Public Law 101-391
101st Congress

An Act

To amend the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 to allow for the development and issuance of guidelines concerning the use and installation of automatic sprinkler systems and smoke detectors in places of public accommodation affecting commerce, and for other purposes.

Sept. 25, 1990
[H.R. 94]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990.

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

15 USC 2201 note.

This Act may be cited as the "Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act of 1990".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

15 USC 2201 note.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) more than 400 Americans have lost their lives in multistory hotel fires over the last 5 years;

(2) when properly installed and maintained, automatic sprinklers and smoke detectors provide the most effective safeguards against the loss of life and property from fire;

(3) automatic sprinklers and smoke detectors should supplement and not supplant other fire protection measures, including existing requirements for fire resistive walls and fire retardant furnishings;

(4) some State and local governments and the hotel industry need to act more rapidly to require the installation and use of automatic sprinkler systems in hotels; and

(5) through the United States Fire Administration and the Center for Fire Research, the Federal Government has helped to develop and promote the use of residential sprinkler systems and other means of fire prevention and control.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act to save lives and protect property by promoting fire and life safety in hotels, motels, and all places of public accommodation affecting commerce.

SEC. 3. HOTEL AND MOTEL FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL.

State and local governments.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new sections:

"LISTINGS OF CERTIFIED PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

15 USC 2224.

"SEC. 28. (a) SUBMISSIONS BY STATES.—(1) Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this section, each State shall, under procedures formulated by the Director, submit to the Director a list of those places of public accommodation affecting commerce located in the State which the Governor of the State or his designee certifies meet the requirements of the guidelines described in section 29.

"(2) The Director shall formulate procedures under which each State shall periodically update the list submitted pursuant to paragraph (1).

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Federal Register, publication.

"(b) COMPILATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF MASTER LIST.—(1) Not later than 60 days after the expiration of the 2-year period referred to in subsection (a), the Director shall compile and publish in the Federal Register a national master list of all of the places of public accommodation affecting commerce located in each State that meet the requirements of the guidelines described in section 29, and shall distribute such list to each agency of the Federal Government and take steps to make the employees of such agencies aware of its existence and contents.

"(2) The Director shall periodically update the national master list compiled pursuant to paragraph (1) to reflect changes in the State lists submitted to the Director pursuant to subsection (a), and shall periodically redistribute the updated master list to each agency of the Federal Government.

"(3) For purposes of this subsection, the term 'agency' has the meaning given to it under section 5701(1) of title 5, United States Code.

"FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL GUIDELINES FOR PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION

15 USC 2225.

"SEC. 29. (a) CONTENTS OF GUIDELINES.—The guidelines referred to in sections 28 and 30 consist of—

"(1) a requirement that hard-wired, single-station smoke detectors be installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association Standard 74 in each guest room in each place of public accommodation affecting commerce; and

"(2) a requirement that an automatic sprinkler system be installed in accordance with National Fire Protection Association Standard 13 or 13-R, whichever is appropriate, in each place of public accommodation affecting commerce except those places that are 3 stories or lower.

"(b) EFFECT ON STATE AND LOCAL LAW.—The provisions of this section shall not be construed to limit the power of any State or political subdivision thereof to implement or enforce any law, rule, regulation, or standard concerning fire prevention and control.

"(c) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

"(1) The term 'smoke detector' means an alarm that is designed to respond to the presence of visible or invisible particles of combustion.

"(2) The term 'automatic sprinkler system' means an electronically supervised, integrated system of piping to which sprinklers are attached in a systematic pattern, and which, when activated by heat from a fire, will protect human lives by discharging water over the fire area, and by providing appropriate warning signals (to the extent such signals are required by Federal, State, or local laws or regulations) through the building's fire alarm system.

