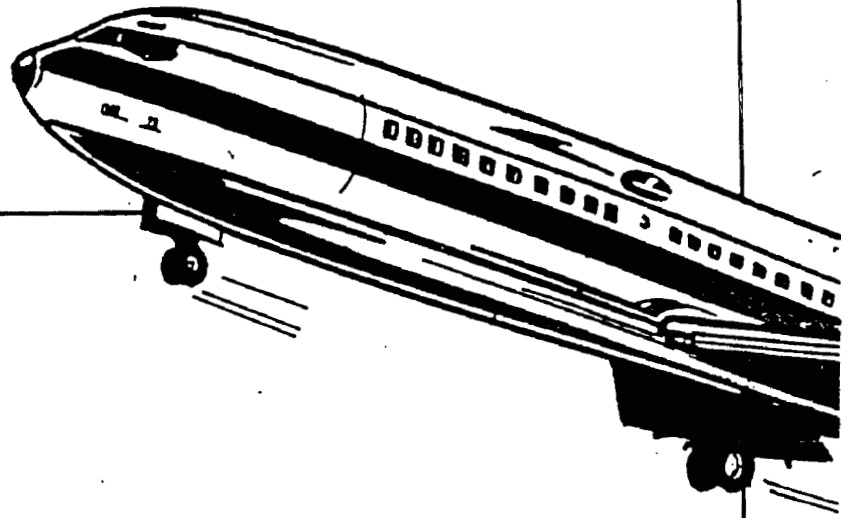


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## AARC Airline Smoking Survey

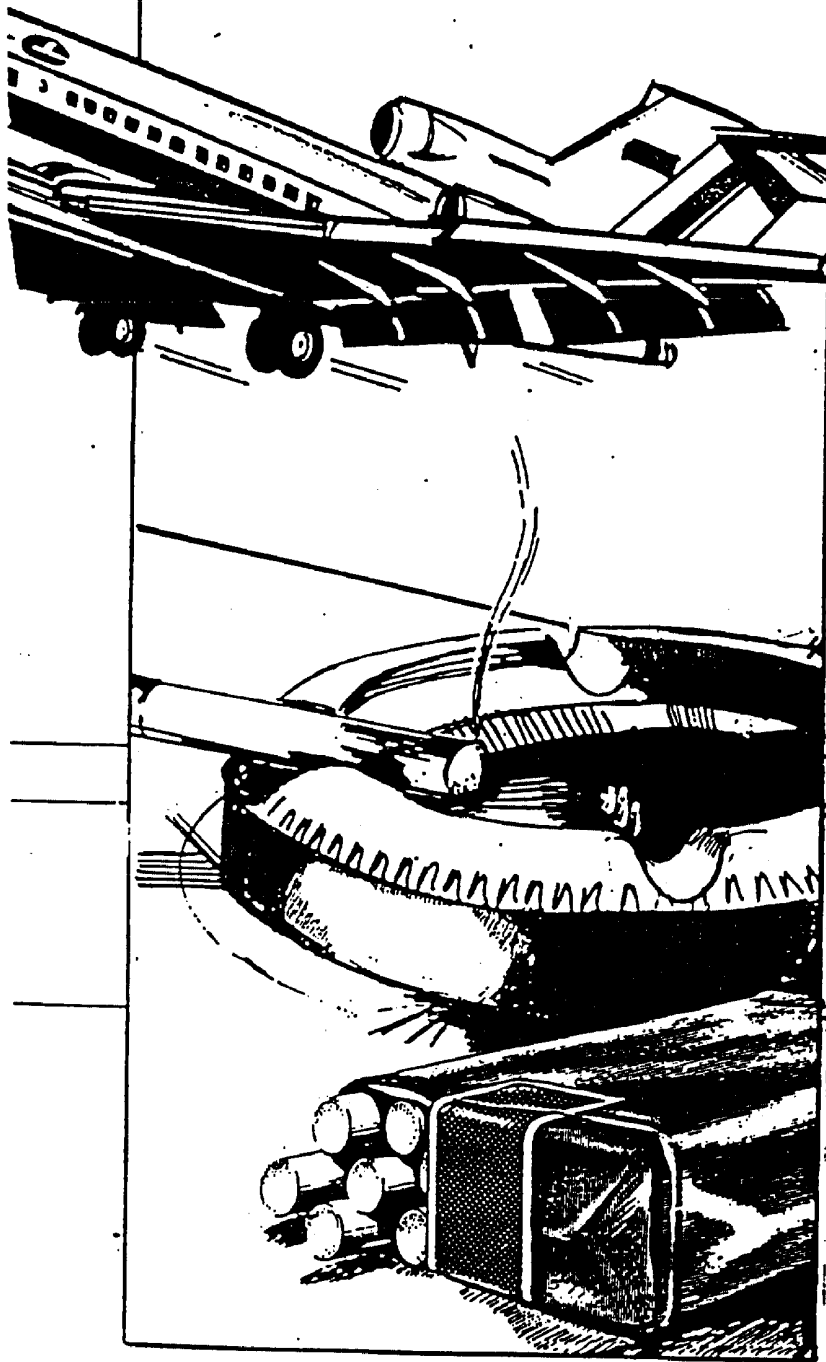
# Airline Passengers Prefer Smoke-Free Environment

