

STATEMENT OF CRAIG BEARD, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF AIRWORTHINESS,
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION, BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION, SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION,
CONCERNING CABIN AIR QUALITY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1986.

Madam Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I welcome this opportunity to discuss the recently released National Academy of Sciences study, "The Airliner Cabin Environment: Air Quality and Safety." Because of the health issues raised in the study, I am accompanied by Dr. Jon Jordan, the Deputy Federal Air Surgeon.

Public Law 98-466 authorized the Secretary of Transportation to commission an independent study by the National Academy of Sciences to review all health and safety aspects of airline cabin air quality for all passengers and crew aboard civil commercial aircraft. The study included but was not limited to a review of the quantity of fresh air per occupant and overall quality of air onboard aircraft; emergency breathing equipment, including toxic fume-protective breathing equipment; and measures, procedures, and capabilities for detecting and extinguishing fires and the removal of smoke and toxic fumes within safe pressurization limits.

Public Law 98-466 also required the Secretary to submit a copy of the study to Congress, along with comments and recommendations for legislative, regulatory, and industry changes, as may be necessary.

The National Academy of Sciences study was formally transmitted to the Office of the Secretary (OST) and FAA on August 12. The

extensive 300-page study makes 21 findings and/or recommendations. They include recommendations that the FAA review the carbon dioxide standard onboard aircraft; that the FAA re-examine passenger protective breathing devices and consider requiring the availability of such equipment in case of in-flight and postcrash fires; that the FAA consider rulemaking that restricts exposure to cosmic radiation by pregnant flight crew and cabin crew members; that FAA establish a program, subject to peer review, for the systematic measurement, by unbiased independent groups, of the concentration of carbon monoxide, aerosols, ozone, and other particles on a representative sample of commercial flights; and a ban on smoking on all domestic commercial flights. The study also indicated that the health effects associated with air travel should be within the purview of a Federal agency.

The study is undergoing careful review by a joint OST/FAA working group. OST is involved since some of the study's recommendations fall within the responsibility of the Secretary's office.

When the review is complete, the working group's recommendations will be forwarded through the Administrator to Secretary Dole. The Secretary will submit the study "as it was prepared" and her recommendations to the Congress.

Because of the time necessary for the deliberate and extensive review of the working group, and the fact that we only received

the report in August, we doubt that we will be able to transmit the study and the Secretary's response to the study prior to Congressional adjournment, as originally anticipated. If that is the case, then it will, of course, be transmitted during the opening days of the 100th Congress.

Madam Chairman that concludes my prepared statement. Dr. Jordan and I will be pleased to answer any questions you or other Members of the Subcommittee may have.