

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

October 3, 1984

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FIRE SAFE CIGARETTE LEGISLATION PASSES CONGRESS

Congressman Joe Moakley (D-Mass), Senator John Heinz (R-Penn) and Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif) enthusiastically hailed the passage today of the Cigarette Safety Act (H.R. 1880/S. 1935/S. 51), legislation authorizing a federal review of the ignition propensity of cigarettes to ignite upholstered furniture and mattresses.

"The passage of this legislation is a major step toward ending cigarette ignited fire deaths in the United States," declared Rep. Moakley. "Each year thousands of people, many of them innocent children, are senselessly injured or killed as the result of the careless use of cigarettes. This historic step is the first toward ending this injustice."

"With this bill on the President's desk, the Congress, the tobacco industry, and national consumer and fire service groups put aside ten years of differences and are acting in unison for the public good," stated Sen. Heinz. "As Chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, I feel this bill is of special importance for America's 29 million senior citizens, who we know to be the most likely victims in home fires caused by cigarettes."

"Tobacco industry support of this study represents a turnaround by the industry which opposed legislation I originally introduced in 1980 to encourage the manufacture of fire-safe cigarettes," added Sen. Cranston. "I believe this study will support my contention that such a cigarette is economically and technologically possible. If we continue to get the cooperation of the tobacco industry, I expect that within four to five years, all cigarettes on the market will be fire-safe."

Congressional sponsors of the Cigarette Safety Act, which was originally introduced in 1979, saw a major breakthrough earlier this year when the Tobacco Institute, the trade association of tobacco product manufacturers, abandoned their long-standing opposition to fire-safe cigarette legislation and endorsed a compromise proposal.

The compromise calls for an intergovernmental agency review of the cigarette fire issue with the assistance of the tobacco industry, the fire service, the medical community and the furniture industry. Under the legislation a technical study will be submitted to Congress within 30 months of the date of enactment and will answer all the relevant questions concerning product modification and the health consequences of that modification.

Supporters of federal fire-safe cigarette legislation have argued that altering the physical characteristics of commercial cigarettes may lead to significant reductions in the high number of fire fatalities which occur annually in the United States. Two studies, one by the National Bureau of Standards which highlighted several changes which could be made to the construction of the cigarette (packing density, diameter of cigarette, porosity of cigarette paper, etc) and the other by the United States Testing Company, which pointed to two commercially available cigarettes (More, Sherman's) which already appear to have less of a propensity to ignite upholstered furniture than other cigarette brands, have been used as evidence for developing a national cigarette ignition standard.

In 1981, it is estimated that there were 63,518 residential fires in the United States resulting from the careless use of smoking materials. While careless smoking is not the number one cause of fires, it is the number one cause of fire deaths in the United States.

Over one third of the fire deaths in the United States are caused by cigarette-ignited fires. 67.4% of the fire deaths in hotels and motels result from cigarette ignited fires. In 1981, 2,144 people lost their lives and 3,819 more were injured as a result of cigarette ignited fires.

CIGARETTE SAFETY ACT

Other Contacts

THE FOLLOWING IS A PARTIAL LIST OF INDIVIDUALS ACTIVE ON THIS ISSUE WHO ARE AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT AND/OR WHO HAVE RELEASED A PRESS RELEASE TODAY:

Andrew McGuire (The Burn Council, San Francisco, Calif) 415-821-5135

Art Delibert (Citizens Committee for Fire Protection, Washington, D.C.)
202-466-6060

John Girard (National Fire Protection Association, Washington, D.C.)
202-484-8200

Film footage

NBC, CBS, ABC and Cable News covered March 21, 1983 hearing before Rep. Waxman's Subcommittee on Health & the Environment

KRON in San Francisco, Ca has an excellent 1/2 hour documentary with graphic footage

Photographs

Rep. Moakley has picture of Moakley, Cranston, & Heinz at May, 1983 Press Conference announcing agreement with Tobacco Industry.

