

MEMORANDUM

May 10, 1984

To: William Kloepfer
From: Susan Stuntz *sm8*
Re: Hearing on S 1935

The tobacco industry was the hero of the day, according to most witnesses testifying before the Senate Governmental Affairs subcommittee on information management and regulatory affairs today. Senators, burn victims, proponents of "fire safe" cigarettes and representatives of fire organizations all commended the industry for its support of the amended S 1935, which calls for a federal study into the feasibility of manufacturing a more "fire safe" cigarette.

Press coverage was light.

Sen. Heinz (R-Pa.) led off the witness list, commending the industry for its support of an effort "that is so clearly in the public interest." He admitted that human carelessness plays a major role in death and loss due to fires, but said "there is nothing we can do legislatively to keep a private citizen from falling asleep in bed with a lighted cigarette in his hand."

Sen. Cranston (D-Cal.) told the subcommittee he is convinced production of a safer cigarette is economically and technically possible. The study proposed in S 1935, he said, is the first step toward that goal.

The only senators present on the subcommittee, Danforth (R-Mo.) and Roth (R-Del.), described the compromise as a "remarkable agreement" and a "major step forward," respectively. Roth, noting he is chairman of the full committee, said he hoped to send it to the Senate floor at the next mark-up session. He said he will propose an amendment giving the U.S. Fire Administration responsibility for chairing the interagency task force.

Burn victims comprised the next panel, with Phoenix Society director Alan Breslau saying he was "sincerely grateful" to the industry for supporting the legislation. "I am confident that the industry, with its brilliant technologists," will be able to come up with a solution to the problem of cigarette-related fire deaths and injuries, he said.

Citizens Comm. for Fire Protection's Art Delibert led off the fire community panel, endorsing the agreement and supporting CPSC as chairman of the interagency committee. The fight, he cautioned, is far from over. He claimed TI expects such a study to disprove advocates of "fire safe" cigarettes. "We expect a fair study to show just the opposite," he said.

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Although National Fire Protection Assn.'s John Girard cautioned against getting "bogged down in niggling" over who heads the study group, all other fire representatives testified in favor of USFA chairing the commission. "This is a fire problem, not a health problem," said National Volunteer Fire Council's Jim Monihan. All commended the tobacco industry for its efforts.

TI's Walker Merryman cautioned that the study does not guarantee a technical breakthrough. He also promised the industry would continue its fire prevention education programs. He told Danforth that, if the study determines a "fire-safe" cigarette is possible, he "doubts" further regulation would be necessary. "The modifications would be made as soon as possible." John Rupp, responding to another Danforth question, said the industry would consider a request to remove the exemption from the paperwork reduction act currently in the bill.

The Burn Council's Andy McGuire, assuring the committee he had not been "bought off," came out firmly in favor of the bill, commending Peter Sparber, Walker Merryman and John Rupp as "forward thinking individuals" responsible for pushing the compromise through. He would not comment on whether he thought a "fire safe" cigarette was possible, saying he preferred to "let the study tell us."

cc: Mr. Kornegay
Mr. Chilcote
Mr. Liebengood
Mr. Milway
Mr. Mozingo
Dr. Schafer
Mr. Sparber
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Mr. Vinovich
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