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LEGGETT & PLATT DRIVES SLEEP TECHNOLOGY THROUGH SCIENCE

Ergonomics research expert to join R&D team

CARTHAGE, Mo., (May 22, 2007) – It’s no secret that sleep deprivation is affecting more and more Americans each day. In a 2005 Harvard Medical School Study involving more than 82,000 nurses, researchers found an increased risk of death among those who slept less than six hours a night.

“This study is alarming and one that everyone involved in the sleep industry should take very seriously,” states Mark Quinn, group executive vice president of sales and marketing for Leggett & Platt’s bedding division. “At Leggett & Platt, we’ve made it one of our top priorities to focus research efforts on improving overall health through improved sleep quality.”

To assist the company in understanding how science impacts sleep and bedding technology, it is enlisting the help of Dr. Susanne Frohriep. Dr. Frohriep comes to Leggett & Platt from the automotive industry in Europe, where she has spent the last three years as an ergonomics specialist, responsible for product development and ergonomic research of comfort products.

“Ergonomics plays a pivotal role in giving consumers the comfort that enables restful sleep, which impacts overall health,” explains Frohriep. “By understanding how ergonomics is connected to better sleep, Leggett & Platt can continue developing innovative sleep systems.”

Niels Mossbeck, vice president of product development for Leggett & Platt, sees the addition of Dr. Frohriep as further evidence of Leggett’s commitment to advancing the science and technology that creates better sleep systems.

“Dr. Frohriep’s experience offers us insight into how the body interacts with our products,” says Mossbeck. “We are marrying technology with human impact.”

Dr. Frohriep has spent her career studying, teaching and researching in the United States, Germany and Japan. She studied language, linguistics and anthropology at Kiel University in Germany and completed her doctorate in 1998. From 1991 to 2001, and again from 2003 to 2004, Frohriep worked in the physiological anthropology research group at Kiel University. As a member of this group, she was responsible for consumer testing on a range of products such as mattresses, cushions and medical braces.

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Dr. Frohriep's research has been published and presented in academic and educational settings across Europe and Asia. Her work includes studies on female car drivers and comfort, mattress quality assessment through an index of deformation and ergonomic implications of upper spine variability.

"The vast experience that Dr. Frohriep brings to the table enables us to apply scientific research to our product development process in a way we never have before," explains Quinn. "Her research will help us to design and engineer the most technologically advanced sleep systems in the world."