Rt Hon Jonathan Reynolds MP
Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade
Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade
Old Admiralty Building, Admiralty Place
London, SW1A 2DY

05 November 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

As a broad coalition representing UK businesses, consumers, and public safety organisations, we are writing regarding the development of secondary legislation under the Product Regulation and Metrology Act. Online marketplaces claim to prioritise the safety of their customers, yet repeatedly allow sellers to list products that do not adhere to the UK's strict product safety rules, despite the significant resources at their disposal.

Enough is enough. We face a once in a generation chance to make online shopping safe. We urge you to ensure the forthcoming regulations include robust measures to tackle unsafe products - often from overseas - that are now too easily sold through online marketplaces; to protect consumers and create a level playing field for responsible businesses.

We welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the consultations under the Product Regulation and Metrology Act, and to meet with your team to discuss the overwhelming case for urgent action. With those consultations now concluded, the focus must now turn to translating the ambition of the Act into an effective and enforceable regulatory framework.

The Act presents a pivotal opportunity to drive economic growth by closing the deeply unfair and widening gap between the responsibilities placed on traditional high street retailers and online marketplaces. The rise of online marketplaces has resulted in responsible businesses - both retailers and suppliers - being forced to compete against businesses that do not face any of the same compliance costs while remaining unaccountable to enforcement. This has contributed to the gradual erosion of local retail centres, reducing consumer choice, weakening local economies, and undermining investment in our high streets. The Act will only deliver change if the regulations made under it close the accountability gap and are supported by meaningful penalties.

A framework that relies primarily on voluntary action, reactive product removal or minimum compliance standards will never provide the protection that consumers and responsible businesses require. Online marketplaces have repeatedly shown that they will not take meaningful action unless they are forced to.

Over the last decade, dozens of investigations by members of our coalition have exposed thousands of unsafe products for sale online across a wide range of categories. From illegal and life-threatening toys and baby products to toxic cosmetics and exploding electronics, these

products are routinely re-listed and purchased by unsuspecting shoppers even after they are exposed by our research. Despite our technological resources paling in comparison to these shopping giants, the ease at which we are still able to easily find illegal items for sale is shocking. If we can develop tools to easily detect these products, there should be no excuses for these platforms to hide behind.

Traditional retailers and their suppliers would have been held to account to put an end to these bad practices and repeated failures. They are expected to ensure the products they sell comply with UK safety standards and can be held accountable when unsafe products reach consumers. Online marketplaces should be too. Only clear legal duties, supported by meaningful penalties, will deter online marketplaces from allowing unsafe products to be sold through their platforms.

We therefore urge the Government to use the forthcoming secondary legislation to:

- Introduce a clear duty on online marketplaces to take responsibility for the safety of products sold through their platforms, including proactive measures to prevent unsafe products from being listed and sold in the first place.
- Give regulators strong and effective enforcement powers, including significant financial penalties and the ability to take further action where online marketplaces fail to meet their obligations.

Every month implementation is delayed is another month in which unsafe products can continue to reach UK consumers through online marketplaces. Meanwhile, responsible businesses which invest in meeting UK product safety requirements, and face ever rising business costs, struggle to compete.

We urge you to ensure the forthcoming regulations fully deliver on the promise of the Act by establishing robust duties and enforcement powers that truly hold online marketplaces to account.

Yours sincerely,

Associated Independent Stores
Association of Cycle Traders
Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Appliances
Baby Products Industry Association
The Bicycle Association
British Beauty Council
British Burns Association
British Electrotechnical and Allied Manufacturers Association
British Independent Retailers Association
British Safety Industry Federation
British Toy & Hobby Association
Brompton Bike Hire
The Chartered Trading Standards Institute
Child Accident Prevention Trust
Consumer Friend
Cosmetic, Toiletry and Perfumery Association
Daniel of Windsor
Electrical Safety First
The Entertainer
Firechief Global
Independent Ambulance Association
The Ladder Association
Lancashire Fire & Rescue Service
The Lighting Industry Association
London Fire Brigade
The Lullaby Trust
Morley's Department Stores
Music Industry Association
National Association of Balloon Artists and Suppliers
National Association of Jewellers
National Fire Chiefs Council
National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting
The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
Smyth's Toys
Toy Retailers Association
Toymaster
Toy Town
The UK Fire Association
Walpole
West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
Which?


AIS
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Independent
Stores


ACT
ASSOCIATION OF CYCLE TRADERS


AMDEA
The Association of Manufacturers
of Domestic Appliances


BABY PRODUCTS
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
bpia


BICYCLE
ASSOCIATION


BRITISH BEAUTY
COUNCIL


BRITISH BURN ASSOCIATION
BBA


beama
The trade association for energy
infrastructure & systems


bira


BSiF
BRITISH SAFETY INDUSTRY FEDERATION


BRITISH
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hobby
ASSOCIATION


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Chartered Trading
Standards Institute


child accident
prevention trust


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Walpole


West Yorkshire
Fire & Rescue Service


Which?