



April 19, 2012

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Committee on Health, Employment,  
Labor and Pensions  
SD-428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Health, Employment,  
Labor and Pensions  
SD-428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Enzi:

The Coalition for Workplace Safety (CWS), a broad coalition comprised of associations and employers dedicated to improving workplace safety through cooperation, respectfully submits this letter in response to today's hearing titled, "Time Takes Its Toll: Delays in OSHA's Standard-Setting Process and the Impact on Worker Safety."

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has been criticized as unable to proceed quickly enough to implement its regulatory priorities due to the various requirements it must satisfy to issue new standards. The premise underlying this criticism is that this inability to issue more standards has somehow meant employees are less safe. Yet, during this period when OSHA has issued few new standards, workplace fatalities, injuries and illnesses have declined steadily to their lowest recorded levels.

We believe these criticisms are misguided. These critics fail to understand that the steps in OSHA's rulemaking process exist for a reason. Congress recognized that without first examining feasibility, economic impact, and small business impact, among other factors, OSHA would risk pushing out poorly designed and badly supported standards and that consequently such standards would not provide appropriate guidance to employers to assist them in protecting their employees from the designated hazards.

Employers and OSHA agree that workers need adequate safety and health protections on the job. CWS believes this can be best achieved by making agency standards as practical, science and data driven, cost-effective and performance-oriented as possible. We understand and value the importance of common sense policymaking based on sound scientific evidence, with meaningful attention paid to economic analyses and practical input from stakeholders. In addition, proper consideration must be given to potential conflict with other requirements outside OSHA's purview, such as environmental or transportation regulations.

*The CWS is comprised of associations and employers who believe in improving workplace safety through cooperation, assistance, transparency, clarity, and accountability.*

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Our members are committed to providing safe workplaces and striving to improve safety in their workplaces. Ultimately, everyone benefits when agencies work with the industries they regulate to identify and achieve mutual goals. CWS stands ready to work with OSHA and Congress to pursue policies that will help improve workplace safety.

Sincerely,

American Bakers Association  
American Composites Manufacturers Association  
American Feed Industry Association  
American Foundry Society  
American Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Iron and Steel Institute  
Associated General Contractors  
Associated Builders and Contractors  
Associated Wire Rope Fabricators  
Brick Industry Association  
Corn Refiners Association  
Food Marketing Institute  
Forging Industry Association  
Heating, Air-Conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International  
Independent Electrical Contractors  
Industrial Fasteners Institute  
Industrial Minerals Association – North America  
IPC – Association Connecting Electronics Industries  
LeadingAge  
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association

National Association for Surface Finishing  
National Association of Chemical Distributors  
National Association of Convenience Stores  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Manufacturers  
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors  
National Cotton Council  
National Cotton Ginners Association  
National Council of Textile Organizations  
National Federation of Independent Business  
National Grain and Feed Association  
National Marine Manufacturers Association  
National Oilseed Processors Association  
National Roofing Contractors Association  
Non-Ferrous Founders' Society  
North American Die Casting Association  
Printing Industries of America  
Retail Industry Leaders Association  
Shipbuilders Council of America  
Textile Rental Service Association  
Tree Care Industry Association  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce