CFA CFAnews
April 1985
Vol. 10, No. 3
ISSN #0732-8281

Party Gap Narrows on Consumer Issues

Seventy-three members of the 98th Congress have been named official "Consumer Heroes" in recognition of their strong pro-consumer voting record in 1984.

The heroes—seven senators and 66 representative—were cited in Consumer Federation of America's 1984 Congressional Voting Record. Ratings were based on 12 key votes in each house of Congress, covering such issues as antitrust enforcement, nutrition, energy costs, health and safety, and communications.

Alan Fox, CFA's Legislative Representative, said the voting record reveals "several new and potentially important trends, the most striking of which is a narrowing of differences between Democrats and Republicans on consumer issues."

In both houses, the record reveals an emerging bipartisan coalition opposed to business subsidies, antitrust exemptions and "other special favors for special interests," Fox said.

Nineteen representatives and seven senators were named "Consumer Zeroes" in the CFA Voting Record.

The record's key findings and Fox's analysis of them, include the following:

1. **Partisan differences narrow.** Between 1983 and 1984, voting scores for Democrats in both houses declined while percentages for Republicans rose. Ratings for Senate Democrats fell from 62 percent to 56 percent, for House Democrats from 76 percent to 70 percent. On the other hand, ratings for Senate Republicans rose from 26 percent to 40 percent, for House Republicans from 18 percent to 30 percent.

2. **Individual Republicans rated highly.** For the first time, several House Republicans scored over 90 percent and are listed as Consumer Heroes. Reps. Sherwood Boehlert (NY), Silvio Conte (MA), Benjamin Gilman (NY), John McKernan (ME), and Christopher Smith (NJ) each cast 11 pro-consumer votes on 12 issues, for 92 percent scores.

3. **House Democrats still lead.** Significant differences remain between House Democrats and Republicans. The difference between the parties is 40 points. All 17 representatives scoring 100 percent were Democrats, as were 44 of the 49 at 92 percent. The average House Democrat cast five more pro-consumer votes, out of twelve, than the average House Republican.

4. **Senate partisan differences are smaller.** The gap between Senate Democrats and Republicans has never been smaller. Differences in the past seven years ranged from 22 to 45 points. In 1984, Democrats averaged only 14 percent above Republicans (54-40 percent), a difference of fewer than two votes out of twelve per member.

5. **Regional differences are significant.** Although Democratic scores as a whole were higher, Republicans from some regions scored consistently higher than Democrats from other parts of the country. In both houses, for example, New England Republicans were more pro-consumer than southern Democrats. Regional differences were most pronounced in the Senate.

Senate Regional Differences

Region	Democrats	Republicans
New England	78%	60%
Midwest	54%	47%
South	41%	31%

Congressional Heroes & Zeroes

Senate heroes scoring 83 percent, all of them Democrats, are:

Edward M. Kennedy (MA)	Jeff Bingaman (NM)	Frank R. Lautenberg (NJ)
Patrick J. Leahy (VT)	Claiborne Pell (RI)	Paul E. Tsongas (MA)
Howard M. Metzenbaum (OH)		

Heroes in the House who scored 100 percent, all of them Democrats, are:

Don Bonker (WA)	Mike Lowry (WA)	George E. Brown, Jr. (CA)
Matthew G. Martinez (CA)	Edward R. Roybal (CA)	Harold E. Ford (TN)
Samuel Gejdenson (CT)	Tom Harkin (IA)	Mary Rose Oakar (OH)
Louis Stokes (OH)	David R. Obey (WI)	Solomon P. Ortiz (TX)
Charles B. Rangel (NY)	James H. Scheuer (NY)	William B. Richardson (NM)
Gerry E. Sikorski (MN)	Bruce F. Vento (MN)	

Democratic House heroes who scored 92 percent are:

Gary L. Ackerman (NY)	Thomas J. Downey (NY)	Robert Garcia (NY)
Matthew F. McHugh (NY)	Robert J. Mrazek (NY)	Major R. Owens (NY)
Ted Weiss (NY)	Daniel K. Akaka (HI)	Michael D. Barnes (MD)
Barbara A. Mikulski (MD)	Parren J. Mitchell (MD)	Barbara Boxer (CA)
Tony Coelho (CA)	Ronald V. Dellums (CA)	Norman Y. Mineta (CA)
Esteban E. Torres (CA)	Henry A. Waxman (CA)	Brian J. Donnelly (MA)
Barney Frank (MA)	Gerry E. Studds (MA)	John Conyers, Jr. (MI)
Dennis M. Hertel (MI)	Dale E. Kildee (MI)	Howard E. Wolpe (MI)
Wayne Dowdy (MS)	Bob Edgar (PA)	Thomas F. Foglietta (PA)
Peter H. Kostmayer (PA)	Lane A. Evans (IL)	Charles A. Hayes (IL)
Melvin Price (IL)	James J. Florio (NJ)	James J. Howard (NJ)
Joseph G. Minish (NJ)	Robert G. Torricelli (NJ)	Andrew Jacobs, Jr. (IN)
Frank McCloskey (IN)	Robert W. Kastenmeier (WI)	Mickey Leland (TX)
James L. Oberstar (MN)	William R. Ratchford (CT)	Alan D. Wheat (MO)
Pat Williams (MT)	Ron Wyden (OR)	

Republican House heroes are:

Sherwood L. Boehlert (NY)	Benjamin A. Gilman (NY)	Silvio O. Conte (MA)
Christopher H. Smith (NJ)	John R. McKernan, Jr. (ME)	

At the bottom of the list are three House members who did not score a single point:

Phil Gramm (R-TX)	George Hansen (R-ID)	Stan Parris (R-VA)

House zeroes who scored 8 percent are:

Bill Archer (R-TX)	Steve Bartlett (R-TX)	Marvin Leath (D-TX)
Bill Frenzel (R-MN)	Danny L. Burton (R-IN)	John N. Erlenborn (R-IL)
Bob McEwen (R-OH)	Thomas F. Hartnett (R-SC)	Thomas N. Kindness (R-OH)
David D. Marriott (R-UT)	Michael G. Oxley (R-OH)	Ken Kramer (R-CO)
Robert E. Badham (R-CA)	Bob Stump (R-AZ)	Robert S. Walker (R-PA)
William E. Dannemeyer (R-CA)		

The zeroes list also includes several senators who scored only 17 percent:

David L. Boren (D-OK)	Jeremiah Denton (R-AL)	Barry Goldwater (R-AZ)
Chic Hecht (R-NV)	Paul Laxalt (R-NV)	Russell B. Long (D-LA)
John C. Stennis (D-MS)		

(Copies of the 1984 Congressional Voting Record are available from CFA for $10. Non-profit organizations may purchase it for $5.)

6. **New coalition emerges.** On a number of votes, traditional partisan or ideological divisions gave way to a new pro-consumer coalition which opposed "special favors to special interests" by supporting antitrust enforcement and opposing energy industry subsidies. Three of the twelve Senate votes involved these issues—reduction of the subsidy for large energy corporations through the Synthetic Fuels Corporation, and antitrust exemptions for beer distributors and businesses regulated by cities. In all three cases, more Republicans than Democrats voted with consumers. These three Senate votes influenced average scores significantly.

7. **Pro-consumer members were re-elected.** At least 69 of the 73 Consumer Heroes are still in Congress in 1985. One Senator was re-elected and one retired. The other five Senate Heroes were not up for re-election. Rep. Tom Harkin (D-IA) was elected to the Senate. All of the other 65 House Heroes ran for re-election, and all were successful except William Ratchford (D-CT) and Joseph Minish (D-NJ). The status of Rep. Frank McCloskey (D-IN) was still uncertain at this writing.

8. **Pro-consumer members come from every region.** Another measure of broad public support for consumer issues is the fact that Consumer Heroes represent every region of the country. Although average scores for western and southern members are low, individual members from Tennessee, New Mexico and Texas recorded 100 percent scores. Members from Mississippi and Montana are also listed as Consumer Heroes.

Consumer votes in the last Congress were often defensive in character. But Congress also established some new consumer protections in 1984. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) was given additional authority to regulate toy safety; auto manufacturers were required to stamp car parts to reduce auto theft; generic drugs were made more available; and public participation was required in the renewing of cable television franchises.

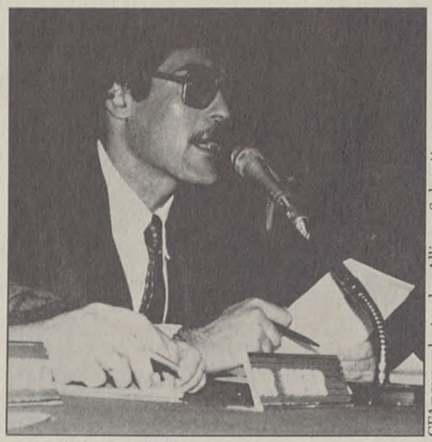
Fox says consumers can probably expect more of the same in 1985—small, cautious victories rather than sweeping change. He notes, however, that the developing coalition of members opposed to favors for special interests may signify growing support for the elimination of tax loopholes which could lead to a major victory for consumers.

Product Liability Fight: Round Three

Leading consumer organizations have forged a united front in opposition to proposed federal legislation which would wipe out essential consumer protections contained in current product liability law.

Their unity was demonstrated at a standing-room-only hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee's Consumer Subcommittee on the product liability bill (S. 100), introduced in Congress for the third time by Senator Robert Kasten (R-WI).

Consumer Federation of America's Legislative Director Gene Kimmelman testified against the proposed legislation on behalf of CFA, Consumers Union, Public Citizen's Congress Watch and U.S. Public Interest Research Group.



CFAnews photos by Allison Schuette

CFA Legislative Director Gene Kimmelman presents the consumer case against proposed product liability legislation at a hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee's Consumer Subcommittee.

Bill Is Anti-Consumer

"We join together," Kimmelman said, "to emphasize S. 100's most anti-consumer provisions—provisions which would impede recovery for injuries caused by defective products, reduce incentives to manufacture safe ones, and add costly confusion to product liability litigation."

The Kasten bill, should it become law, would supercede state statutes and common law. It would eliminate the strict liability standard in the vast majority of cases and impose pro-manufacturer negligence standards and defenses in cases challenging product design or warning adequacy. It could effectively bar any compensation for victims injured by certain products and also would substantially decrease the likelihood of punitive damage awards.

CFA Favors Strict Liability

CFA and other public interest groups strongly favor retention of the strict liability standard embodied in state laws. Although states formulate their rules in slightly different fashion, Kimmelman pointed out that laws in 46 states protect consumers through such a standard, assuring that "manufacturers who produce defective products are held responsible for the injuries they cause."

Replacing the strict liability standard with a negligence one would "tilt the competitive balance in litigation in favor of manufacturers," Kimmelman said.

The CFA legislative director emphasized that strict liability "is not shorthand for carte blanche payment of meritless claims." On the contrary, "it subjects the injured consumer to rigorous but fair proof requirements."

Kimmelman expressed consumer leaders' concern that S. 100's narrow definition of negligence would significantly reduce manufacturers' responsibility for dangerous products.

Under the bill's provisions, an injured consumer bringing a product liability claim would have to prove not only that the product causing the injury was defective, but also that the manufacturer knew or should have known of the defect.

Such a search of corporate minds and motives is a high hurdle on the road to successful recovery. "Even where negligence is present," Kimmelman said, "it is often difficult, if not impossible, to prove because manufacturers control the evidence about what they knew, when they knew it, and how they responded to what they knew."

Product Safety Threatened

Another issue troubling to consumers is the bill's probable adverse impact on product safety. "Manufacturers would simply not be encouraged to test products for safety," Kimmelman said, "since doing so might provide the information needed to show knowledge of the defect and expose the manufacturer to potential liability."

S. 100's punitive damage provisions would also reduce manufacturers' incentives to improve product safety. The bill not only increases the consumer's burden of proof but establishes a separate trial procedure for compensatory and punitive damages, thereby increasing legal fees and prolonging delays.

While punitive awards are comparatively rare, they are, nevertheless, "an important tool for curbing outrageous and reckless disregard for the health and safety of consumers," Kimmelman said.

Despite assertions by S. 100 proponents that the bill would create a uniform product liability system, Kimmelman doubts that would be the outcome. Although S. 100 would preempt state laws, state courts would be free to interpret its provisions as they wish, making confusion and uncertainty a more likely result than uniformity.

