

HBI-USA
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HBI

Healthy Buildings International, Inc.

October 19, 1990

Ms. Kay Thomas
The Tobacco Institute
1875 I Street, N.W.
Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Kay:

This letter is to inform you of some of the discussions at the symposium sponsored by the Consumer Federation of America titled, "Indoor Air Quality: Problems and Solutions." This symposium was held at the Washington Plaza Hotel, in Washington, D.C., on October 18 and 19, 1990.

Although you are probably already aware, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced that there will be a public meeting of the Science Advisory Board on the two environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) draft documents. This will be held on December 4 and 5, 1990. The details of this meeting will be published in the Federal Register. Ms. Feldman from the EPA also publicly stated that her agency prefers a buildings systems approach over pollutant-by-pollutant method for indoor air quality (IAQ) mitigation.

This issue was brought up again during the session on building maintenance, when the Business Council on Indoor Air's (BCIA) summary of their "building systems approach" was read by David Swankin as the prelude to the session. I asked afterward if the panel agreed with their statement. They all did; however, Hal Levin later added that the buildings systems argument is used as a smoke-screen by large industries, including the tobacco industry, to shift the blame from their products. He also criticized the BCIA for allowing board membership "to anyone with \$15,000 to spare."

Elsewhere, David Bearg, reacting to a loaded question by Jerome Wesolowski from the California Department of Health, opined that IAQ consultants should recommend to building managers that they should oblige tenants not to smoke in their buildings, or oblige them to fit dedicated exhaust systems. He recommends a clause in their contracts outlining this.

On a more positive note, there was general agreement that use of TLVs and PELs are not the best way to solve indoor air quality problems; industrial hygienists have their place, but are only part of a larger picture. The consensus was that building diagnostics should include engineering assessments and corrections to the building itself by qualified individuals, and measurements of air contaminants only was considered a partial answer at best. Bill Borwegan of SEIU was very helpful as a panel member in getting this point across.

The American Lung Association (ALA) representative gave a short presentation in which ETS was hardly mentioned; he announced that this week had been proclaimed by the ALA as the "Radon Action Week." Unfortunately, when he asked, only about five people in the audience of well over a hundred indoor air specialists, indicated they had ever heard of it. This may indicate that the ALA's publicity machine is in need of some oiling.

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I enclose the information package distributed at the conference. Please note the positive statement by BOMA which is somewhat inflammatory and may require some rebuttal. A direct rebuttal by HBI; however, would need to be handled carefully as BOMA represents almost all our property manager clients.

Finally, a note on the lunchtime speech by Congressman Joseph Kennedy. His subject was his IAQ bill and his personal ignorance of the issue astounds me, although I suppose it should not. The bill died in the Energy and Commerce Committee this year and he blamed it on "Special Interest Groups," a phrase he used a dozen times. Even on questioning, he didn't elaborate on which specific special interest groups killed this bill; although he mentioned that it will, of course, be back next year.

Please call me if you have any further questions.

With best regards,


Simon Turner

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Enclosure