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6 Infant Deaths Linked to Amby Baby Beds and Stork Craft Cribs, Suits Filed
Baby Hammock/Crib Death Lawsuits Highlight Need for More Regulation in Baby Products

Alexandria, LA - January 4, 2010 - A lawsuit has been filed in Multnomah County Circuit Court by the father of a 5-month-old who died in an Amby Baby motion bed/hammock. The suit alleges that the hammock's defective design led to the suffocation death of the child last summer.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission announced the recall of about 24,000 Amby Baby hammocks on December 8th. They contend the side-to-side motion of the hammocks can cause infants to roll and become trapped against the side of the crib, posing the risk of asphyxiation.

The death of the Oregon child named in the suit, along with the suffocation death of a 4-month-old from Georgia were apparently the catalyst for the recall last month.

Attorney Richard J. Arsenault, who currently represents a Louisiana family whose infant died in another recalled crib, is troubled by the risks associated with infant and children's products, many of which consumers are simply unaware.

"Corporations owe consumers safe products – especially when the products are intended for infants and children," said Arsenault.

In November, Arsenault filed a lawsuit against Stork Craft for the suffocation death of a 7-month-old Louisiana boy. The suit filed in U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana (Docket # 6:09-CV-01976), alleges that Stork Craft's disregard for safety and faulty design resulted in the infant's death. Three other deaths and over 100 injuries have been associated with the Stork Craft cribs.

"It is appalling to think these products make it to store shelves. One of the biggest risks associated with infants' sleeping environments is the risk of suffocation/strangulation. These companies should know this and consequently need to do more to protect our children. Our regulatory agencies also need to become the watch dogs we so desperately need," added Arsenault.

Over the last few years, the nation has witnessed heartbreaking deaths and injuries caused by defective products and a troubling series of recalls aimed at children's products. Risks of lead contamination, choking hazards, dangerous magnets, defective nursery products and the recalls

of millions of children's sleeping environments have left parents shaken and calling for reform in Washington.

"The current safety standards established for many infant and children's products are too weak and the enforcement capabilities of our regulatory agencies are inadequate. The tort system provides a welcomed safety net by motivating wayward companies to clean up their act and make safety a priority. The system's indirect regulatory function, through product liability litigation, often takes up the slack where governmental agencies may fail," concluded Arsenault.

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