"It is unrealistic," Kimmelman said, "to expect that one uniform interpretation of a complex statute will naturally emerge from independent state and federal court rulings throughout the nation."

Administration Backs Bill

The Kasten bill is likely to be a priority of the Reagan Administration. It is also backed by a powerful and well-financed business alliance of manufacturers, distributors and wholesalers in the pharmaceutical, chemical, automobile, machine tool and insurance industries.

The Commerce Committee passed it in the last session of Congress, but it was not taken up on the Senate floor. Kimmelman predicts a probable mark-up effort in late Spring and urges consumers to make their views know to their senators.

"There is a growing interest in consideration of some changes in product liability law," Kimmelman says, "but the Kasten bill is not the sort of change we would like to see."

Instead of emphasizing manufacturers' interests in averting liability, Kimmelman and other consumer leaders say the emphasis should be on safety incentives and adequate compensation for victims—especially those who are not effectively served by the present system.

CFA Urges CPSC to Strengthen Compliance

Consumer Federation of America has urged the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to "refrain from weakening in any manner" the agency's enforcement policy on reporting of substantial product hazards.

In comments to the agency, CFA encouraged the commission to "strengthen its compliance efforts by regularly applying civil penalties to those firms who fail to report in accordance with regulations."

The federation also reiterated its strong support of "an adequately funded and staffed CPSC Directorate for Compliance and Administrative Litigation" to carry out "essential compliance efforts."

Mary Ellen Fise, CFA's Product Safety Director, wrote the comments in response to a Federal Register notice inviting public comment on CPSC's reporting enforcement policy.

The commission's "Statement of Enforcement Policy on Substantial Product Hazard Reports" was originally published in April of 1984 without the opportunity for public comment. A delayed comment period was provided, CPSC said, "in response to requests from several organizations representing manufacturers of consumer products." Its length was later extended when the United States Chamber of Commerce said it needed additional time "to gather data, prepare comprehensive comments and obtain approval of industry association comments by member companies."

Fise's comments call the policy statement a "needed and useful document" which gives all those within CPSC jurisdiction "fair notice of the commission's intention to carry out its Section 15 mandate to the fullest."

Section 15 of the Consumer Product Safety Act allows CPSC, in effect, to recall dangerous consumer products. That power, CFA said, is "clearly one of the key tools given the commission by Congress."

Use of the commission's recall power under Section 15 was vigorously debated by CPSC Chairman Terrence Scanlon and R. David Pittle, a former CPSC commissioner who is now technical director of Consumers Union, at this year's Consumer Assembly. (See *CFAnews*, February/March, 1985.)

CFA's comments noted that while the Statement of Enforcement Policy provides useful guidelines, it is neither new law nor new regulation. All its basic tenets are contained in established agency regulations interpreting Section 15.

Reasons for supporting strong enforcement of reporting requirements, as enumerated in CFA's comments, are:

- The alarmingly high rate of firms failing to report death or injury associated with a product;
- The continuing need for reports of a single death or injury, which can trigger a CPSC investigation and agency action;
- The need for *timely* reports, enabling CPSC to take corrective action which could prevent thousands of injuries, and,
- The importance of reporting "when in doubt," rather than awaiting clear certainty of hazard.

"The commission should resist recommenations to weaken either its enforcement regulations or the reporting guidelines," Fise said.

CFAnews

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CFAnews is published 8 times a year. Annual subscription rate is $25 per year.

Design & Typeset by: Design Consultants, Inc.

Mark Your Calendar

What? Conference on Electric Utilities & Their Residential Customers

When? Thursday & Friday, May 30-31, 1985

Where? Washington Plaza Hotel • Thomas Circle • Washington, D.C.

Who? Advocates, utility representatives, public utility counsels, representatives of federal agencies and public service commissions, interested citizens

Why? To discuss pressing concerns and future options

(For more information, contact Erika Landberg at (202) 387-6121.)

Rail Rates Cost Consumers $1 Billion Annually

The single most important issue now affecting electric utility consumers is the more than $1 billion a year in rail rate overcharges which are passed directly through to their utility bills.