by Sherry Milligan

Last November a challenge was put to the AARC House of Delegates: find out how people would feel about a smoking ban on airlines. This November we have the answer, and the national attention focused on our data may contribute toward attaining that goal.

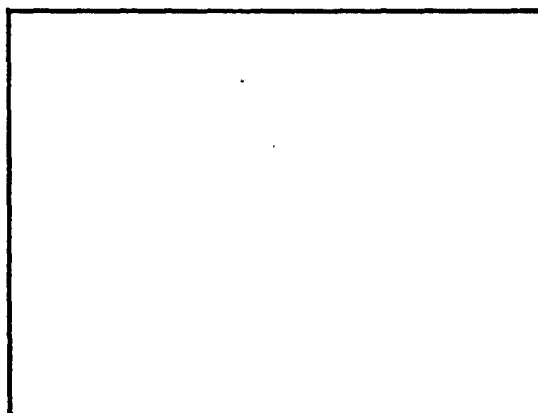
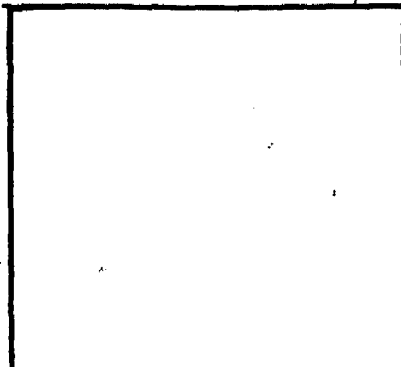
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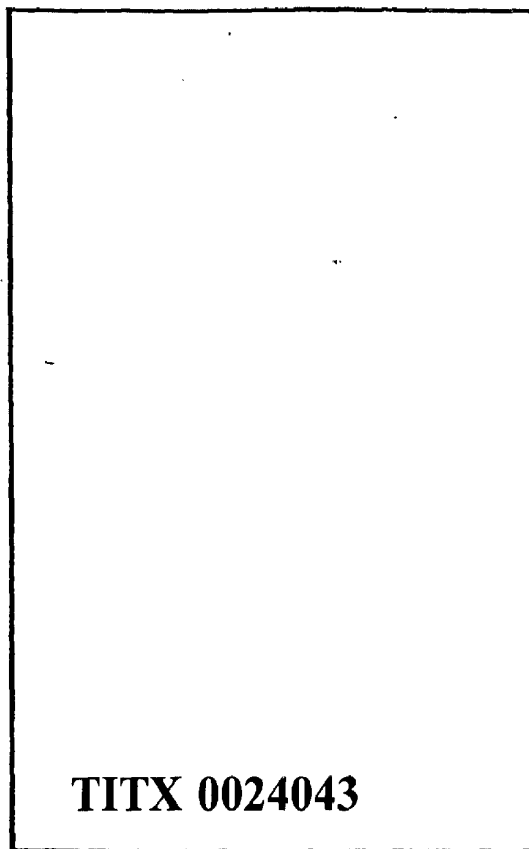


*Dale Griffiths*

The AARC released the results of its airline smoking survey during a press conference in Dallas on September 1, 1987.



*Sam Giordano*



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*Mel Martin*

The survey, believed to be the largest of its kind, asked 33,242 airline passengers if they favored a smoking ban on all commercial airline flights. Sixty-four percent said, "yes," 28% said, "no," and 8% had no opinion. The study was conducted by 39 chartered affiliates this spring. Volunteer respiratory therapists, respiratory therapy technicians, and students polled flyers at 89 airports across the country.

The Association released the results of the survey September 1 at a press conference in Dallas. Presenting information at the press conference were AARC President Mel Martin, 1986 President Jeri Eiserman, and BOMA Chairman Walter O'Donohue, M.D.

