

SB1 | HB 328

March 14, 2016

Attention: Senate Finance Committee – Alaska Legislature

House Health & Social Services Committee

Thank you for the providing a public hearing opportunity for constituent input to your deliberations on SB-1. I would have given testimony at the Fairbanks LIO this morning, but previous commitments did not allow for my participation.

I have long been in favor of smoke free environments and the health issues that are abated by this change in practice, so fifteen years ago when my husband and I first began our business – a coffee house in Fairbanks – we determined that the business would be smoke-free.

A significant factor in my strong support of this bill is that my mother, diagnosed with Emphysema, never smoked; but did work in smoke-filled restaurants for most of her life. I, too, never smoked; but during earlier times in my performance work, I spent way too many hours in smoke-filled rooms, breathing more deeply than perhaps anyone else in the room, as I sang for their entertainment. While I don't have the severe condition that my mother does, I do have issues of allergic and problematic breathing responses to smoke filled rooms.

It's been mentioned that people can make the choice if they want to work in such conditions. True enough and I made the decision to create my own smoke-free workplace, where my band SAND CASTLE performs every Friday and Saturday evening. However, this is not a realistic option for most musicians – particularly young hopeful musicians – and they should not have to put their health in jeopardy in order to work.


In talking with club owners who have converted to smoke-free venues, I am not surprised when they tell me that their revenue increased substantially.

Only recently did I learn of the properties of E-cigarettes and, based on what I learned, I firmly agree with including them as an item that doesn't deserve acceptance in a smoke-free venue.

As an Alaskan leader, you are called upon to decide on a broad spectrum of issues that relate to the well-being of our communities. Please give your utmost consideration to this bill. It will provide for a more productive and healthful workplace and, not surprisingly, will also benefit in less health costs for our state.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,


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