That is the conclusion of a series of reports released by Consumer Federation of America in support of the Consumer Rail Equity Act of 1985 (HR 1190 and S. 477). The legislation, sponsored by a bipartisan group of 11 senators and 24 House members, is supported by an unprecedented coalition of consumer groups, farmers, state and local governments, and regulators who have allied themselves with electric utilities.

Both the legislation and the coalition are responses to the failure of the Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) to restrain the pervasive market power of railroads over the movement of heavy bulk commodities such as grain and coal.

The ICC now allows an electric utility to be charged rail rates up to the actual cost of building its own railroad. Such a ratemaking methodology is "meaningless," says the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC). In formal comments filed at the ICC, NARUC charges that the commission has allowed the "unfettered exercise of rail monopoly power to the ultimate detriment of electric utility rate payers."

Savings for Consumers

The CFA study series, prepared by CFA Energy Director Dr. Mark Cooper, reaches a similar conclusion. "If the ratemaking principles used at the state level were applied to federal coal ratemaking," it states, "consumers could be saved tens of billions of dollars over the next several decades."

The series reveals that rail rate overcharges have been building since the onset of regulatory reform in 1976. The density of coal rail traffic has more than doubled in the last decade, achieving cost reductions of at least 30 percent. But *none* of the savings have been passed through to consumers.

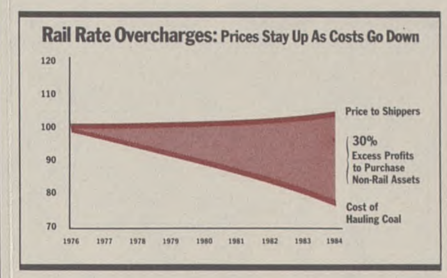
The overcharges are readily apparent in railroad accounts, according to another study conducted by the Edison Electric Institute. In 1981, the rate of profit for coal traffic was a whopping 32 percent, more than twice the average of other commodities. Coal alone accounts for well over one-third of the operating profits of the rail industry.

The profits are concentrated in a few major coal-hauling railroads, according to still another study by Consumers United for Rail Equity (CURE), a coalition of disparate groups organized specifically to seek passage of the rail equity bill.

Coal Railroads Amass Profits

Since 1978 the major coal railroads have generated a capital surplus of more than $10 billion. "This is in sharp contrast to a revenue shortfall that the Department of Transportation (DOT) had predicted at the time," the CURE report states. "The DOT study was very influential in setting transportation policy but it proved completely unfounded."

The CFA series points out that the major coal railroads never experienced serious financial difficulty and the excessive coal profits have not gone into revitalizing the



rail industry. Instead, the major coal railroads have accumulated huge cash hordes which they use periodically to buy up transportation and non-transportation assets. In 1981-82, Burlington Northern managed a $1.3 billion purchase of El Paso Gas Company, and in 1983, Chessie found $1 billion to purchase Texas Gas Resources. Both were declared to be "revenue inadequate" by the ICC at the time of their purchases.

"The ultimate irony involves the Norfolk Southern," one of CFA's reports states. "On February 8, 1985, the Department of Transportation declared that the Norfolk Southern Corporation is 'a very profitable company' and the best candidate to purchase Conrail. Ironically, on December 17, 1984, less than two months earlier, the ICC had declared Norfolk Southern a 'revenue inadequate railroad' that had fallen ten percent short of earning its cost of capital."

ICC Test Needs Revisions

Fixing the ICC's revenue adequacy test is the centerpiece of the Consumer Rail Equity Act. Currently the ICC does not examine what is included in a railroad's investment base. It does not consider indicators of financial health other than the current cost of capital. It figures debt at current rather than embedded levels and it allows a rate of return on deferred taxes. The proposed legislation changes these procedures to bring them into line with principles applied by virtually every other regulatory and accounting body in the nation.

Utility consumers can also expect some rate relief from other provisions of the bill. One such provision requires the ICC to take into account the extent to which railroads have maximized revenues from competitive traffic. Another would even out discriminatory pricing between captive shippers.

Without passage of the proposed legislation, the current annual overcharge of $1.3 billion has the potential to more than double over the next several decades.

CFA Backs Legislation On Amusement Rides

Legislation has been introduced in both houses of Congress to restore the Consumer Product Safety Commission's authority over amusement park hazards.

