

# Smokefree Air Talking Points

**Everyone has the right to breathe smokefree air.**

## **Secondhand smoke is a health hazard.**

- Secondhand smoke causes approximately 3,400 lung cancer deaths and about 46,000 heart disease deaths among non-smoking adults each year in the United States (1). According to the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, 1,240 adult Indiana nonsmokers die from exposure to secondhand smoke each year.
- Secondhand smoke contains 69 known or probable carcinogens and more than 4,000 chemicals including formaldehyde, arsenic and cyanide (2).
- Exposure to secondhand smoke causes many of the same tobacco-related diseases and premature death as active smoking, including increasing nonsmokers' heart disease, stroke and cancer risk (3).
- In addition to causing lung cancer and heart disease, secondhand smoke increases the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems and more severe asthma (4).

## **No one should have to choose between a job and good health.**

- Dishwashers, wait staff and gaming employees deserve protection from secondhand smoke as much as bankers, lawyers or office workers.
- The workplace is a major source of secondhand smoke exposure for adults, and secondhand smoke exposure in the workplace has been linked to an increased risk of heart disease and lung cancer among nonsmoking adults (5).
- Food service workers have a 50 percent greater risk than the general public of dying from lung cancer, in part because of their continuous exposure to secondhand smoke in the workplace (6).
- Without smokefree policies in effect, bars and lounges have among the highest concentrations of secondhand smoke of all public spaces – exposing bartenders to even greater levels of secondhand smoke than waiters and waitresses (7).
- The evidence shows that implementing smokefree policies has immediate benefits on restaurant and bar workers' health. Indiana air monitoring studies in Bloomington, Fort Wayne, and West Lafayette found an 89-94 percent decrease in indoor air pollutions in workplaces after the implementation of a smokefree air law (8).

***Each year 1,240 adult Indiana nonsmokers die from exposure to secondhand smoke.***

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## There is NO safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

- The 2006 Surgeon General's Report on *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke* concluded that "The scientific evidence indicates there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. (9)"
- Smoke knows no bounds. Nonsmoking sections and ventilation systems do not eliminate exposure. According to the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), "The only means of effectively eliminating health risks associated with indoor exposure is to ban smoking activity... No other engineering approaches, including current and advanced dilution ventilation or air cleaning technologies, have demonstrated or should be relied upon to control health risks from ETS (environmental tobacco smoke) exposure in spaces where smoking occurs...(10)"
- Restricting smoking in workplaces only during certain hours fails to protect the workers who spend an entire workday in the facility. Additionally, smoke does not leave when the smokers walk out the door.

## Smokefree air is good for business and the economy.

- A 2010 statewide poll conducted by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) revealed that 92 percent of Hoosiers would be likely or more likely to visit bars, restaurants, bowling alleys and casinos that are smokefree (11).
- According to the poll, 71 percent of Hoosiers stated that a restaurant's current smoking policy impacts their decision to dine in (11).
- Passing a statewide smokefree air law would keep all establishments on an even playing field, with the possibility of many places seeing an increase in patronage. Less than 10 percent of those polled would refrain from visiting a non-smoking establishment (11).
- One year after the smokefree air law went into effect, New York City bars and restaurants were booming. Data from the New York City Department of Finance show that tax receipts increased by 8.7 percent, or approximately \$1.4 million. Moreover, the New York State Department of Labor found no evidence that restaurants were closing as a result of the smoke-free law, and the rate of restaurant openings remained unchanged since the law went into effect (11).

## Secondhand smoke costs Indiana millions of dollars per year.

- A 2009 report from the Bowen Research Center at the Indiana University School of Medicine concluded that secondhand smoke costs Indiana \$390 million per year or \$62 per Hoosier (12).
- The social costs of secondhand smoke are substantial. In 2005, the estimated economic value of lost wages, fringe benefits, and services associated with secondhand smoke exposure amounted to \$4.7 billion per year nationwide (13).

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## Broad support exists for smokefree air policies.

- A 2009 poll conducted by the Indiana Rural Health Association (IRHA) in four rural Indiana counties concluded that two-thirds, or 66 percent, of adults in rural Indiana would support an ordinance in a nearby city requiring all workplaces, including restaurants and bars, to be totally smokefree.
- A 2010 poll conducted by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network found that 66 percent of, or two out of three, Indiana voters favor a statewide comprehensive smoke-free air law – an increase of two percentage points over the previous year.

## References

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