Martin, who recapped results of the survey, called for commercial airlines to institute a voluntary smoking ban on all flights. "In preparation for such a ban, the AARC asks airline passengers to 'go cold turkey' during the Thanksgiving holiday," said Martin.

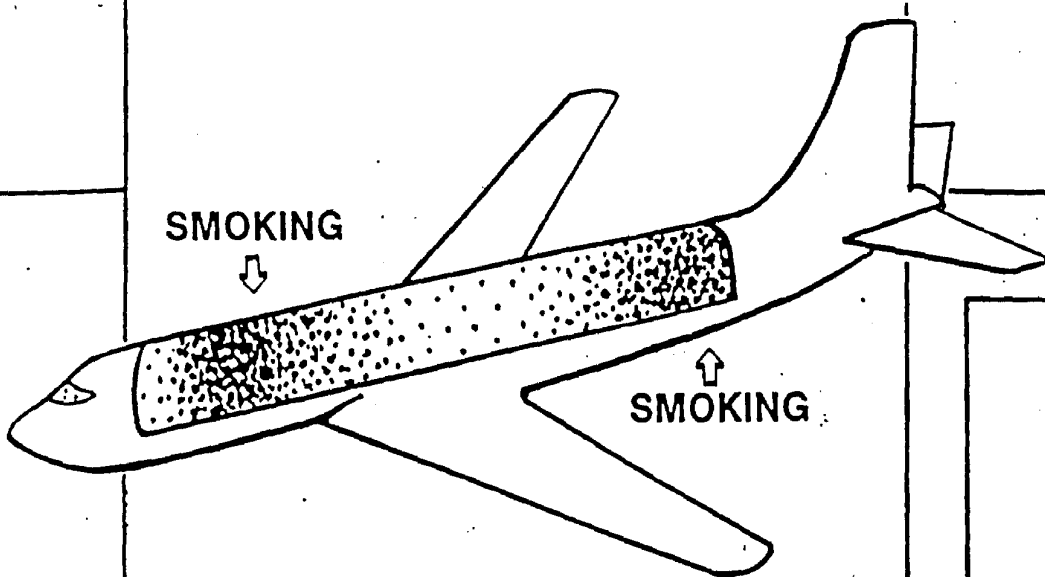
Martin called for the ban at this particular time because the five-day period from Wednesday through Sunday at Thanksgiving is the most heavily traveled time of the year. "Airlines could use this five-day trial to gauge

passenger reactions to smoke-free flying," he said.

Prior to the press conference, major U.S. airlines were contacted regarding their reaction to such a ban. At the time of the press conference no airlines had responded. However, since then American Airlines and Delta Airlines have responded by saying they will look into the issue.

Eiserman, who last year challenged the AARC affiliates to undertake this project, explained why smoking on airlines is of major concern to the Association. "The airline cabin is a unique environment. Unlike other public places, where you could step outside to get a breath of fresh air, the air cabin confines smoke and recirculates it. Everyone on the airplane is smoking, whether actively or passively," she said.

Quoting information from a National Academy of Science report, Eiserman explained that ventilation systems aboard aircraft may not empty smoke as well as those found in other public places. Therefore, smoking and nonsmoking passengers may be exposed to higher concentrations of toxic gases and chemicals. (continued)



## Airline Air Quality Poor

Airplane passengers and crew members often complain about the accumulation of cigarette smoke in the air. The reason may be that ventilation systems aboard aircraft do not remove smoke as well as those in public places.

While reliable scientific tests are difficult to perform aboard aircraft, one calculation presented in a 1986 National Research Council (NRC) report indicates that air quality is not acceptable in 80% of all airplane flights.

Other studies reported by the NRC include:

Records of passenger or flight attendant complaints compiled by the Association of Flight Attendants listed "smoky" as a complaint in 73 of 297 air quality complaints.

A Scandinavian Airlines System study of 1,961 cabin attendants found 69% were "bothered to a great extent" by smoky air. In fact, smoke was the number one complaint — more bothersome than turbulence, noise, or cold.

