

Korea WTO TBT Enquiry Point
Korean Agency for Technology and Standards
Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy
Republic of Korea
www.kats.go.kr



To: Standards Coordination Office **Email:** usatbtep@nist.gov

Number of Pages: 1+1 **Date:** 2023.2.1

From: Korea WTO TBT Enquiry Point

Subject : Comments from the Republic of Korea with respect to Proposed Rule of 'Safer Products Restrictions and Reporting' of the State of Washington, USA (G/TBT/N/USA/1958)

Message:

Dear USA TBT Enquiry Point,

Attached is a formal letter from Korea about the “Proposed Rule of 'Safer Products Restrictions and Reporting' of the State of Washington, USA (G/TBT/N/USA/1958)”.

Please convey the attached comments to the competent authorities. Acknowledgment of this letter would be appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the Korean characters "진민영" (Jun Min-yung) written vertically.

Jun Min-yung
Director, TBT Division
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**<Comments from the Republic of Korea with respect to Proposed Rule of
'Safer Products Restrictions and Reporting' of the State of Washington,
USA (G/TBT/N/USA/1958)>**

The Korean government appreciates this opportunity to submit its comments on the proposed rule of 'Safer Products Restrictions and Reporting,' which was notified by the USA as G/TBT/N/USA/1958 on 6 January 2023.

With regard to the restriction of flame retardants in electric and electronic products specified in the proposed rule of 'Safer Products Restrictions and Reporting' (hereinafter, the "proposed rule") published by the government of Washington state, the following concerns have been raised from the related industries in Korea.

We would like to request the withdrawal of the provisions* related to the restriction of flame retardants that are expected to be applied to most electric and electronic products, including electronic display products for following reasons.

* WAC 173-337-112

According to the provisions, the restriction of flame retardants applies to electric and electronic products intended for indoor use that are powered by either Standard 120 volt outlets (and designed for up to 20 amp circuit) or by batteries. This means that almost all electric and electronic products for indoor use are affected. However, currently neither the U.S. Environment Agency (EPA), states outside of Washington, nor any other country has wide restrictions on flame retardant use.

In addition, if the provisions are implemented as they are, the discrepancy in the level of regulation between Washington states and other states/Federal government may cause a reduced range of purchasable products available for Washington residents. Further, electric and electronic products with limited application of flame retardant may be more vulnerable to fire hazard.

Not only will the extensive restriction on flame retardants in electric and electronic products impose an overly burdensome requirement on the manufacturers, but it will also diminish the product's fire safety properties. Therefore, we request that the Washington state consider withdrawing aforementioned provisions.

We would appreciate a quick reply and a positive consideration of our request. Do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.