



Alaska Dental Society

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January 13, 2014

Ken Helander
Advocacy Director
AARP Alaska
3601 C Street #1420
Anchorage, Alaska 99503
907-762-3314

Dear Ken,

The Alaska Dental Society is pleased to offer our full support of legislation filed that would introduce a statewide smoke-free workplace ban. With the mountains of evidence now of the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke, no Alaskan should be subjected to such a well known health hazard in their place of employment. We applaud all the communities that have been able to institute such a ban and are 100% behind making the jump to a statewide ban on smoking in the workplace.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather A. Willis". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Dr. Heather A. Willis
Alaska Dental Society President

Resolution of Support for Smokefree Alaska

Whereas, Secondhand smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including at least 69 of which are known to cause cancer¹, including formaldehyde, benzene, vinyl chloride, arsenic, ammonia and hydrogen cyanide², and people who are exposed to secondhand smoke are inhaling many of the same cancer-causing substances and poisons as smokers³; and

Whereas, Numerous studies have found that tobacco smoke is a major contributor to indoor air pollution and that breathing secondhand smoke is a cause of disease in healthy nonsmokers⁴, including heart disease, stroke, respiratory disease and lung cancer²; and

Whereas, The 2006 U.S. Surgeon General's Report, "*The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*," concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke; ventilation and other air cleaning technologies cannot eliminate exposure of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke; and smokefree workplace policies are the only effective way to eliminate secondhand smoke exposure in the workplace⁴; and

Whereas, The 2010 U.S. Surgeon General's Report, "*How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease*," determined that even occasional exposure to secondhand smoke is harmful⁵; and

Whereas, For every nine smokers who die, one nonsmoker dies from exposure to secondhand smoke⁶; and

Whereas, Approximately half of Alaska's population is not protected by a smokefree workplace law⁷; and

Whereas, Among those who work primarily indoors, young adults aged 18 to 29 are significantly less likely to be protected by a smokefree indoor workplace policy than other Alaskan adults⁸; and

Whereas, Research in communities where smokefree laws have been adopted has consistently shown neutral or positive economic effects to the hospitality industry following a smokefree workplace requirement⁹; and

Whereas, Smokefree workplace laws protect people from secondhand smoke⁴, reduce tobacco use overall and reduce health care costs⁶; and

Whereas, all Alaskans have the right to breathe smokefree air;

THEREFORE, we, the undersigned support a law in Alaska to make all workplaces 100% smokefree to protect the health and safety of all workers and visitors from the dangers of secondhand smoke.

Organization: Alaska Dental Society

Signature: 

Name: David Nielson DDS

Title: Executive Director ADS