

Coalition on Smoking OR Health

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March 18, 1991

President George H.W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are informed that Secretary of Health and Human Services Louis Sullivan is prepared to ask you to sign an executive order prohibiting smoking in all federal buildings, with the exception of uniformed services buildings, congressional offices and the Supreme Court. On behalf of the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and the American Lung Association, united as the Coalition on Smoking OR Health, we wish to convey our strong support for this proposal and to urge you to sign this order.

Recently, the Sullivan proposal for the issuance of such an executive order was made public in the press. For this reason, we believe it important that we express our support now for this proposal. The need for such action is clear. According to the United States Surgeon General and the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), environmental tobacco smoke is harmful, and sometimes deadly, to healthy nonsmokers. The 1986 NAS report entitled Environmental Tobacco Smoke, Measuring Exposures and Assessing Health Effects and the 1986 Surgeon General's report entitled The Health Consequences of Involuntary Smoking reached several principal conclusions. These conclusions were reached after examining all of the available, credible scientific evidence by this nation's most respected scientists, and represented the broad consensus of the scientific community. They were:

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AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION



AMERICAN
CANCER

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- Involuntary smoking is a cause of disease, including lung cancer in healthy nonsmokers.
- Involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke increases the frequency of lower respiratory illnesses in infants and young children.
- Involuntary exposure to tobacco smoke increases the occurrences of respiratory symptoms in children and reduces the rate of lung growth as the lung matures.

Studies have indicated that from one-half to three-fourths of nonsmoking adults experience symptomatic effects from environmental tobacco smoke exposure, including eye, nose and throat irritation, headache and nausea, with more severe effects reported in persons with chronic heart or lung disease.

On December 5, 1990, a panel of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Science Advisory Board endorsed the conclusions of a draft report prepared by the EPA that classified environmental tobacco smoke as a Class A carcinogen, the category that the agency reserves for the most dangerous cancer causers, including radon, asbestos and benzene. The final version of this report is expected sometime this summer.

On February 1, 1991, the Centers for Disease Control of the Department of Health and Human Services reported in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report that at least 3,825 nonsmoking Americans die each year from lung cancer attributable to passive smoking. The January 1991 issue of Circulation, an American Heart Association journal, estimated, moreover, that passive smoking causes about ten times as many deaths from heart disease as it does from lung cancer, leading to a total estimate of 53,000 deaths annually in the United States from passive smoking. Secretary Sullivan's proposal is also justified by the data that the problems posed by environmental tobacco smoke are not eliminated by the simple separation of smokers and nonsmokers within the same airspace.

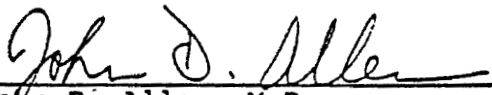
The scientific consensus is clear. The harmful nature of environmental tobacco smoke has been reaffirmed by the objective review of the scientific data by the Surgeon General of the United States, the National Academy of Sciences, the Centers for Disease Control, the Environmental Protection Agency and the World Health Organization. Taking into account the extraordinary amount of evidence now available regarding the harmful effects of environmental tobacco smoke on healthy nonsmokers, as well as the

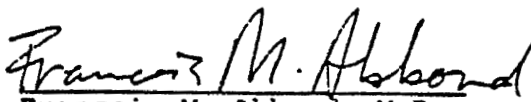
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fact that more than 70 percent of the adult population do not smoke, the time is ripe for signing of the executive order proposed by Secretary Sullivan. While our organizations would prefer that the uniformed services not be exempted, we strongly urge you to sign this order.

Sincerely,


John D. Allen, M.D.
President
American Lung Association


Francois M. Abboud, M.D.
President
American Heart Association


Gerald D. Dodd, M.D.
President
American Cancer Society

cc: Louis Sullivan, M.D.

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