



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2008

Contact: Destry Henderson

202-225-2006

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers Works to Prevent Lawsuits Against Firefighters who Volunteer to Help Parents

(Washington, D.C.) Today, Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers proposed on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives new liability protection for firefighters.

It's estimated nearly 75% of child restraint systems are installed incorrectly. To help remedy that, many fire departments train personnel to properly install and use child safety seats and then provide parents with voluntary help to make sure their child's car seat is installed properly.

But a recent study by the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration found that while the courses were effective, some fire departments were concerned about liability issues, leaving some fire departments and communities unwilling to offer these life-saving services.

“When my husband and I had Cole last year, we were advised to have a fire department ensure our seat was properly installed,” McMorris Rodgers said. “This service the firefighters are offering is too valuable to let it be bogged down by the threat of lawsuits. We should not allow the trial lawyers to hijack the safety of our children.”

The proposal McMorris Rodgers offered today would protect fire departments that wish to offer this service by asking states or local governments covered by the federal fire safety legislation – within two years – to shield their properly trained firefighters from frivolous lawsuits when they offer inspection and advice regarding car seat use. The measure to amend the reauthorization of the United States Fire Administration (H.R. 4847) failed by a vote of 205 to 209.

###

To see video of the Congresswoman's speech, log onto our website at:

<http://mcmorrisrodgers.house.gov/>