In 1981, Congress rescinded the CPSC's authority over rides at fixed sites, leaving the agency with power to regulate only those rides which are dismantled and moved from place to place in traveling carnivals.

Nearly 100 people have died because of amusement park ride accidents in the past ten years, and there are nearly 10,000 injuries requiring emergency room treatment every year. Yet, half the states do not require inspection of fixed site rides, and many that do are unable to adequately protect consumers from unnecessary risks.

In 1984, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed HR 5790, restoring the CPSC's power to regulate fixed site rides, but the Senate took no action.

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA), sponsor of HR 5790, has reintroduced that bill, now numbered HR 1596, in the current Congress. Sen. Paul Simon (D-IL) will introduce the same bill in the Senate.

Rep. Frank Guarini (D-NJ) earlier introduced HR 667, which in addition to providing the CPSC with authority over rides, would allow the federal safety agency to limit safety hazards in other amusement park attractions for which an entry fee is charged. This provision was prompted by the death of eight teenagers in a "haunted house" fire at New Jersey's Six Flags Great Adventure Amusement Park on May 11, 1984.

CFA has written Guarini supporting HR 667. "We plan to work with both Rep. Guarini and Rep. Waxman to ensure that the strongest possible bill is adopted," CFA Legislative Representative Alan Fox said.

"Amusement park safety is a nationwide problem which requires nationwide solutions," Fox said. "Only the CPSC has the ability to identify design or structural defects on rides all over the country, then respond quickly to prevent serious accidents. Safety in amusement parks should not be left to chance."

ACTION POINT Write your representative to urge him or her to cosponsor Rep. Guarini's HR 667. If a large number of representatives endorse it, a stronger bill is more likely to be reported out of committee.

CFA Asks Congress to Repeal Oil Companies' Tax Breaks

The immediate repeal of tax breaks to oil companies and continued commitment to fill the Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) were asked of Congress in testimony by Dr. Mark Cooper, Energy Director of Consumer Federation of America.

Appearing before the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources, Cooper called these two actions "the most important energy issues of the decade."

Cooper labeled current energy tax incentives "give-aways" and "a drain on the U.S. Treasury that provides no benefits to the nation's energy consumers."

He emphasized that American consumers would be better off without a tax-based energy policy. "Energy tax incentives are encouraging oil companies to overdevelop American resources," he said, when "the emphasis should be on the diversification of supplies."

Cooper expressed CFA's strong disagreement with the Reagan Administration's plans to reduce the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, calling it "the cornerstone of energy policy in the 1980s." Administration efforts to limit the SPR to less than .5 billion barrels fly in the face of the fact that "all recent economic studies show a need for a reserve three times that size," he said.

CFA's testimony called, at the very least, for a continuation of the current fill rate "to prevent hardship on consumers and improve SPR's value as a strategic weapon."

"By utilizing the reserve as a weapon to restrain prices, increases caused by market disruptions can be cut in half," Cooper said, noting that a very large reserve not only reduces market vulnerability to foreign manipulation, but makes such manipulation less likely by reducing the incentive to do so.

Dr. Mark Cooper, CFA Energy Director, testifies before the House Subcommittee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources, on the world energy outlook.

CFA's concern about oil price increases is not an idle one. As its testimony points out, seven of the eight recessions since World War II have been preceded by energy price increases.

Cooper also vigorously opposed the use of fees and quotas on foreign oil products. "The import quotas of the 1960s resulted in the artificial depletion of more than 13 billion barrels of American oil, thus helping set the stage for the oil crises of the 1970s," he said. "Imposing import fees or quotas today could help set the stage for an oil crisis in the 1990s."

In calling for Congressional action now, the CFA energy director stated "the most important energy decisions should be made when the least attention is being paid to energy costs."

CFA Drafts Indoor Air Action Plan

A draft plan of action to address the problem of indoor air pollution was presented to Congress by Consumer Federation of America in testimony before the House Subcommittee on Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment.

"Every delay in defining and dealing with the myriad problems of indoor air quality subjects consumers to risks to their health which are avoidable and preventable," said Alan Fox, CFA's Legislative Representative.

The presentation of CFA's plan comes at a time when the Reagan Administration is in full retreat on the indoor air quality front.

