



ELECTRONIC SECURITY ASSOCIATION

THE *evolution* OF NBFAA

March 18, 2010

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush
Chairman
Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ed Whitfield
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rush and Ranking Member Whitfield:

As representatives of manufacturers, service providers, and installers of carbon monoxide alarm and detection devices, we want to commend you for holding today's hearing on H.R. 1796, the Residential Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act.

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning is the leading cause of accidental poisoning death in the United States. High concentrations of CO—a colorless, odorless gas that is produced when fossil fuel is incompletely burned—can cause cognitive impairment, loss of consciousness, coma and often death. In fact, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that every year, more than 400 people die in the U.S. from accidental CO poisoning and estimates that approximately 20,000 Americans seek medical attention each year due to carbon monoxide poisoning.

There are many things American families can do to protect themselves from carbon monoxide poisoning, including properly maintaining fuel-burning appliances, furnaces and chimneys and correctly using portable generators. These actions can help prevent the buildup of toxic carbon monoxide gas in people's homes. However, once CO is present, timely detection is paramount to ensuring residents have the time to evacuate their home and contact emergency personnel. Carbon monoxide detection and notification devices installed in residential and other places where people sleep provide an effective way to reduce the incidence of CO poisoning.

We support the goals of H.R. 1796, the Residential Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act, introduced by Representative Jim Matheson. H.R. 1796 acknowledges the value of carbon monoxide alarm and detection devices by promoting their purchase and installation in residential homes and dwellings nationwide. By requiring the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to adopt the American National Standards Institute/Underwriters Laboratories (ANSI/UL) Standard 2034, *Standard for Single and Multiple Station Carbon Monoxide Alarms*, as a mandatory consumer product safety rule, the bill places importance on continued quality, effective devices that meet rigorous safety standards.

The Honorable Bobby L. Rush & The Honorable Ed Whitfield
March 18, 2010
Page 2

We are also pleased that H.R. 1796 encourages states to require residential CO detection devices and establishes a federal grant program to provide assistance to eligible states to carry out a CO alarm program. Currently, over two dozen states and many local jurisdictions have laws on the books requiring CO devices in homes, commercial lodging, and other dwellings, and those laws are proving successful in reducing the incidence of CO poisoning.

H.R. 1796 is a good bill that calls attention to an important life safety issue and promotes the use of quality, effective CO detection and notification devices. While we support the goals of H.R. 1796, there are some technical corrections needed to ensure technological consistency. We look forward to working with Representative Matheson and members of the Subcommittee to address these issues and concerns as the bill advances.

Thankfully, there are ways to protect against the deadly assassin known as carbon monoxide. We appreciate your Subcommittee's attention to this life-and-death issue. We stand ready to work with you.

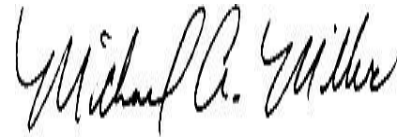
Sincerely yours,



Evan R. Gaddis
President & CEO
National Electrical Manufacturers Association



Richard W. Chace
Chief Executive Officer
Security Industry Association



Michael A. Miller
President
Electronic Security Association

cc: The Honorable Jim Matheson