

Senate Special Committee on Aging

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IKEA Statement

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I. Introduction

Thank you to Chairman Casey, Senator Scott, and the Senate Special Committee on Aging for inviting IKEA to join this important conversation.

At IKEA, our understanding of life at home is the core of our business. Our mission is to help our customers live better lives, giving them the products, knowledge, and resources, they need. A better life at home begins with safety, especially for the most vulnerable – young children and older people.

Through many years of experience, we know how people live and use the products in their home. We want to know how people live, and what their frustrations, needs, and dreams are. Each year, IKEA co-workers do hundreds of home visits to build our knowledge base and stay current in an ever-changing world. Naturally, what we have learned has given us the insight to develop better and safer products. But it also allows us to share the knowledge that can contribute to a safer life at home.

IKEA is committed to working with safety organizations and industry stakeholders to advocate for setting mandatory stability requirements for clothing storage furniture to keep homes safer. We have launched initiatives that focus on creating a safer environment in the home. And we are collaborating with others in this space to drive change in home safety.

II. IKEA Support for STURDY Act

Furniture tip-over incidents are an industry-wide issue, and remain a serious home safety challenge. At IKEA, we continue our commitment to playing a collaborative role within the industry to reduce tip-overs by working with legislators, regulators, standard-setting committees, consumer safety advocates, and customers. We have long advocated for setting mandatory stability requirements for clothing storage furniture. This is why we support the Stop Tip-Overs of Unstable, Risky Dressers on Youth (“STURDY”) Act. We believe that the STURDY Act can significantly advance industry-wide progress on furniture stability. And we appreciate all opportunities to engage with our stakeholders on this important legislation.

This legislation will decrease the risk of furniture-related tip-over incidents through mandatory furniture stability requirements – making homes safer. In addition to strengthening safety standards for clothing storage units, the STURDY Act also accomplishes two important objectives.

First, it encourages industry to invest in research and the development of furniture safety innovations and ensures that safety and testing standards can be adapted to incorporate such innovations in the future – a vital component of a comprehensive approach to reduce the risk of tip-over.

Second, STURDY provides regulatory certainty for businesses in an expedited timeframe. It allows for a rulemaking process that is proven to produce final rules at the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) without delay – which can often take years. This will help brands like IKEA introduce new safety innovations and bring new products to market with confidence.

We are not alone on this journey, and we are humbled and grateful for our partnership with organizations such as Parents Against Tip-Overs (“PAT”), Kids in Danger (“KID”), and the Consumer Federation of America. We appreciate the support and participation of other retailers and furniture industry organizations who have joined with us in the work advancing the STURDY Act. IKEA also

applauds Senators Casey, Blumenthal, Klobuchar, and Rep. Schakowsky for their support of the STURDY Act.

IKEA looks forward to continuing to play a collaborative role within the industry, as well as with legislators, regulators, standard-setting committees, consumer safety advocates, and our customers to promote safe furniture use through the passage of the STURDY Act.

III. Creating a Safer Life at Home

At IKEA, our vision is to create a better everyday life for people, and we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe at home – from children to the elderly and everyone in between.

Unfortunately, every year, too many people are injured in their own homes. We want to do what we can to change that – and make home a safer place for everyone – through an initiative we call IKEA Safer Life at Home. This initiative builds on the robust work that IKEA is already doing across the value chain and is focused on innovation and development in the area of safety.

A. Innovation

We believe innovations are the long-term solution to minimize the risks, for example of furniture tip-over. IKEA makes significant investments in research, testing, and product design and development, leading to innovative solutions in product safety.

These innovations are often inspired by personal experiences. When one of our furniture designers was recovering from a debilitating stroke, she gained a new perspective on what it means to maintain an independent life at home. This life-altering event inspired and informed the OMTÄNKSAM (Swedish for “caring”) collection, with products designed to help support an aging population to remain in their homes. OMTÄNKSAM includes jar grippers that help unscrew lids, cushions that provide support, and chairs that make it easier to both sit and stand. This award-winning collection is sold in IKEA stores around the world, with plans to further develop products that provide comfort, functionality, and safety for those with different physical needs and challenges.

