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KENNEDY, MURRAY ON OSHA'S SAFETY EQUIPMENT RULE

WASHINGTON, DC— Today, Senators Edward M. Kennedy and Patty Murray released the following statements in response to the long awaited action of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, which published its final rule requiring employers to pay for workers' safety equipment. A court had imposed a November 30th deadline for the agency to issue the rule.

Senator Kennedy, Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, said, "Year after year, OSHA has been AWOL on this issue. Finally, facing court-ordered deadlines, they've done the right thing by requiring employers to pay for the equipment that workers need to do their jobs safely. It is time for OSHA to act on other long-delayed safety needs. Employees deserve an agency that takes the initiative to protect them – not an agency that responds only to a court order or a Congressional mandate."

"Common sense dictates that working men and women should not have to foot the bill for the equipment that keeps them safe in the workplace," said Senator Murray, Chair of the Senate HELP Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety. "That's why Senator Kennedy and I have been pushing for years to get the Administration to include the safety of employees as a cost of doing business. I'm glad that the Department of Labor has finally ruled, but it's unfortunate that it takes an angry chorus of Congress, courts, and workers for this Administration to act."

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