

American Restroom A s s o c i a t i o n

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Restroom Association calls on U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fix public health policy

Baltimore, MD. October 1, 2007 The American Restroom Association has called upon the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that toilet facilities are available on airplanes, in public schools, at transit centers, and in other public places.

According to the organization, the increasing lack of public availability of restrooms in the US. is a problem that can be traced to policy gaps at the national level. Two federal departments have mandates to set policy on restrooms and health, but only one has acted.

The U.S. Department of Labor regulates workplace restrooms throughout the individual states through the U.S. Occupational Safety and Health Administration, or OSHA. OSHA provides the necessary regulations to ensure that employees “*will not suffer the adverse health effects that can result if toilets are not available*” when needed.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for protecting the health of the public in general, not just employees. The agency, however, has failed to recognize the threat to public health if restroom facilities are not available. Without federal recognition, local governments will continue to close public restrooms; government-supported schools can prevent students from using the lavatories; transit systems will put more amenities off limits to passengers and airlines can deny passengers use of toilets.

Since the mandate of the Department of Health and Human Services is to protect the health of all Americans, the American Restroom Association is launching a Call to Action. The group is asking citizens to act through their representatives in Congress to ensure that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services spells out the public health requirements related to toilets. No new legislation is needed, only compliance with an existing mandate.

The American Restroom Association is 501 c3 registered national non-profit that advocates for the availability of clean, safe, well designed public restrooms. It is a member of the World Toilet Organization, sponsors of the World Toilet Summit in Delhi, India on October 31, 2007.

Carol McCreary of Portland, Oregon will represent the American Restroom Association at the Summit. She will deliver a paper on the Call to Action that references numerous case studies where the basic human right to use a toilet has been denied in the United States. Ms. McCreary is a co-founder of PHLUSH, a public restroom advocacy group that is working with Portland Mayor Tom Potter and City Commissioner Randy Leonard to enhance the availability of restrooms in the downtown area. ###