Contact: Carlton Currens
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Major Components of Compromise Fire-Safe Cigarette Legislation
as Passed by the Congress

- I. Establishes an Inter-Agency Committee to analyze and make policy recommendations as to the technical feasibility and the social and economic consequences of developing cigarettes and little cigars which have a minimum propensity to ignite upholstered furniture and mattresses.
 - A. The Inter-Agency Committee is composed of the following:
 1. The Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) (Chairman)
 2. The Assistant Secretary for Health in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (Vice Chairman)
 3. The Associate Director for Training and Fire Programs of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
 - B. The Inter-Agency Committee will submit to Congress three reports:
 1. At the end of 1 year, a status report;
 2. At the end of 30 months, a technical report prepared by the "Technical Study Group.;"
 3. Two months after submission of the technical report, any policy recommendations that the Inter-Agency Committee deems appropriate.
 - C. The Inter-Agency Committee shall direct, oversee, and review the work of the Technical Study Group.

- II. There is established a Technical Study Group which shall undertake studies and other activities to determine the technical & commercial feasibility, economic impact, and other consequences of developing fire-safe cigarettes.
- A. The Technical Study Group shall consist of technical and scientific persons:
1. Five governmental representatives representing the CPSC, FEMA, National Institutes of Health, National Bureau of Standards and the Federal Trade Commission;
 2. Four representatives of the tobacco industry;
 3. Two representatives of the medical/public health/burn community;
 4. Two representatives of the fire community;
 5. Two representatives of the furniture industry.
- B. The activities undertaken by the Technical Study Group will include the identification of the different physical characteristics of cigarettes which have an impact on ignition, an analysis of the feasibility of altering any pertinent characteristics to reduce ignition propensity, and a cost/benefit analysis to both the industry and the public of product modifications.
- III. All confidential and trade secret information provided by the tobacco industry will not be released publically except to a duly authorized committee or subcommittee of Congress.

HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS
OF THE CAMPAIGN FOR A
FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE

August 1, 1854 First American patent (Bristol #11,409) issued for "self-extinguishing" cigarette.

March 31, 1932 "Washington, March 31 (AP) With the aid and encouragement of Representative Edith Nourse Rogers of Massachusetts, the (National) Bureau of Standards is out to prove to the world the practicability of a self-extinguishing cigarette...(the National Bureau of Standards) developed a treatment which caused the cigarette to go out as soon as thrown away...
Now Dr. Lyman Briggs, acting director of the bureau has written Mrs. Rogers that all there is to do is to find a manufacturer to take up the idea."

--Boston Herald American (3/31/1932)

September, 1950 "What causes a cigarette to go on burning after it is tossed away? The California Fire Marshal's laboratory recently tested 55 brands of cigarettes and found that the paper in each had been treated with precipitate chalk; this makes the paper more porous, thus letting in more oxygen and creating a kind of natural draft which keeps the cigarette burning to the end.

Tests by the National Bureau of Standards that cigarettes would seldom set anything afire until they had lain still long enough to burn an inch....

The bureau also discovered that coating the butt end of a cigarette with sodium silicate ("water glass") totally sealed the pores of the paper; when discarded that cigarette would not continue to burn...the tobacco industry is not yet ready make its product less of a fire hazard. The faster cigarettes burn, the more are used, the bigger the sales."

--The Reader's Digest (Sept., 1950)
"So You Want To Burn to Death!"

March, 1974 U.S. Senator Phil Hart pushes self-extinguishing cigarette bill through the Senate; bill is killed in committee in the House of Representatives.

