

**Statement by Mattel, Inc. to the
House Ways and Means Committee Supporting
the Duty Suspension Bill for
Certain Infant Products (H.R. 4456)**

June 22, 2012

This statement is submitted by Mattel, Inc. in connection with the Ways and Means Committee's request for public comment regarding certain miscellaneous tariff measures introduced in the House of Representatives during the 112th Congress. Mattel wishes to express its strong support for H.R. 4456, introduced by Rep. Brian Higgins (NY) on April 19, which would suspend temporarily the duty on certain infant products.

Headquartered in El Segundo, California, Mattel is the world's largest toy company with 2011 sales of \$6.3 billion in over 150 countries. Mattel has 28,000 employees worldwide, with the crucial U.S. component of that workforce including 5,500 employees.

At the urging of the U.S. toy industry, the U.S. government agreed to eliminate U.S. tariffs on all toys as part of a multilateral "zero-for-zero" sectoral agreement in the Uruguay Round of WTO trade negotiations. However, for various technical reasons, U.S. Customs and Border Protection has classified certain toy-related articles of significant interest to Mattel and other U.S. toy companies in dutiable non-toy HTS subheadings.

Among those articles are infant projection soothers, a recently developed product. These articles are designed to soothe or entertain infants by projecting soothing or entertaining images onto the ceiling or wall and playing soothing sounds such as lullabies, classical music, or nature sounds. Customs has classified the articles as "projectors" under HTS 9008.50.40, a dutiable category, rather than as toys under Chapter 95.

H.R. 4456 would correct that anomaly by providing the duty-free status infant projection soothers normally would have as toys, with that duty-free status remaining in effect through December 31, 2015. An identical bill was passed by the House at the end of the 111th Congress as Sec. 2186 of H.R. 6517, but that bill was not taken up by the Senate.

There is no known U.S. production of infant projection soothers. There was no opposition to the predecessor House and Senate bills introduced in the 111th Congress, and none is anticipated with respect to this bill. The estimated annual duty impact of the

duty suspension provision is below the \$500,000 threshold specified by the House Ways & Means and Senate Finance Committees.

We appreciate this opportunity to share Mattel's views with the Ways and Means Committee. Please feel free to contact us if Committee staff have any questions regarding our position on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Murat".

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