



UNITED STATES
CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION
4330 EAST WEST HIGHWAY
BETHESDA, MD 20814

ACTING CHAIRMAN ANN MARIE BUERKLE

March 23, 2018

Dear Consumer Privacy Organizations:

Thank you for your letter of October 13, 2017, regarding the Google Home Mini and the potential risks to consumers posed by the Internet of Things (IoT). I sincerely apologize for the delay in sending this response. Unfortunately, I did not receive your letter when it was originally sent. A news report brought the letter to my attention.

I cannot comment on agency action concerning a specific consumer product. However, I would like to address your concerns about potential risks posed by the IoT and the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) role in protecting the public from consumer products that are connected to the Internet.

The CPSC is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death associated with the use of thousands of types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The CPSC is committed to protecting consumers and families from products that pose fire, electrical, mechanical, or chemical hazards, among others.

To the extent that a consumer product connected to the Internet poses an unreasonable risk of injury or illness under our statutory authority (*e.g.*, electrical, fire, mechanical, and chemical hazards), CPSC will fully evaluate such risks and take appropriate action. Accordingly, as we monitor the development of the IoT, we know that connecting a consumer product to the Internet may lead to new hazards, including remote operation (unattended use), software updates impacting operation, or the effect of disabling a product's safety features. Notwithstanding our monitoring of the development of the IoT, CPSC's authority will not generally extend to situations solely related to consumer privacy or data security that do not pose a risk of physical injury or illness, or property damage that could result in injury or illness.

As the IoT develops and gains wider adoption, it will open exciting new possibilities for consumers and also pose new challenges to regulators. Although

privacy concerns fall outside CPSC's statutory authority, we are closely monitoring consumer products connected through the Internet and will investigate those products that pose an unreasonable risk of injury or death. We are also collaborating with interested stakeholders, including domestic and foreign government agencies (*e.g.*, the Federal Trade Commission and the Department of Homeland Security), consumer product manufacturers, voluntary standards organizations, and public interest organizations such as yours, to address risks and concerns with the IoT.

Thank you for bringing these issues to my attention. I look forward to working with you in the future on issues of mutual concern to your organizations and the CPSC.

Sincerely,



Ann Marie Buerkle
Acting Chairman

Cc: Marc Rotenberg, Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) ✓
Josh Golin, Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood
Jeff Chester, Center for Digital Democracy
Ariel Fox Johnson, Common Sense Kids Action
Linda Sherry, Consumer Action
Susan Grant, Consumer Federation of America
John M. Simpson, Consumer Watchdog
Edmund Mierzwinski, U.S. PIRG
Beth Givens, Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
Robert Weissman, Public Citizen