

84/186

FEB 2 1988

The Honorable William Proxmire
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Proxmire:

Thank you for your inquiry of January 15 on behalf of Mr. Robert Gilbert regarding the proposed regulations governing the certification of respirators.

The current regulations under which the Mine Health and Safety Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health test and certify respirators (30 CFR Part 11) were originally promulgated in 1972. During the last several years, there has been a growing consensus among the respirator manufacturers and user community that these requirements need revision to reflect the technical advances in the field and the increased knowledge regarding environmental factors in the workplace. Some of the steps taken to develop the proposed rule are outlined in the enclosed preamble (52 FR 32402).

We are, of course, anxious to receive comments on both the technical and policy elements of this proposed rule. Toward that end, in October we extended our original comment period and announced two public hearings (52 FR 37639). The first took place in San Francisco on January 20, 1988, and the second was January 27-28, 1988, in Washington, D.C. We look forward to hearing from all parties concerned, and I assure you that all comments received will be placed into the record and will be carefully considered in any final rulemaking decision.

Sincerely yours,

James O. Mason, M.D., Dr.P.H.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director

Enclosure

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PHS Tracer No. T91268; CDC ID #D41201; NIOSH #3181; Doc. 3160C

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United States Senate

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1/15/88

To ensure proper handling, please return
all correspondence TO THE ATTENTION OF:

Bobbie Davis

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Respectfully referred to:
Congressional Liaison
Dept. of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20201

Please respond to the attached inquiry in
duplicate and return the enclosure. Thank
you for your cooperation.

Bill Proxmire

William Proxmire, U.S.S.
United States Senate
Senate Dirksen Office Bldg., Rm. 530
Washington, D.C. 20510

CDC ID: D <u>41201</u>
DATE: <u>JAN 28 1988</u>
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