

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1566

To improve fire safety by creating incentives for the installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 1 (legislative day, JULY 21), 2003

Mr. CORZINE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance

A BILL

To improve fire safety by creating incentives for the installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Fire Safety Incentive
5 Act of 2003”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds that—

8 (1) since the publication of the original study
9 and comprehensive list of recommendations in Amer-
10 ica Burning, written in 1974, requested advances in

1 fire prevention through the installation of automatic
2 sprinkler systems in existing buildings have yet to be
3 fully implemented;

4 (2) fire departments responded to approxi-
5 mately 1,700,000 fires in 2001;

6 (3) there were 3,745 non-terrorist related
7 deaths and almost 21,000 civilian injuries in the
8 United States resulting from fire in 2001;

9 (4) 99 firefighters were killed in 2001, exclud-
10 ing the terrorist acts on September 11th;

11 (5) fire caused \$8,900,000,000 in direct prop-
12 erty damage in 2001;

13 (6) sprinklers are responsible for a 43 to 70
14 percent reduction in property damage from fires in
15 public assembly, educational, residential, commer-
16 cial, industrial, and manufacturing buildings;

17 (7) fire departments respond to a fire every 18
18 seconds, a fire breaks out in a structure every 60
19 seconds and in a residential structure every 80 sec-
20 onds in the United States;

21 (8) the Station Nightclub in West Warwick,
22 Rhode Island, did not contain an automated sprin-
23 kler system and burned down, killing 99 people on
24 February 20, 2003;

1 (9) due to an automated sprinkler system, not
2 a single person was injured from a fire beginning in
3 the Fine Line Music Cafe in Minneapolis, Min-
4 nesota, after the use of pyrotechnics on February
5 17, 2003;

6 (10) the National Fire Protection Association
7 has no record of a fire killing more than 2 people
8 in a completely sprinklered public assembly, edu-
9 cational, institutional, or residential building where
10 the system was properly installed and fully oper-
11 ational;

12 (11) sprinkler systems dramatically improve the
13 chances of survival of those who cannot save them-
14 selves, specifically older adults, young children, and
15 people with disabilities;

16 (12) most property owners are incapable of up-
17 grading fire counter measures in buildings built
18 prior to fire safety codes due to the financial cost of
19 retrofitting;

20 (13) many State and local governments lack
21 any requirements for new structures to contain auto-
22 matic sprinkler systems;

23 (14) under the present straight-line method of
24 depreciation, there is a disincentive for building safe-

1 ty improvements due to an extremely low rate of re-
2 turn on investment; and

3 (15) the Nation is in need of incentives for the
4 voluntary installation and retrofitting of buildings
5 with automated sprinkler systems to save the lives of
6 countless individuals and responding firefighters as
7 well as drastically reduce the costs from property
8 damage.

9 **SEC. 3. CLASSIFICATION OF AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER**
10 **SYSTEMS.**

11 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 168(e)(3)(B) of the Inter-
12 nal Revenue Code of 1986 (relating to 5-year property)
13 is amended by striking “and” at the end of clause (v),
14 by striking the period at the end of clause (vi) and insert-
15 ing “, and”, and by inserting after clause (vi) the following
16 new clause:

17 “(vii) any automatic fire sprinkler sys-
18 tem.”.

19 (b) ALTERNATIVE SYSTEM.—The table contained in
20 section 168(g)(3)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code of
21 1986 (relating to special rule for certain property assigned
22 to classes) is amended by inserting after the third item
23 the following new item:

“(B)(vii) 7”.

24 (c) DEFINITION OF AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER
25 SYSTEM.—Section 168(i) of the Internal Revenue Code of

1 1986 (relating to definitions and special rules) is amended
2 by adding at the end the following:

3 “(15) AUTOMATED FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEM.—

4 The term ‘automated fire sprinkler system’ means
5 those sprinkler systems classified under 1 or more of
6 the following publications of the National Fire Pro-
7 tection Association:

8 “(A) NFPA 13, Installation of Sprinkler
9 Systems.

10 “(B) NFPA 13 D, Installation of Sprin-
11 kler Systems in One and Two Family Dwellings
12 and Manufactured Homes.

13 “(C) NFPA 13 R, Installation of Sprinkler
14 Systems in Residential Occupancies up to and
15 Including Four Stories in Height.”.

16 (d) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
17 this section shall apply to property placed in service after
18 the date of the enactment of this Act.

○