

Rigell Remarks on the Floor of the House of Representatives Regarding Contaminated Drywall from China

September 20, 2011

- Mr/Madam Speaker:
- Imagine that you worked hard and saved for a down payment on a house of your own – a down payment on the American Dream.
- Imagine that you secured the financing, found the perfect brand-new house, and happily began life as a homeowner with your family.
- Now imagine having an ever increasing putrid, rotten egg-like odor permeating your home, making your children sick with severe headaches and nose bleeds.
- Imagine the mounting frustration as the copper coils on your AC and refrigerator corrode, develop leaks, and have to be replaced again and again and again.
- You ultimately move your family into a rental home and find out that the cause of all these problems is defective drywall, imported from China.
- Mr/Madam Speaker, many of my constituents don't have to imagine this nightmare. They are living it right now.
- Some have been dealing with this issue for more than two years now without relief.
- Many are severely financially strained as they try to continue paying a mortgage on a house they cannot live in, while paying rent for a second home.
- Some homes have been foreclosed on, some are pending foreclosure.
- Because our legal system is flawed, the manufacturers of this contaminated drywall from China are not held accountable for selling a defective, dangerous product. Even if a judgment is made in favor of the homeowners, it can't be enforced.
- This is not right!
- Homeowners insurance and builders insurance refuse to cover the damages.
- In the end the people left holding the bag are the homeowners who bear no fault whatsoever for the situation.

- Their finances are devastated. Their credit scores are ruined.
- I have worked with a bipartisan group of my colleagues on the Contaminated Drywall Caucus to forge a path forward for these homeowners.
- We have begun hearings, met with the Consumer Product Safety Commission, written letters to the President, and asked for assistance from the United States Trade Representative.
- But that is not enough.
- We **must** hold the Chinese manufacturers accountable for the defective products they shipped to our nation.
- I call on the committees of jurisdiction to hold hearings, investigate, and help move forward with solutions to this problem.
- Thank you, Mr./Madam Speaker. I yield the balance of my time.

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