In conclusion, the National Research Council believes it is unlikely airlines will be able to devise systems to increase ventilation to acceptable levels for the following reasons:

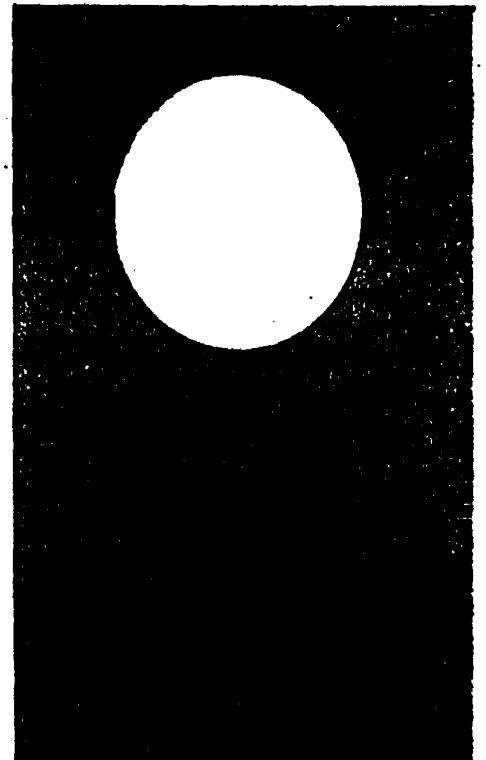
The only source of fresh air for the cabin comes from air passing through the engines. Extracting more air from the engines could result in decreased fuel efficiency, and higher fuel costs.

Physical barriers between smoking and nonsmoking sections as well as separate ventilation systems also appear economically unfeasible.

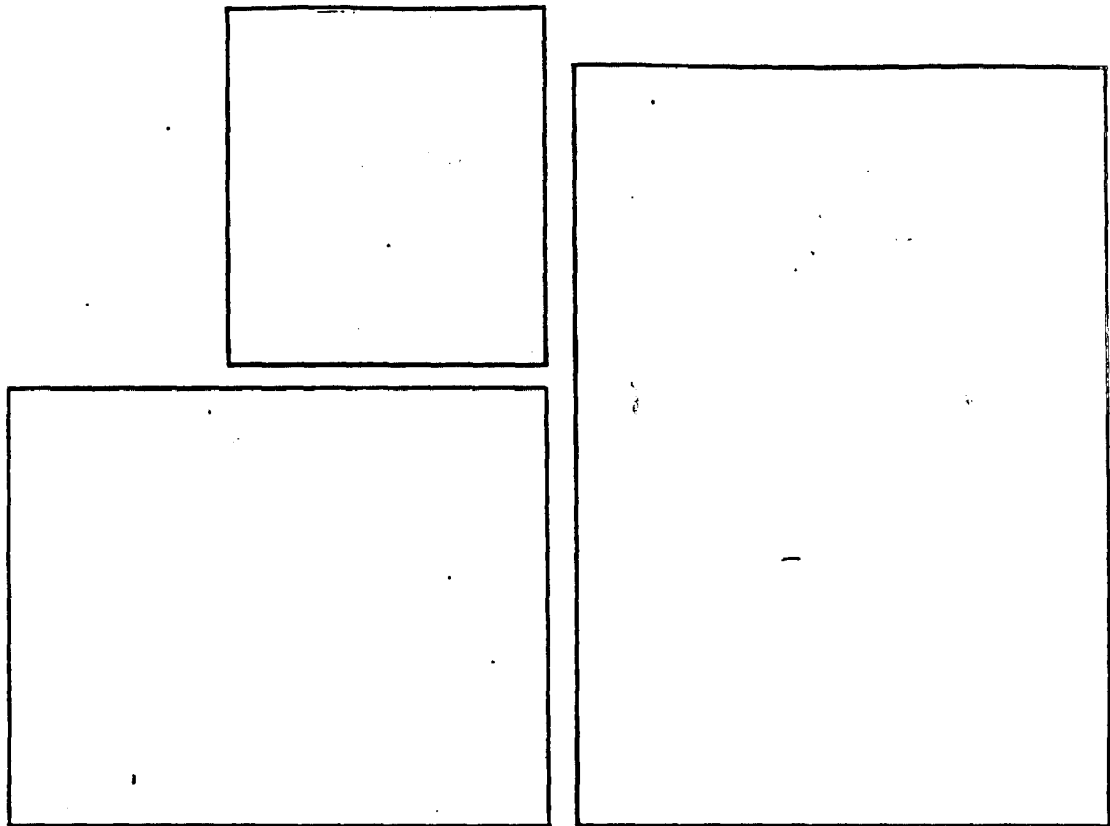
Acceptable filter systems that effectively remove gases and particles from tobacco smoke have not yet been developed.

For these reasons, the American Association for Respiratory Care agrees with the recommendations of the National Research Council: a smoking ban on commercial airlines is the best way of preventing exposure to cigarette smoke.

