

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL FLIGHT ATTENDANTS
FLIGHT ATTENDANT PATRICIA YOUNG

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMITTEE, MY NAME IS PATRICIA YOUNG, AND I HAVE BEEN A FLIGHT ATTENDANT FOR 23 YEARS. I AM SPEAKING FOR THE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION TO BAN SMOKING ON BOARD ALL COMMERCIAL AIRCRAFT IN THE U. S.

UNLIKE OTHER WORKERS, FLIGHT ATTENDANTS CANNOT STEP OUTSIDE FOR A BREATH OF FRESH AIR OR SIMPLY OPEN A WINDOW WHEN THE AIR IS FULL OF CIGARETTE SMOKE. WE ARE TRULY HOSTAGES AT 35,000 FEET WHO ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO PULMONARY ABUSE BY THE PASSENGERS WHO SMOKE. UNLIKE OTHER WORKERS, WHOSE HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE PROTECTED BY STANDARDS SET BY GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES, WE AS FLIGHT ATTENDANTS ARE AFFORDED NO SUCH PROTECTION.

SOME OF THE EFFECTS OF THIS CONSTANT EXPOSURE TO CIGARETTE SMOKE ARE...BURNING EYES, NOSE AND THROAT; RECURRENT INFECTIONS OF THE SINUSES AND BRONCHIAL TREE; REDUCED LUNG FUNCTION, LOSS OF HEARING, AND A WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEM. THE MORE DEADLY EFFECTS ARE INCREASED RISK OF LUNG CANCER AND CERVICAL CANCER. FLIGHT ATTENDANTS ARE DYING AND HAVE DIED FROM CIGARETTE SMOKE THEY HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO WHILE ON THE JOB.

I SUFFER FROM CHRONIC BRONCHITIS AND A PARTIAL LOSS OF HEARING RESULTING FROM INJURIES TO MY EARS WHILE IN FLIGHT BECAUSE OF CIGARETTE SMOKE IN MY WORK ENVIRONMENT. I HAVE ALSO INTERVIEWED MANY FLIGHT ATTENDANTS WITH SMOKE RELATED INJURIES, SOME WITH

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LUNG DISEASE AND LUNG CANCER, TO TRY TO PUT TOGETHER SOME STATISTICS FOR YOU. THE INDIVIDUALS WILL NOT TALK ON RECORD BECAUSE THEY ARE AFRAID THAT THEIR JOBS AND HEALTH BENEFITS WILL BE IN JEOPARDY.

EVERY TIME A SMOKER LIGHTS UP AND BLOWS THE TOXIN FILLED SMOKE MY WAY, HE INADVERTENTLY TELLS ME HOW HE FEELS ABOUT MY RIGHTS AS A NON-SMOKER WITHOUT SAYING A WORD. IN RESPONSE TO THIS SILENT ABUSE, I MUST BE VERBAL, I MUST SPEAK OUT.

I AM HERE TODAY TO ASK YOU, THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS, TO USE YOUR POWER TO BAN SMOKING ON ALL FLIGHTS. HISTORICALLY, WE HAVE HAD TO RELY ON FEDERAL REGULATION AND LEGISLATION TO DO WHAT THE AIRLINES WOULD NOT DO VOLUNTARILY.

IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT PAST, FLIGHT ATTENDANTS WERE REQUIRED TO QUIT OR WERE FIRED WHEN THEY GOT MARRIED, HAD A CHILD, OR REACHED THE AGE OF 32. THE " NO SMOKING" SECTIONS ON AIRCRAFT DID NOT EXIST. SMOKING WAS PERMITTED ON ALL FLIGHTS WHILE IN THE AIR, DURING GROUND DELAYS, AND IN THE LAVATORIES. THE CHANGES EFFECTED OVER THE YEARS GUARANTEEING OUR CIVIL RIGHTS AND IMPROVING CABIN SAFETY HAVE COME ABOUT THROUGH JUDICIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ACTION AND WERE RESISTED BY THE AIRLINES.

THE U.S. AIR CARRIERS, THE FAA, AND THE NTSB SHOULD CARE ABOUT PASSENGER AND CREW HEALTH AND SAFETY. THEY SHOULD HAVE MOVED TO BAN SMOKING ON BOARD ALL U.S. AIRCRAFT AFTER A VARIG AIRLINES 707

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CRASHED IN PARIS, FRANCE IN 1973 KILLING 124 PEOPLE WHEN A LAVATORY CAUGHT FIRE DUE TO PASSENGER SMOKING.

TWENTY THREE PEOPLE WERE BURNED TO DEATH IN A FIRE ABOARD AN AIR CANADA FLIGHT IN 1983 IN CINCINNATI, OHIO. THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAS SINCE BANNED SMOKING ON ALL FLIGHTS WITHIN CANADA AND TO THE U.S.

ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, I HAVE WALKED THROUGH THE AIRCRAFT CABIN TO DISCOVER A BURNING CIGARETTE SMOLDERING ON THE CARPET OR ON THE UPHOLSTERED SEATS WHERE IT HAD BEEN DROPPED. I HAVE EXPERIENCED FIVE FIRES ON MY FLIGHTS FROM SMOKERS. DUE TO THE VIGILANCE OF MYSELF AND THE OTHER FLIGHT ATTENDANTS, THE FIRES WERE PUT OUT QUICKLY.

THE TIME HAS COME FOR A TOTAL BAN ON SMOKING ON BOARD AIRCRAFT IN THE UNITED STATES. CONGRESS NOT ONLY HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY, BUT AN OBLIGATION TO DO SO. IN PAST YEARS, INCIDENTS HAVE PROMPTED ACTION RANGING FROM SECURITY SCREENING FOR ALL CREW MEMBERS TO TAMPER PROOF PRODUCT PACKAGING - ALL DONE WITHOUT EXTENSIVE STUDIES AND TRIAL PERIODS. A PROBLEM WAS IDENTIFIED AND IMMEDIATE CORRECTIVE ACTION WAS TAKEN.

I HAVE IDENTIFIED SUCH A PROBLEM FOR YOU TODAY. THE ABILITY TO REMEDY THE PROBLEM RESTS WITH YOU, THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. BE OUR VOICE . LET THE AMERICAN PUBLIC KNOW WE, THE FLIGHT

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ATTENDANTS, ARE NOT A "DISPOSABLE WORK FORCE." GRANT THE OVER 100,000 FLIGHT ATTENDANTS IN THIS COUNTRY THE BASIC RIGHT TO A HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT.

YOU HAVE ALREADY TAKEN THE FIRST STEP BY BANNING SMOKING ON FLIGHTS UNDER TWO HOURS. HEED THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES SURGEON GENERAL, THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, THE AMERICAN LUNG AND HEART ASSOCIATIONS, THE AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY, AND THE NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE WHICH ARE ALL ON RECORD IN FAVOR OF A TOTAL BAN ON SMOKING ABOARD ALL U. S. AIR CARRIERS.

THE CARRIER INTERESTS ARE MOTIVATED BY MARKETING STRATEGY. WILL YOU ALIGN YOURSELVES WITH THEM OR ACT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD? I AM CONFIDENT YOU WILL MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE. I THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO YOU REGARDING THIS VERY IMPORTANT ISSUE.

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