EPA, CPSC Slash Budgets

Fox deplored the research budget cutbacks at both the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

"EPA, which in the past has sponsored more indoor air pollution research than any other federal agency, has not proposed a nickel for such research this year," he said. "CPSC has slashed its budget request for indoor air quality from $1.2 million in Fiscal Year 1984 to just $600,000 in FY 1986."

In addition, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has held up release of the comprehensive indoor air pollution research strategy developed by the Interagency Committee on Indoor Air Quality (CIAQ), despite a Congressional mandate to release it by January 1 of 1985. Subcommittee members expressed dismay at OMB's slowness and Rep. Claudine Schneider (R-RI), ranking minority member, said she felt strongly that "there is a need for more federal research, particularly a well-funded, long-term EPA effort."

Alan Fox, right, CFA Legislative Representative, and Dr. Jan Stolwijk, Chairman of the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at Yale University, oppose cutbacks in indoor air pollution research funds at a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Natural Resources, Agriculture Research and Environment.

CFA's testimony mirrored that concern. Fox called for Congress to give EPA a minimum of $4 million in research funds this year, plus another $12 million over the next three-to-five years for a national multi-pollutant field survey. Such a survey has been endorsed by the academic and scientific communities as well as by CIAQ, which is chaired by EPA.

CFA Cites Research Needs

Overall, the preliminary version of the CFA document identifies more than $50 million in research projects which should be undertaken in the next several years. "And," Fox cautioned, "the compilation is not yet complete."

While suggesting no new legislation, CFA vigorously supports a strong role for the federal government in funding indoor air quality research.

Because "there is much more we need to learn in order to make intelligent policy choices," Fox said, "there is an enormous amount of research needed, and needed soon."

He admitted it is "unrealistic" to expect approval of the full amount needed to meet research needs, but he urged the subcommittee to take steps "to begin to make indoor air quality research a greater priority."

In addition to research, CFA's recommendations include an Information Clearinghouse on Indoor Air Pollution, authorized and funded through CIAQ, and the establishment of a CIAQ Public Advisory Committee to consist of representatives from citizen groups, state agencies, private industry and the research community.

The latter recommendation has no budget implication. Fox estimated the annual cost of the clearinghouse to be $1 million and urged it be fully operational by FY 1987.

"CFA believes the EPA's budget request on indoor air pollution must be expanded, not eliminated," Fox said.

Experts Blast Reductions

That belief was echoed by Dr. Jan Stolwijk of Yale University Medical School, an indoor air pollution expert.

He said the administration proposal "clearly is a highly inappropriate reduction" because indoor air research "is in a pitiful condition" and "practically no progress has been made."

Stolwijk also said indoor air pollution is becoming a "larger and larger" problem in terms of its total impact on the nation's health.

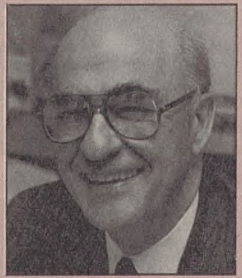
A similar view was expressed by Richard Dowd, a former executive director of EPA's Science Advisory Board and the agency's acting research chief in the early months of the Reagan Administration.

He described the administration's decision to halt EPA's research into the health effects of indoor air pollution as "ludicrous."

15th Annual Awards Dinner

Representative James Florio (D-NJ)

FTC Commissioner Patricia Bailey



Alex Radin

Ellen Kingsley

Four outstanding consumer leaders in government and the public sector will be honored at Consumer Federation of America's 15th Annual Awards Dinner at the Capital Hilton Hotel in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, June 19.

Rep. James J. Florio (D-NJ), chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Transportation Subcommittee, and Commissioner Patricia Bailey of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) will receive the Philip Hart Public Service Awards. The Philip Hart Distinguished Consumer Service Award will go to Alex Radin, Executive Director of the American Public Power Association. Consumer Reporter Ellen Kingsley of Washington's WDVM-TV will be presented the Outstanding Consumer Media Service Award.

The awards dinner is CFA's major fundraising event of the year. A 6 p.m. reception is followed by a buffet dinner at 7. For tickets, or more information, contact Erika Landberg, CFA Administrative Director, 1424 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, or telephone her at (202) 387-6121.

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