From: [redacted]
Sent: 10 November 2016 16:58
To: Furniture Regulations Consultation
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: CONSULTATION ON UPDATING THE FURNITURE & FURNISHINGS REGULATIONS

CONSULTATION ON UPDATING THE FURNITURE & FURNISHINGS REGULATIONS

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From .. [redacted]

Cottonsafe Natural Mattress, formally Cambridge Natural Mattress

Dear Sir / Madam

Please note, your objectives in BEIS should be to reduce FR's in furniture, save money for industry and make the regulations more effective.

In roughly 13 years of talking very little has been achieved. Good work was done by Terry Edge and Steve Owen who both had experience and technical expertise however this side lined in order not to upset the chemical lobby. The chemical lobby will not except any change in the status quo, especially when it means a reduction in the use of FR's

It is REALLY important that there is continuity and transparency with the tests that were put forward in 2014. We cannot keep 'throwing the baby out with the bath water every two years. This is not the way to move forwards – it is delaying tactics. As you admitted yourself you do not have any experience of the history, problems and circumstances that were discussed in 2014. To make an informed judgement you need to know what has happened in the past. Therefore, it is VITAL that Steve Owen, with all his experience, should be involved in these new discussions. As you admitted yourself, there is no valid reason at all why he should be left out.

Regarding the history of the fire regulations, you must look to America. This is where a lot of research has been going on* and despite the influence of the chemical industry, the nation has banned the vast majority of fire retardants in domestic furniture. Combine this with the ban in Europe and Canada and you can see that the UK is going in the opposite direction to the rest of the world. I am very concerned that, as the Head of these discussions, that you have not made yourself aware of what is happening outside the UK and the negative impact of the variety of FR chemicals on human health and the environment. There is no point in constructing regulations that include chemical fire retardants when the future of these solutions is in doubt. You would be much better to ask the industry to look at alternative solutions to fire safety which are not a risk to public health and the fire service – they DO exist.

I do not know how long you are going to continue with these stake holder meetings but you must know that by dragging things out year after year that eventually the only people who are going to turn up to BEIS meetings are those who are paid to do so, which is normally the chemical lobby protecting their market. Small companies like myself find it difficult to pay hundreds of pounds in rail fares to attend endless meetings that go nowhere.

Kind regards,
[redacted]

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