

THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE

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SAMUEL D. CHILCOTE, JR.
President

June 17, 1985

MEMORANDUM

To: Members of the Executive Committee
From: Samuel D. Chilcote, Jr.
Re: NAS Aircraft Cabin Air Quality Hearings

The day-long hearing devoted to the National Academy of Sciences' (NAS) study of aircraft cabin air quality went as expected June 14, with the morning session devoted to the many issues the study is intended to address. The afternoon session -- with Coalition, ASH and respiratory therapy witnesses joining James Repace -- focused almost entirely on smoking.

Copies of all available statements are attached for your information.

Press coverage was noticeably absent -- primarily the aviation trades. Most who were there left after the morning session. Spectators, who numbered up to 150 in the morning, dwindled to about 50 by day's end.

Institute staff and aviation consultants had worked, to the extent possible, with appropriate regulatory officials and trade associations to ensure morning testimony would not focus on the smoking issue. These efforts were successful. As we develop our reply comments, we will continue to coordinate with these groups.

Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), sponsor of the legislation that resulted in the study, kicked off the testimony with a review of the events that led to the bill. He called upon NAS to identify the source of the problem and recommend remedies, citing such concerns as oxygen, bacteria, pressurization, solar radiation and toxic fumes from in-flight fires.

Aviation representatives from the FAA and the manufacturing and airline trade associations noted the regulatory docket on many of the issues the committee will address. On the smoking issue, a representative for the Air Transport Association said separate seating continues to be the most effective way of serving smokers and nonsmokers. Until a government agency bans smoking in public, ATA testified, airlines would continue to meet the needs of all passengers.

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Three of the four scientists asked by The Institute to present their views focused on the broader issue of indoor air quality, asking that any work on environmental tobacco smoke be placed in proper context. A fourth witness rebutted claims of nonsmoker health harm from exposure to ETS. These scientists will be submitting reply comments to the committee as the study progresses. To the extent possible, they also will attempt to work with committee members.

Representatives from anti-smoking organizations (the Coalition on Smoking OR Health, ASH, American Association for Respiratory Therapy) called for increased protection for nonsmoking passengers and flight attendants. Flight attendants' groups, too, said they were concerned about effects of ETS on their workplaces. They singled out pregnant flight attendants as a group of particular concern.

James Repace, introduced as an EPA Doctor, corrected the committee on the former, but let the title stand. He described his work on the aircraft air quality issue for the World Health Organization, offering his services to the committee to perform an air quality study. The committee appeared receptive. He discussed his risk assessment models in general, but made no direct reference to his Environment International report. It was available as a handout to the press, however.

As we develop our follow up comments, and as additional information arises, we will, of course, keep you informed.

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Attachments

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