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President

July 17, 1986

MEMORANDUM: Peter Sparber
Susan Stuntz
The Tobacco Institute

John Rupp
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FROM: Philip Schaenman *PS*

SUBJECT: Comments on Fire Safe Cigarette Technical Study Group,
July 10-11, 1986

The following mostly are comments on side meetings I had in connection with the Study Group meeting. (I assume you all have access to the minutes of the meeting, and hear about the official proceedings from other sources).

1. Richard Gann, the Study Group chairman, told me that much laboratory work already has been completed on the experimental cigarettes. He feels they have identified some cigarettes that are more fire safe than current ones. He did not say which of the variations led to this conclusion.

He also said that there would be no further data released from the project until the final report. The interim report has led to such controversy that he wants to avoid having any more specific technical data on the table until the final report. This may mean not hearing about results until it is too late. You probably want to encourage at least verbal summaries to be put on the table if Gann is not planning to do that already. He also complained that he was not getting inputs from other Study Group members as to what research should be undertaken, and that it was falling on him to define the specifics.

2. Elizabeth McLoughlin attended the meeting. She is back from working on flammable fabric studies in New Zealand. She is working directly for Andy McGuire in the San Francisco General Hospital's trauma center. She will be working primarily but not exclusively on fire-related studies, and clearly will be a keen observer of the fire safe cigarette work. She is planning to broaden her efforts to other types of injuries, and is seeking grants from the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, which is now branching into Injury Data. She also met with the CPSC fire hierarchy while at the meeting. I was invited to join this meeting because of my recent work with CPSC on apparel fires.

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3. CPSC has its entire "fire hierarchy" at each of these meetings. Jim Hoebel, Jim Sharman, and Bea Harwood attend in addition to their official Study Group member (Cohn) and their administrative coordinator for the Study Group, Colin Church.

There is a real possibility that CPSC will be changed into a unit of the Food and Drug Administration. Apparently there was a bureau of consumer safety at FDA prior to the existence of CPSC, and they may return from whence they came. CPSC staff is unhappy about this, and about the reduction in their fire related activity. They had put flammable nightwear for the elderly at the top of their priority list for fiscal '88, but their executive director has struck it down from being a top priority. That will leave them time to focus on other fire issues in fiscal '88 with the limited time they will have available.

4. It is evident the cost effectiveness modeling part of the technical study group is off in fairyland. They are developing sophisticated models that will have a wide (least certain) range of inputs and produce a wide range for the outputs. There is great potential for misleading results the way they are proceeding. Those on the Study Group who understand something about modeling are trying to point this out in a genteel way, but it is not fazing the PhD economist modelers at all.

5. Lee Stanford gave me a copy of John Hall's (NFPA) proposed approach and some statistics for his data section of the study. Hall flatly states in his draft that there will be great uncertainty in trying to estimate the reduction in cigarette fires or losses because of the difficulty in bridging the gap between the NBS lab work and its potential meaning in the real world. This absolutely critical transition is packaged as part of the small data effort Hall is undertaking, while others are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars building models to interpret what will happen based on this estimated loss reduction. To me the balance in research is ludicrous. It may make it easy to discredit any findings from the study.

6. Collecting data on cigarette brands involved in fires: Chief McGibeny of Daytona Beach told the Study Group how difficult it would be to get fire fighters to collect data on brands of cigarettes and to collect samples of the furniture substrates involved in actual fires. Dr. Press is still pressing for a collection of brands involved in fires, and so is Bea Harwood of CPSC. Unless there really are one or two cigarettes that are involved in fires disproportionate to their usage, the distribution of brands found in fires is more likely to reflect the preferences of low income smokers (who have a disproportionate share of fires) than it is brands with higher ignition propensity. Without a very large data collection effort, it will not be possible to separate out the socioeconomic effects from others. Also, Dr. Press reported that Olin Greene State Fire Marshal of Oregon, was cooperating with him on collecting cigarette data, but the voluntary request of the fire service yielded only two or three cases over a few months' period.

7. Garry Briese, IAFC Executive Director, appeared before the Study Group to re-endorse its efforts and to volunteer assistance. Specifically, he volunteered five to ten metropolitan cities considered to be good in arson investigation to report their cigarette-related fires. He noted that the time to plan and conduct such a study would be about a year. Henry Tovey, on the panel, said that the data would be valuable even if it came in past the end of the study. Tovey also said that he thought that there would be many loose ends remaining after the Committee ceased operations, and that additional data would help posterity on the issue.

Briese further volunteered to assist the Committee in obtaining its funding. He said that his information was that the Committee has not secured its \$600k budget, and that in fact the \$600k was not even submitted in any bill at the present time. He further said that the IAFC would lobby for the money, and would also try to obtain funds from HHS or another agency if the Congress did not provide the full amount.

Briese also encouraged the Study Group to issue news releases and not just minutes of its meeting. He said that most of the fire service does not know what is going on in the Study Group.

8. Chief McGibeny agreed for me to interview him for our new TI pub. ed. project the next time he comes to town for one of the Study Group meetings. He will also let his city manager, Howard Tipton, former administrator of USFA, know that I would like to interview him by phone.

9. Henry Tovey told me in a private conversation that he was going to write a letter to the Study Group chairman to complain that too much effort was being spent on the cost effectiveness modeling and too little on the key issue of whether the laboratory results could be extrapolated to a real world reduction in fire losses. Alex Spears also pointed this out during the discussion.

10. In a side conversation with Andrew McGuire, he said that the insurance industry was the main cause of the fire problem. They needed fires to make money, did not care about public education, and were the only large industry that was totally unregulated at the national level. He has funded a public health researcher from Harvard to look into the insurance industry's negative impact on the fire problem. The latest ISFSI newsletter has a several page article summarizing the results of the study. It is highly relevant to our new study on public fire education. McGuire thought it would be useful to interview his researcher, which I plan to do. (This will give us an opportunity to work with McGuire on a topic of mutual interest!)

11. James Keane, State Representative of the 20th district of the Illinois legislature, was to have appeared but instead had Rick Shell of the State's Washington office read his remarks. Keane was stimulated into action by Tom O'Connell, who is his constituent in Chicago. Keane reintroduced state legislation regarding fire safe cigarettes this spring in Illinois, and plans to keep the legislation alive and under study, but

not go to a vote while the federal study is pending and making progress. In their bill (No. 63), the Illinois State Fire Marshal would be responsible for setting the standards for the cigarette. (It has been referred to the Registration and Regulation Sub-committee for resolving technical details.) Keane wants the standard to be a federal standard if possible, but if there is no federal standard he plans to push it anyhow. Dick Gann volunteered to Keane's representative that the Study Group would be glad to make its information available to any state legislators, so that if there is not federal legislation there still could be state legislation. Gann in a private conversation likened Keane's role to Grannis's in New York.