*Jeri Eiserman*



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*Jeri Eiserman*

Another phenomenon that may cause the environmental smoke problem to be worse on aircraft is that smokers tend to light up at the same time — just after the no-smoking light is turned off and following meals.

Dr. O'Donohue, as the AARC's medical advisor, described how mounting evidence against second-hand smoke should lead airlines to take a close look at this problem. "Nonsmoking wives of smoking husbands have a 3.4 times higher risk of lung cancer than nonsmoking wives of nonsmoking husbands," he said. Additionally, second-hand smoke can trigger attacks of angina as well as exacerbate the problems of people with asthma.

The release of the AARC study may help push through legislation pending in Congress. A bill has already passed the House of Representatives that would ban smoking on flights of two hours or less. Next the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation must consider the bill.

#### **Media focuses attention**

As a result of the AARC's press conference, news stories were released across the country announcing the survey results. Because of their efficiency, "the efforts of our chartered

affiliates may do more toward getting legislation passed than anything else," said Sam Giordano, executive director of the AARC. "Such widespread attention cannot help but have a significant impact on the way the public and our legislators look at this issue." (See charts and other related stories in this issue.)

Giordano praised the efforts of Air Canada, an air carrier that has initiated nonsmoking flights on its Toronto-New York, Toronto-Newark, and Montreal-New York flights. "Surveys conducted during this period showed that 96% of passengers would continue to choose Air Canada on those routes," said Giordano. A spokesman for Air Canada said that ticket sales had not declined since the introduction of those nonsmoking flights.

#### **A new challenge**

This study, the largest of its kind, cannot help but have an impact. It shows without a doubt that airline passengers would like to see no smoking in the skies.

While people are clustered around their dining room tables this Thanksgiving having a hot turkey dinner, we hope they'll be going "cold turkey" in the air. ●

# Several No-Smoking Laws Proposed

If airlines do not voluntarily institute a smoking ban, they may be forced to do so by law.

Presently, five proposed pieces of legislation are before Congress that would prohibit smoking onboard commercial aircraft. Two more bills would have the same effect by prohibiting smoking in public places.

Proposed legislation to target airlines for smoking bans:

- An amendment to the Transportation Appropriations Bill would prohibit smoking on flights of two hours or less. The bill that includes this amendment passed the House of Representatives July 13. The Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation is considering the amendment after a recess through Labor Day. Congressman Richard Durbin (D-IL) sponsored the amendment in the House.

- HR432 Congressman James Scheuer (D-NY) has proposed a smoking ban on all domestic commercial flights.

- HR1078 Congressman Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) has proposed a smoking ban on all domestic commercial flights.

- HR2040 Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA) has proposed a smoking ban on all domestic and international commercial flights.

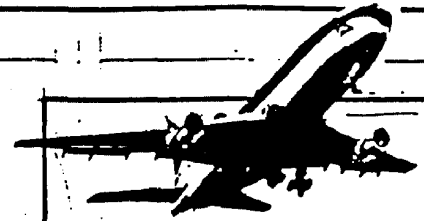
- HR3016 Congressman Jim Bates (D-CA) has proposed a smoking ban on passenger-carrying aircraft on flights of two hours or less.

Other proposed bills would ban smoking on airplanes through broader legislation:

- S51 Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT) has proposed legislation that would prohibit smoking on all public conveyances.

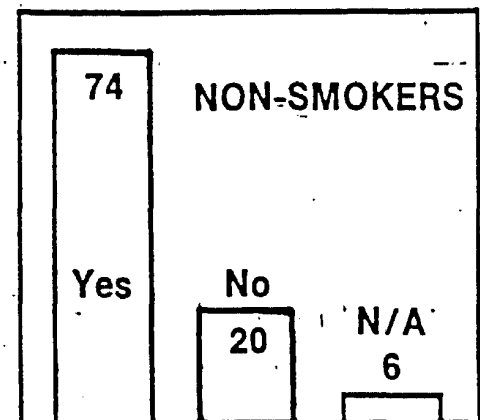
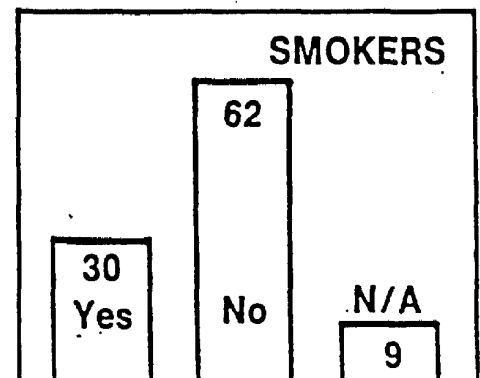
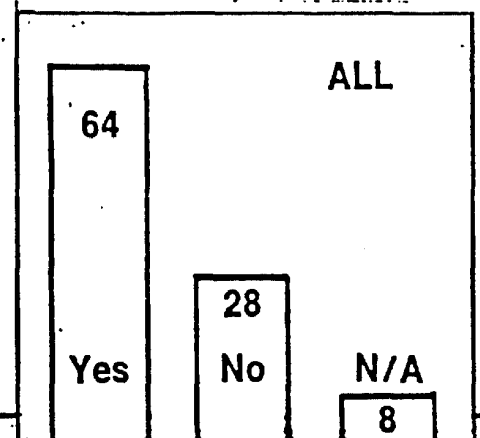
- HR1008 Congressman James Scheuer (D-NY) has proposed legislation that would restrict smoking in all government buildings.