"DISSEMINATION OF FIRE PREVENTION AND CONTROL INFORMATION

15 USC 2226.

"SEC. 30. The Director, acting through the Administrator, is authorized to take steps to encourage the States to promote the use of automatic sprinkler systems and automatic smoke detection systems, and to disseminate to the maximum extent possible information on the life safety value and use of such systems. Such steps may

include, but need not be limited to, providing copies of the guidelines described in section 29 and of the master list compiled under section 28(b) to Federal agencies, State and local governments, and fire services throughout the United States, and making copies of the master list compiled under section 28(b) available upon request to interested private organizations and individuals.".

(b) DEFINITIONS.—(1) Section 4 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2203) is amended by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as paragraphs (5) and (6), respectively, by redesignating paragraphs (6) and (7) as paragraphs (8) and (9), respectively, and by inserting immediately after paragraph (3) the following new paragraph:

"(4) 'Director' means the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency;".

(2) Section 4 of such Act (as amended by paragraph (1)) is further amended by inserting immediately after paragraph (6), as so redesignated, the following new paragraph:

"(7) 'place of public accommodation affecting commerce' means any inn, hotel, or other establishment not owned by the Federal Government that provides lodging to transient guests, except that such term does not include an establishment treated as an apartment building for purposes of any State or local law or regulation or an establishment located within a building that contains not more than 5 rooms for rent or hire and that is actually occupied as a residence by the proprietor of such establishment;".

SEC. 4. ADHERENCE TO FIRE SAFETY GUIDELINES IN ESTABLISHING RATES AND DISCOUNTS FOR LODGING EXPENSES.

(a) AMENDMENT TO TITLE 5.—Subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting immediately after section 5707 the following new section:

"§ 5707a. Adherence to fire safety guidelines in establishing rates and discounts for lodging expenses

"(a) Studies or surveys conducted for the purposes of establishing per diem rates for lodging expenses under this chapter shall be limited to places of public accommodation that meet the requirements of the fire prevention and control guidelines described in section 29 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974. The provisions of this subsection shall not apply with respect to studies and surveys that are conducted in any jurisdiction that is not a State as defined in section 4 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

"(b) The Administrator of General Services may not include in any directory which lists lodging accommodations any hotel, motel, or other place of public accommodation that does not meet the requirements of the fire prevention and control guidelines described in section 29 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

"(c) The Administrator of General Services shall include in each directory which lists lodging accommodations a description of the access and safety devices, including appropriate emergency alerting devices, which each listed place of public accommodation provides for guests who are hearing-impaired or visually or physically handicapped.

Handicapped persons.

"(d) The Administrator of General Services may take any additional actions the Administrator determines appropriate to encour-

age employees traveling on official business to stay at places of public accommodation that meet the requirements of the fire prevention and control guidelines described in section 29 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.".

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting immediately after the item relating to section 5707 the following new item:

"5707a. Adherence to fire safety guidelines in establishing rates and discounts for lodging expenses.".

5 USC 5707a note.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this section shall take effect 60 days after the date of the publication in the Federal Register of the master list of certified places of public accommodation maintained by the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency pursuant to section 28(b) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (as added by section 3 of this Act).

SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS PERCENTAGE FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS PERCENTAGE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5707 of title 5, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(d)(1) Each agency shall ensure that its approved accommodations percentage for a fiscal year shall be not less than—

"(A) 65 percent, for the first fiscal year that begins 4 years after the date of enactment of this subsection;

"(B) 75 percent, for the fiscal year that begins 5 years after the date of enactment of this subsection; and

"(C) 90 percent, for the fiscal year that begins 6 years after the date of enactment of this subsection and for each subsequent fiscal year.

"(2) In this subsection, an agency's 'approved accommodations percentage' for a fiscal year is the percentage determined by multiplying 100 by the quotient of—

"(A) the total number of nights spent by civilian employees of the agency (as described in section 5702(a)) for which payment was made under this chapter for lodging expenses incurred in any State at any approved hotel, motel, or other place of public accommodation not owned by the Federal Government; divided by

"(B) the total number of nights spent by such employees for which payment was made under this chapter for lodging expenses incurred in any State at any hotel, motel, or other place of public accommodation not owned by the Federal Government.

