Statement

For Immediate Release

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NAFRA: CALIFORNIA REMOVES IMPORTANT LAYER OF FIRE PROTECTION BY LOWERING FIRE SAFETY STANDARDS

WASHINGTON (Nov. 21, 2013) – In response to today’s announcement from the governor of California that the state is changing Technical Bulletin 117, which sets the fire safety standards for upholstered furniture, the North American Flame Retardant Alliance (NAFRA) issued the following statement which can be attributed to Steve Risotto:

“Families in California should have serious concerns that state officials are lowering fire standards and removing an important layer of fire protection that has benefitted Californians for more than 35 years. Statistics demonstrate that fires and fire deaths declined in California since the fire safety standards were implemented as part of TB-117, which would explain why a number of respected organizations, like the National Fire Protection Association and Underwriters Laboratories, have submitted comments to California state government opposing this change.

“It is ironic that California is removing an important layer of fire protection for open flame sources even though statistics show that these fires are a real threat. Looking at U.S. home fires that originated with upholstered furniture in 2005 to 2009, the National Fire Protection Association reports, ‘Together, candles, matches and lighters were involved in 21 percent of the fires and 12 percent of the deaths’. The debate over TB-117 has been fueled by concerns about the flame retardants that can be used to meet the standard. But the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has the full authority to review all chemicals, including flame retardants, both prior to production and once they are on the market. So changing TB-117 sacrifices fire safety for California families with no public health gain.”

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