Page Two
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS
FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE

May 9, 1974

"We believe that a cigarette designed to have a limited unassisted burn time can substantially reduce the hazard to the consumer arising from a smoldering cigarette in contact with upholstered furniture. Such an approach would deal with the primary cause of incidents of this type without significantly inconveniencing the smoker. In our opinion, the approach appears to be technically feasible, although considerable research will be needed"

--Arthur D. Little, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts
"Memorandum to Furniture Flammability Committee
Reduction of the Ignition Hazards of Cigarettes"
May 9, 1974

July 2, 1979

"It is clear from our work and the work of others, that a self-extinguishing cigarette would reduce the likelihood of cigarette ignition. We have tested typical furniture construction with regular and self-extinguishing cigarettes and obtained ignitions with the regular cigarettes and no ignitions with the self-extinguishing cigarettes."

--U.S. Department of Commerce
National Bureau of Standards
Center for Fire Research
Product Flammability Research
James H. Winger, Head
(in a letter to Mr. Andrew McGuire,
July 2, 1979)

Page Three
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS
FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE

October 2, 1979 "Results of the testing show that the colite treated cigarette, under the conditions of these tests, shows a significant decrease in burn time when compared to the standard untreated cigarette. For the treated-cigarette samples tested with the mockup, all self-extinguished between 2 minutes, 30 seconds and 6 minutes. All untreated cigarettes burned to the filter ranged from 18 minutes to 28 minutes. (Three) 3 of the tests on the untreated cigarette...led to a smoldering condition....

Based on these results, the use of colite treatments to enhance the self-extinguishing properties of cigarettes appears to hold promise, barring any unforeseen environmental and health effects resulting from the presence of colite (sodium silicate)...."

--Laboratory Report Nos. 2442-79 & 2443-79
State of California, Department of Consumer
Affairs, Bureau of Home Furnishings
Gordon H. Damant, Chief

October, 1979 Congressman Joe Moakley (D-Mass) introduces Cigarette Safety Act in the U.S. House of Representatives.

January, 1980 Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif) introduces Cigarette Safety Act in the U.S. Senate.

April. 1980-1983 The state legislatures in Oregon, Massachusetts, California, New York, Maryland, Virginia, Illinois, and Connecticut hold hearings on state versions of the Cigarette Safety Act.

March 21, 1983 First Congressional hearing on Cigarette Safety Act (H.R. 1880, Serial No. 98-23) in the Health and the Environment Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

July, 1983 California State Senator Garamendi's bill passes California State Senate.

July 28, 1983 U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging holds hearings on "Home Fire Deaths: A Preventable Tragedy" (S. Hrg. 98-364) focusing on cigarette fires and the elderly.

Page Four
HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS
FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE

- October 6, 1983 Senator John Heinz (R-Penn) and Senator Alan Cranston (D-Calif) introduce Cigarette Safety Study Act.
- May 2, 1984 New York State Assemblyman Grannis has hearing on New York State fire-safe cigarette bill.
- May 3, 1984 Press Conference with Congressman Moakley, Senator Cranston, and Senator Heinz announcing agreement with Tobacco Institute on Fire-Safe Cigarette legislation.
- May 10, 1984 Senate Governmental Affairs Committee holds hearing on Cigarette Safety Study Act.
- August 6, 1984 Compromise bill passes House of Representatives (H.R. 1880)
- September 21, 1984 Compromise bill passes Senate (amended).
- October 1, 1984 House amends Senate passed version.
- October 3, 1984 Senate accepts House passed version (as amended).
- October 3, 1984 Sent to President.

STATES THAT HAVE INTRODUCED OR HELD HEARINGS ON FIRE-SAFE CIGARETTE LEGISLATION

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| California | 1982, 1983, 1984 |
| Connecticut | 1982, 1983 |
| Illinois | 1982, 1983 |
| Kansas | 1984 |
| Maryland | 1983, 1984 |
| Massachusetts | 1982, 1983 |
| Michigan | 1983 |
| New Jersey | 1984 |
| New York | 1983, 1984 |
| Oregon | 1980, 1981 |
| Pennsylvania | 1984 |
| Virginia | 1983 |