"(3) For purposes of this subsection, a hotel, motel, or other place of public accommodation is approved if it meets the requirements of the fire prevention and control guidelines described in section 29 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974.

"(4) For purposes of this subsection—

"(A) the term 'agency' does not include the government of the District of Columbia; and

"(B) the term 'State' means any State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Virgin Islands, the Canal Zone, Guam, American Samoa, or any other territory or possession.".

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 5701 of such title is amended in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by striking "For the purpose" and inserting "Except as otherwise provided in section 5707(d), for the purpose".

(b) GAO AUDIT OF AGENCY COMPLIANCE.—Not later than 6 months after the last day of the first fiscal year during which lodging expenses are subject to the requirements of section 5707(d) of title 5, United States Code, as added by subsection (a), and not later than 6 months after the last day of every fiscal year thereafter, the Comptroller General shall conduct an audit of the compliance of agencies with the requirements of section 5707(d) of title 5, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), and shall submit a report to Congress describing the results of such audit.

Reports.
5 USC 5707 note.

SEC. 6. PROHIBITING FEDERAL FUNDING OF CONFERENCES HELD AT NON-CERTIFIED PLACES OF PUBLIC ACCOMMODATION.

15 USC 2225a.

(a) IN GENERAL.—No Federal funds may be used to sponsor or fund in whole or in part a meeting, convention, conference, or training seminar that is conducted in, or that otherwise uses the rooms, facilities, or services of, a place of public accommodation that does not meet the requirements of the fire prevention and control guidelines described in section 29 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (as added by section 3(a) of this Act).

(b) WAIVER.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The head of an agency of the Federal Government sponsoring or funding a particular meeting, convention, conference, or training seminar may waive the prohibition described in subsection (a) if the head of such agency determines that a waiver of such prohibition is necessary in the public interest in the case of such particular event.

(2) DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY.—The head of an agency of the Federal Government may delegate the authority provided under paragraph (1) to waive the prohibition described in subsection (a) and to determine whether such a waiver is necessary in the public interest to an officer or employee of the agency if such officer or employee is given such authority with respect to all meetings, conventions, conferences, and training seminars sponsored or funded by the agency.

(c) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) ADVERTISEMENTS AND APPLICATIONS.—(A) Any advertisement for or application for attendance at a meeting, convention, conference, or training seminar sponsored or funded in whole or in part by the Federal Government shall include a notice regarding the prohibition described in subsection (a).

(B) The requirement described in subparagraph (A) shall not apply in the case of an event for which a head of an agency of the Federal Government, pursuant to subsection (b), waives the prohibition described in subsection (a).

(2) PROVIDING NOTICE TO RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS.—(A) Each Executive department, Government corporation, and independent establishment providing Federal funds to non-Federal entities shall notify recipients of such funds of the prohibition described in subsection (a).

(B) In subparagraph (A), the terms "Executive department", "Government corporation", and "independent establishment" have the meanings given such terms in chapter 1 of title 5, United States Code.

(d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The provisions of this section shall take effect on the first day of the first fiscal year that begins after the expiration of the 425-day period that begins on the date of the publication in the Federal Register of the master list referred to in section 28(b) of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974 (as added by section 3 of this Act).

15 USC 2201 note.

SEC. 7. WAIVER OF FEDERAL LIABILITY.

In any action for damages resulting from a fire at a place of public accommodation, the Federal Government may not be found liable for the death of or injury to any person or damage to any property because an officer or employee of the Federal Government was negligent in carrying out any requirement under this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

15 USC 2201 note.

SEC. 8. EFFECT ON CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS.

Nothing in this Act shall be construed to encourage model building code organizations, or State or local governments, to reduce requirements for fire resistive walls or other safety features.

Approved September 25, 1990.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 94:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 101-357 (Comm. on Science, Space, and Technology).
SENATE REPORTS: No. 101-408 (Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation).
CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:
Vol. 135 (1989): Nov. 17, considered and passed House.
Vol. 136 (1990): Aug. 3, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Sept. 10, House concurred in Senate amendment.