



Representative Lindsey Holmes

House Bill 360 Sponsor Statement

An Act prohibiting smoking in certain locations; and providing for an effective date.

HB 360 seeks to protect Alaskans from the well-known health harms of secondhand smoke. This legislation would update existing Alaska state law to provide comprehensive protection from secondhand smoke for all Alaskans in indoor workplaces, businesses and public places. The proposed law would replace the current Alaska Smoking Law, which only prohibits smoking in limited settings such as healthcare facilities, schools, childcare, and public meeting rooms of government buildings, and otherwise provides smoking and non-smoking sections, which does nothing to protect the air quality of employees.

Under current Alaska Smoking Law, individual municipalities have the ability to create more restrictive smoking requirements however; unorganized areas do not have the ability to legislate health powers. This leaves about 70,000 Alaskans without protection from second hand smoke. HB 360 seeks to extend the protections found in Bethel, Anchorage, Juneau, Barrow, Dillingham, Haines, Skagway, Petersburg, Klawock, Nome, Unalaska, and Palmer to places like Fairbanks North-Star Borough, Mat-Su Borough, and Kenai Peninsula Borough as well as other unorganized areas.

This bill is based on current local laws in Anchorage, Juneau, and Palmer, which are well established and well regarded by citizens and businesses. This legislation takes the concept of those working laws, expands them statewide, so that all Alaskans are free from exposure to secondhand smoke in public spaces and workplaces. 400 Alaskan businesses and organizations, representing all regions of the state, have already signed on in support of a statewide smoke-free workplace law.

Please join me in supporting this important piece of legislation that will protect the right of all Alaskans to breathe clean air.