

S. 1440

Smoking Restrictions in Federal Buildings

Unfair

S. 1440 would restrict the use of tobacco in all U.S. Government buildings throughout the world. The rights of persons desiring to smoke and those desiring not to smoke are subjects deserving careful consideration, but not more government regulation.

Smoking regulations set up a natural confrontation between workers, visitors, management and employees. By polarizing workers, they are likely to lead to low morale and productivity. Common sense and courtesy towards others is the time-honored way to settle such disputes over personal custom. If restrictions are necessary they should be developed by mutual consent on the job site.

Organized labor opposes S. 1440 because "it infringes on the collective bargaining process, imposing arbitrary work rules irrespective of individual workers and worksites."

Unnecessary

There has been no demand for this legislation from federal workers, who are the people who would be most directly affected.

The bill makes a series of "findings" which are not supported by data. The bill finds, for example, "that numerous studies have shown second-hand smoke to be a significant health hazard." In fact, numerous studies contradict this finding.

Unworkable

The Administrator of the General Services Administration would be required by the bill to implement regulations in Departments as diverse as Defense and Health and Human Services. Are considerations for restrictions the same in V.A. Hospitals and our embassies abroad? Most Federal Departments and agencies already have regulations restricting workplace smoking. There is simply no need for a new antismoking bureaucracy.

Expensive

More Federal programs to burden the American taxpayer are particularly unwelcome at a time when federal deficits are a major concern. Dr. Robert Tollison of George Mason University, estimates that implementing S. 1440 could cost more than \$500 million annually.

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