

We have received similar inquiries from Senator Bennett and Congressmen King and Dixon on this subject and have prepared identical replies.

Title VII of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 provides that the Civil Aeronautics Board shall investigate all accidents involving civil aircraft, determine probable cause, and make public such reports as are deemed to be in the public interest. At present, we are investigating all nonfatal accidents to airplanes under 12,500 pounds at the specific request of the Board and submitting our reports of investigation to them. These investigative findings are carefully studied by the Board and a finding as to probable cause is made and published. The contents of these accident files are then public information and may be made available to anyone upon proper request.

In addition, we are authorized to investigate all civil aircraft accidents to assure that the duties and responsibilities of all segments of the Federal Aviation Agency are properly discharged. The reporting form to which you refer is designed exclusively for this internal purpose and may contain unsupported opinion, conjecture, or background material which we are not permitted to release as public information.

We will of course furnish upon proper request a copy of the pilot or operator's accident report and any other related factual information in our possession.

Sincerely,

OSCAR BAKKE,
Director, Bureau of Flight Standards.

SENATOR JAMES E. MURRAY

MAY 10, 1960.

DEAR SENATOR: Thank you for your letter of May 3 with respect to your subcommittee's continuing study on the withholding of information from the Congress by departments and agencies of the executive branch.

This committee, like many of the other legislative committees of the Congress, I suppose, has had frequent occasion to complain to the departments and agencies about the delay in receiving requested information from the executive branch on legislative proposals pending before the committee. I believe that such delays are occasioned more frequently because of the coordinating function of the Bureau of the Budget, rather than the inability of the individual departments to supply the information soon after it has been requested.

I can state, however, that since I became chairman of the committee, I cannot recall any instance where an agency in the executive branch has refused to provide the committee with requested data or information of any type.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES E. MURRAY,
Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.