1200 G Street NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20005
t. 202.459.0354 • e. info@toyassociation.org

February 2020

The Toy Association™ represents over 900 businesses – toy manufacturers, importers and retailers, as well as toy inventors, designers and testing labs – who are all involved in bringing to market safe and fun toys and games for children.

In Maryland, there are over 8,800 jobs directly supported by the toy industry. In the United States, 95% of toy manufacturers, wholesalers, and distributors are small businesses while the state of Maryland beats that average—97% **are small businesses.**

Approximately 3 billion toys are sold in the U.S. each year, totaling $28 billion at retail; Toy Association members account for approximately 90% of the market.

Toy safety is the top priority for the industry and we appreciate this opportunity to discuss our concerns with HB 424.

The Toy Association and its members have long been leaders in toy safety, dating back to the 1930s. Our efforts include leading the development of the first comprehensive toy safety standard (later adopted as ASTM F963, which in 2008 became a mandatory consumer product safety rule under CPSIA); the industry continues to provide technical input and actively participate in the ongoing review of this "living" standard in order to keep pace with innovation and potential emerging issues. The Association and its members work with government officials, consumer groups, medical and child development experts, testing labs and industry leaders on ongoing programs to ensure safe play.

Toy manufacturers typically do not add flame retardants to toys. However, some of these substances may be present in certain components of toys, such as electronic circuit boards and assemblies – inaccessible to children but crucial to the electrical and safety of the products in which they are used. Electronic devices are in constant contact with an electrical current. Not only does the electrical circuitry result in a heated immediate environment, but electrical arcing, shorts, or other electrical faults are a risk, and must be considered. As a result, in electrical products it is crucial that the risk of electrical faults leading to ignition be mitigated.

This risk is currently addressed in electronic devices by using flame retardant chemicals. Many products would not meet long-established safety standards without using these chemicals. Electrically-operated and battery powered toys contain certain components that must meet UL Standard 94 requirements and also have a V-0 flame rating. (Retrieved October 10, 2015 at http://ulstandards.ul.com/standard/?id=94_6) A consistent and reliable alternative for these requirements for electronic components without these chemicals has yet to be found.

Flame retardant bans in electronic components and assemblies may result in thermal and electrical risk that does not exist today because of the use of such substances. Without a viable alternative, these products could present an increased flammability risk in the event of certain electrical fault.

1200 G Street NW • Suite 200 • Washington, DC 20005
t. 202.459.0354 • e. info@toyassociation.org

No cost is too great to ensure the safety of children and consumers. Manufacturers have a willingness to spend more resources to increase and ensure safety when necessary. However, the safety of materials should be looked at holistically, and any new development of safety regulations should based on facts, figures and sound data and science.

For these reasons we urge you to vote no on HB 424.

If you have any additional questions, comments or concerns, please contact me at mbaker@toyassociation.org or 773-441-1930.

Sincerely,

Mindy Baker
Director, State Government Affairs
773-441-1930
mbaker@toyassociation.org