

Revised

REPORT ON IAQ MODEL LAW TASK FORCE PUBLIC COMMENTS HEARING

WASHINGTON, D.C.

AUGUST 7, 1992

Reported by:

Richard M. Silberman

Healthy Buildings International

10378 Democracy Lane

Fairfax, VA 22030

TI DN 0024105

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This document reports on the IAQ Model Law Task Force public comment hearing on August 7, 1992. This hearing took place at the Hall of States building located at 444 North Capitol Street in Washington, D.C.

Overview

The objective of this hearing was to give an opportunity to those parties interested to publicly voice comments on the work of the Task Force. Four organizations chose to speak. Summaries of their comments appear below. Many other organizations will likely provide written comments before the September 1 deadline. A list of those organizations considering comments is attached.

The objective of this hearing was not to give a detailed account of the Task Force's work to date to the public. That is being communicated by various handouts which are attached. The only substantial information given by the Task Force was by Ed Light. Mr. Light is an industrial hygienist who runs his own IAQ firm in this area called Pathway Diagnostics. He was chosen as one of the advisors to the Scientific & Technical Review group.

Ed Light

Mr. Light introduced himself and the American Industrial Hygienists Association (AIHA). He said their goal is to provide technical support to the effort; they have no feelings on a proper regulatory approach on this, or if any regulation is even needed at all. The paper is intended to be general. IAQ is not easily amenable to regulation - it's a complex issue. His experience has been that only 1 of 5 people complain of pollutants; the majority is thermal comfort. Much of IAQ is common sense. He referenced the new EPA book for building owners.

*** Mr. Light said that only a small number of IAQ complaints can be traced back to specific pollutants which can be quantifiable. Often the problem is due to poor ventilation which concentrate pollutants. He said that the Task Force needs to look at State resources. Traditional state personnel will not be qualified for IAQ.

*** It is this reviewer's opinion, from both Mr. Light's comments as well as the handouts, that the Task Force is moving towards a model law based on a Building Systems approach. They are not focusing on individual sources, including tobacco smoke.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chuck Murow (spelling?) - ASHRAE

ASHRAE will be updating the current energy standard to reflect the current IAQ standard (62-1989).

Jim Dinegar - BOMA

BOMA is still gun-shy from experience with asbestos legislation. They will be opposing IAQ model law legislation at every step of the process. Current market forces are sufficient for good IAQ.

TI DN 0024106

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"Regulation won't hold a candle to market forces." BOMA has a knee-jerk reaction to legislation. The EPA document is out 15 years too late. More information is needed.

*** Governments and municipalities need to ban smoking. Building owners can't do it due to market forces. Sources must be attacked. ETS is a major pollutant in the workplace. He doesn't believe it's possible to properly separate smokers from non-smokers - in spite of Ed Light declaring his experience to the contrary. No more research is needed. He cited his experience with smoking lounges from high school.

Responsibilities of tenants and occupants need to be incorporated into any legislation. Appropriate legislation calls for more research. He pointed out that privately owned buildings are almost always healthier than government buildings. BOMA is happy with some provisions within state laws. The complaint driven NJ law has complaint levels which are too high for 1st action.

Steve Rissoto - BCIA

He introduced BCIA and its philosophy of "reasonable source management program in conjunction with building systems approach." Strong support of federal (not state) strategy based on OSHA. 90% of EPA document is building systems approach. BCIA encourages postponement of this effort until more research and deliberation is performed.

Cited example of airliners banning smoking along with reduced ventilation as ill-guided strategy. Preached proactive monitoring rather than reactive.

*** See attached outline of BCIA comments to Task Force

Bill Borwegan - Service Employees Union

Agrees with BCIA - effort is moving too quickly. The task force is not getting enough comments from people actively working in buildings. Their organization is currently too wrapped up in the election.

New Jersey law a good model, but too complaint driven. His experience with carbon dioxide is that problems occur over 600 ppm, not 1,000 ppm. There is now a high rate of Tuberculosis among health care workers which is IAQ driven. He believes that asbestos has still not been adequately addressed in the U.S. This legislation should require building owners to look for asbestos as well.

This reviewer commented to him that a recent presentation given to a professional association of health care employees revealed that the feeling in the industry is that the greatest current cause of the spread of infectious disease in hospitals (though not necessarily Tuberculosis) is workers not washing their hands enough. This is another example of building owners and managers being blamed for the actions, or non-actions, of tenants.

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