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Blocked Bill

Michael R. Lemov recalls his colleague Joe Miller explaining why the Consumer Product Safety Act was held in the House Rules Committee in 1972.

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I'm talking to Joe about the fact that the product safety bill hasn't moved yet out of committee. He said to me, "Don't you know? The Chief Justice of the United States has gone to Congressman Colmer, the chairman of the Rules Committee"—pardon me—"Congressman Colmer"—the chairman of Rules, D-Mississippi—"and urged him to block the bill, and it's never coming out." Miller told me, "It's dead." I said, "What? What are they saying?" He, Miller said, "I don't know, but they put enough pressure on the Rules Committee, so it's not coming out." The Broyhill-Moss compromise was dead. Moss' victory was dead, and the Congress was winding down. So, I walked over to Moss' office immediately. Moss grabbed the telephone. And he used the press for the first time that I remember. But boy, he, he knew how to use it—maybe from his FOIA days, maybe from his own instinctive abilities. He had them. He called the Jack Anderson first, I think, and *The New York Times*, second. But they both ran stories saying "Chief Justice lobbies House Rules Committee to kill product safety bill." All over the country.