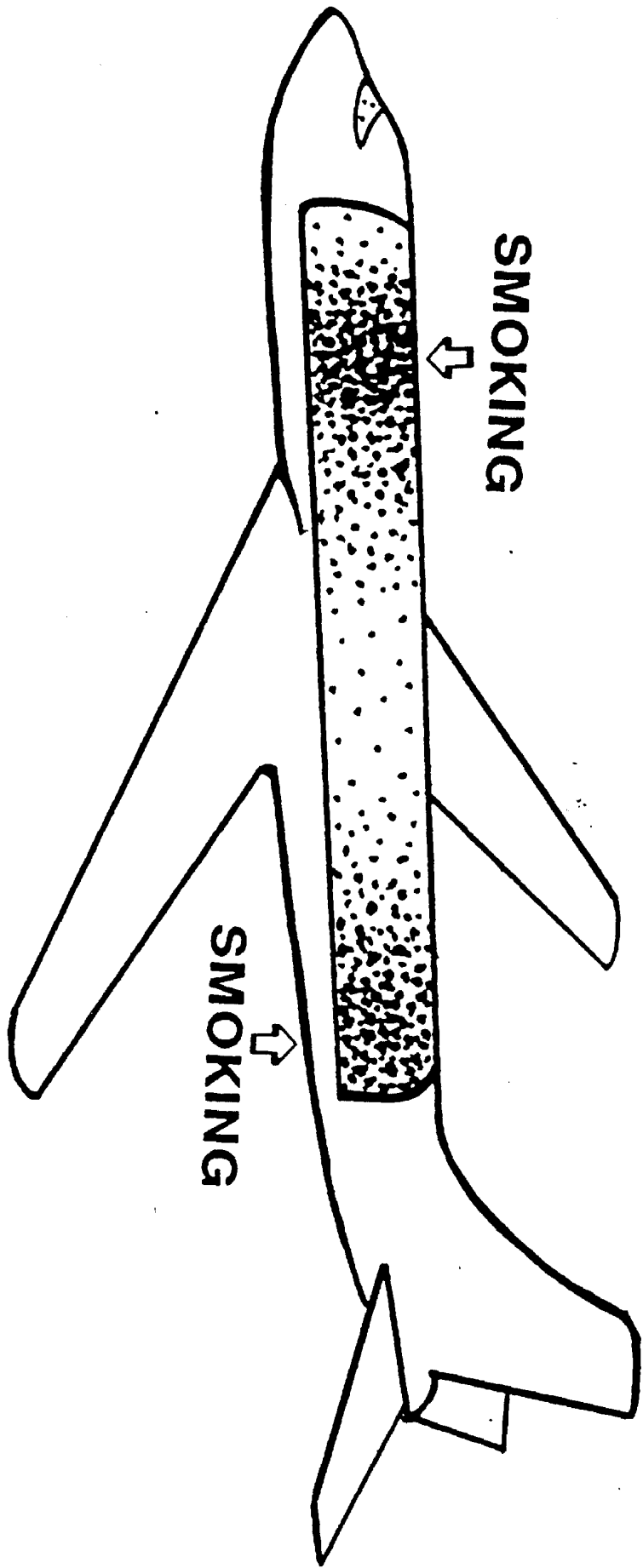
Although a number of states have passed legislation that restricts or bans smoking in public places, currently, no such federal laws have been passed. However, buildings operated by the General Services Administration, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Health and Human Services have smoking restrictions by regulation, not law.



## Smoking Survey Results

Do you favor a ban of smoking on all commercial airlines?





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