

June 30, 1986

Director
General Services Administration (PMFS)
Washington DC 20405

Sir:

Recently, I read of a proposed ban on smoking in all federal buildings except in designated areas and private offices. I am writing to oppose the proposed regulations.

I am not a federal employee. However, in my occupation, I regularly enter many federal buildings and buildings controlled by the federal government. I am also not a smoker.

I believe the proposed regulation is unnecessary, unworkable and unfair.

The proposed regulation would impose a single, inflexible regime upon all federal employees and all citizens doing business in federal facilities. In most instances, each facility and/or each area is better able to determine what if any policy is needed. There is no apparent ultimate need to over-ride this more normal and effective approach. For those who unwittingly violate the regulation, penalties could be severe. For those who use the regulation as a tool of harassment, its inflexibility is ideal.

Ours is a country which prides itself upon its diversity and opportunity. This regulation is not consistent with the basic philosophy of this country.

Furthermore, the proposed regulation is inconsistent with the philosophy of the President and the majority of citizens of the US. President Reagan and the majority believe that the best government is a government which governs least.

Secondly, the proposed regulation is unworkable because simply imposing it without making other needed changes in workplace working conditions and other ancillary rules will impose the most harsh requirements upon smokers. They will be subjected to a significant change in workplace conditions without compensation or consideration of any kind.

Finally, the proposed regulation is unfair because it creates a second-class of citizen within federal facilities: the smoker. He/she will not be permitted to work competitively for the best working reports. He/she will not be able to work as effectively and, hence, will not be as likely to be as efficient.

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If and when a smoker-employee is found to have violated the regulation, he/she could be subjected to disciplinary actions unlike any other and not related in any meaningful way to work quality or work productivity.

It must be said too that there are many workplace "conditions" not now regulated by GSA or any other agency each of which could be of equal or greater importance to the quality of the workplace environment and the efficiency and effectiveness of federal employees.

GSA has apparently chosen to focus upon one facet of the workplace and at the same time to ignore others which are important to all workers and which could benefit all workers.

I urge GSA to set aside this proposed regulation and to more carefully examine the full range of workplace working conditions, prioritize them and address the most important ones first. The proposed smoking policy has significant costs attached to it and does not appear to have any likelihood of resulting in greater efficiency. It is an entirely negative proposal. It is ill-advised, unjustified and unfortunate.

What has been proposed should be abandoned.

Respectfully,

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