IV. The Tip-Over Issue

IKEA has been engaged in prevention of furniture tip-over for years. However, this is not just an issue for IKEA, it is an industry-wide issue. We are fully committed to working together with other stakeholders to drive change in this area.

We are investing heavily in research, innovation, product development and testing, leading to new technical solutions for furniture stability. The work is a top priority, it is ongoing, and while we are making progress, this work will never be completely finished. New furniture and new behaviors in our homes will always require innovation.

A. The number of seniors injured by tip-over

With tip-over accidents involving furniture in the home, much of the focus has been on accidents involving children. When we look at the total number of furniture-related

accidents across age groups, more children tragically lose their lives when a tip-over accident occurs.

But a story that is less frequently told is the number of people aged 60 and over who are fatally injured by falling furniture. According to data compiled by the CPSC, from 2000 to 2019 seniors are the second-largest age group who sustain a fatal injury caused by tip-over accidents (14% of all reported fatalities). Even more dramatic is how many seniors seek emergency treatment for injuries caused by furniture tip-over accidents. From 2017 – 2019, the CPSC reported a total of 3200 seniors – an average of 60 a week -- who were seriously injured by tip-over accidents and required medical attention. These statistics emphasize the continuing need to raise awareness of the risk of tip-over injury for all age groups, educating consumers on how to prevent this from happening to themselves, their children, and grandchildren.

V. Leader in Consumer Protection and Home Safety

As a major retailer and manufacturer, we believe we have a responsibility to be engaged in home safety topics related to our product offering. Our knowledge about life at home, the competence and resources that we have in product development and design, and our understanding of customer engagement allow us to contribute to, and in some cases lead, on safety topics. Our reach to millions of customers across the world means that we can make a meaningful difference.

A. Collaboration

IKEA has a long history of collaboration with others on challenging topics. It is part of our culture, and we have a term for it, KRAFTSAMLA (togetherness in Swedish). In the area of safety, we collaborate with others on standard setting, solution development and in the case of STURDY, development of legislation. We believe in having open dialogue to move topics forward, including with those stakeholders that challenge us.

One example of this was our work advocating for increased safety measures for furniture flammability. We worked together with scientists, universities, manufacturing companies, a major hospital provider and several furniture trade associations to press California to amend its flammability standard. These collaborative efforts from industry experts resulted in changes to the flammability test method and enabled the entire home furnishings industry to develop and manufacture upholstered furniture without adding flame retardant chemicals that are proven harmful to people and the planet.

B. Secondhand Market

Our concern for consumers reaches beyond the primary purchaser, and extends to a secondhand purchase- furniture bought at a garage sale, flea market, or on-line marketplace. IKEA believes that wall-attachment, along with innovation in product design, mandatory safety standards and clarity in safety testing methods, are all part of a comprehensive approach to reducing furniture tip-over incidents. In line with advice

from the CPSC (through their "Anchor It" communication), we want all consumers to safely use furniture in their homes, regardless of where it was purchased.

IKEA is committed to working toward solutions that address and minimize the risk. We continue to seek the help of diverse stakeholders to identify and pursue solutions that involve public awareness, and legislative and corporate action.

C. Customer Engagement

At IKEA, we are in a unique position to leverage our voice and raise awareness for ways to establish a safer life at home. Our safety messaging is an important part of our customer communication, and appears on all customer touchpoints. From our retail stores and website, our social media channels, our "IKEA Safer Homes" app, and regular email outreach, we regularly update and inform our customers on how we can help them reduce safety risks in their homes.

In 2020, IKEA instituted a new sales requirement in which consumers who wish to purchase our chests, dressers and other select clothing storage units must acknowledge the need for wall attachment. This requirement is an important step in our journey to help our customers enjoy a safer life at home and mirrors our support for stronger regulation in the space.

VI. Conclusion

Everyone deserves a home where they and their loved ones are safe. We are committed to do our part through our product offering, the knowledge we share with our customers and by engaging with a wide range of stakeholders on these important topics.

The STURDY ACT is an important element of creating a safer home for everyone, from children to seniors. Please join us in supporting its passage and thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective on a how we, together, can help create a safer life at home for everyone.