

Tobacco Action Network
1875 I Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006

July 17, 1987

Dear Tan Activist:

Never was the old saw, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!," more applicable than right now! And we need your help to make sure members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations realize that is the case.

I am referring to an imminent move by the Senate Appropriations Committee to ban smoking on most, or perhaps all, airplane flights in the United States. Subcommittee action is likely to occur next week, with full Committee action following very soon. The measure is being discussed as an amendment to the Department of Transportation (DOT) 1988 appropriations bill.

Next week the Subcommittee on Transportation will hear arguments for and against such an airline smoking ban. If you agree that such a ban is unfair and unnecessary -- please contact your Senator immediately -- and let your lawmaker know you object strongly to a smoking ban. A list of Senators serving on the Appropriations Committee may be found at the end of this message.

There are several compelling reasons to oppose such action:

- . Smoking aboard aircraft is already sharply restricted; every passenger is guaranteed a "no-smoking" seat -- even if a smoking section must be reduced or eliminated to satisfy that guarantee.
- . In a recent poll conducted by the airline pilots association (ALPA), 87% of respondents agreed that the "current practice of separating smoking and non-smoking passengers is a reasonable policy that respects the rights of each." Current policy is working and the flying public agrees.
- . Recent D.O.T. consumer complaint data consistently show no more than a single smoking complaint for each one million passengers -- and smoking complaints are declining in real terms and relative to all other consumer concerns.
- . Indeed, a recent ALPA poll suggests passengers agree that the most negative aspects of flying are flight delays, crowded conditions and poor service in general -- smoking hardly registers a blip on the radar of public opinion.
- . The D.O.T. -- the expert department in this area -- believes such a ban is not necessary at this time. On the question of an airline smoking ban the D.O.T. said "...We believe that further study is needed before the department can propose a definitive response to this recommendation [to ban smoking]."

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- . All major in-flight tests of tobacco smoke conducted since 1971 have concluded the amount of cigarette smoke detected aboard flights is extremely small, posing no demonstrated risk to non-smoking passengers or flight personnel.
- . Further, despite proclamations by the Surgeon General and others, a joint communique from leaders of an environmental tobacco smoke workshop, held in Vienna, Austria, in 1984 in cooperation with the International Green Cross, is still valid: "Should lawmakers wish to take legislative measures with regard to passive smoking, they will, for the present, not be able to base their efforts on a demonstrated health hazard from passive smoking."
- . Concern that airline smoking poses a fire hazard is also unwarranted. An independent study by the National Transportation Safety Board concluded none of the airline fires studied (65 fires between 1970-1984) were positively determined to have been smoking related. In fact, a smoking ban could create a dangerous on-board fire hazard by encouraging surreptitious smoking, especially in airline rest rooms.

It is quite clear that the vast majority of the flying public is satisfied with existing airline smoking rules. It is equally obvious that those in a position to know -- the D.O.T., Airline Pilots Association, Air Transport Association, Airport Operators Council, American Association of Airport Executives, American Society of Travel Agents -- appear satisfied with the current smoker/non-smoker section setup and oppose bans.

Clearly, this is a case of -- If it ain't broke, don't fix it! Please CALL AND WRITE your senator -- TODAY! All senators may be reached by calling and writing:

Honorable _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510
Telephone: 202-224-3121

Senator Daniel K. Inouye.....(Hawaii)
Senator Ernest F. Hollings.....(South Carolina)
Senator J. Bennett Johnston.....(Louisiana)
Senator Quentin N. Burdick.....(North Dakota)
Senator Jim Sasser.....(Tennessee)
Senator Dennis DeConcini.....(Arizona)
Senator Dale Bumpers.....(Arkansas)

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Senator Frank R. Lautenberg.....(New Jersey)
Senator Tom Harkin.....(Iowa)
Senator Barbara Mikulski.....(Maryland)
Senator Harry Reid.....(Nevada)
Senator Mark O. Hatfield.....(Oregon)
Senator Ted Stevens.....(Alaska)
Senator James A. McClure.....(Idaho)
Senator Jake Garn.....(Utah)
Senator Thad Cochran.....(Mississippi)
Senator Arlen Specter.....(Pennsylvania)
Senator Pete V. Domenici.....(New Mexico)
Senator Charles E. Grassley.....(Iowa)
Senator Don Nickles.....(Oklahoma)

Thanks again for all your help. One last favor -- If you can,
please send me a copy of your correspondence to your senator.

Sincerely,



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National Tan Director

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