



March 22, 2016

Members of the Committee

My name is Angela Cernich. I am an Alaskan born Athabascan woman who, along with my husband, own and operate Arctic Industries, a small business here in Anchorage. There is no irony in the fact that our business focuses on safety in the work place. You see, the topic of second hand smoke is of great personal concern for me and something that I feel very strongly about.

As a child, I was raised in a smoke-filled environment compliments of my parents who were the proverbial chain smokers. This had a very profound effect on my personal health. I had many issues related to my severe allergy to smoke... yet my parents just didn't recognize the cause of those health issues. After I moved out of my home, many of the severe issues subsided.

However, as an adult, I've always dealt with asthmatic and lung issues related to the damage done to my lungs. So much so, that last year, as I was in a hospital with lungs which were collapsing, I was diagnosed with COPD. The very sad part of this disease for me is that I personally never smoked a day in my life. So here I am, facing a lifelong disease that will likely shorten my life... a disease that I have to vigilantly fight with medications, inhalers, and lung issues that plagued me on a daily basis. Even the common cold becomes much more for me: it will linger for weeks and cause me to have coughing bouts that lead to extreme migraine like headaches. And yet, I am not the one who caused this.

My parents did not know back then the damage they were doing. We do know today the effects of second hand smoke. When I hear a smoker say, "No one should be allowed to take away my rights to smoke", I say, "Of course I don't want to take away your right to kill yourself. But I do want the right for me to be able to breath smoke free air. You have the right to choose to kill yourself: you don't have the right to take me with you!"

I also know what it is like to be in a remote area where jobs are scarce and you're forced to choose between making a living or your health. When I went to Ninilchik to spend the summer with my father who was diagnosed with cancer, the only place I could find a job was at the Inlet View, a restaurant/bar that allows smoking. Within a week, I was so sick that I had to quit my job. Because there were no other jobs available, I was forced to leave and did not have the chance to spend that summer with my father.

As you hear the testimonies on why it is so important that we give all Alaskan's the right to breath smoke free air, I hope you will remember this: if my father were alive today, I know without a doubt that he would look you in the eye and tell you, had he known what he was doing to his beloved daughters lungs, he would have chosen to take it outside!

Thank you for the opportunity to tell you my reasons for being an ardent supporter of HB328.

Angela Cernich



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House HSS
Committee name

Committee on HB 328, dated 3/22/16
Bill/Subject

Hello. My name is Stephani Allen, Executive Director for United Way of Mat-Su and Coalition Director for Thrive Mat-Su, our local youth substance abuse prevention coalition. I would like to ask for your support of HB 328. A statewide smokefree ordinance would be beneficial for a variety of reasons. You have a unique opportunity to use policy to make significant improvements in both public health and public safety. Like OSHA regulating fumes in auto body shops to the prohibition of trans fat in food preparation, prohibiting smoking in public places has true, positive health outcomes by not allowing harmful chemicals to be breathed in by bystanders. As a resident of Palmer, I understand first hand the notion of not wanting to →

Signed: Stephani Allen
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

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Address

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Phone number

Thank you - Chair - Paul Seaton

I would like to express my support for House Bill 328.

It is my firm belief that no one should be exposed to second hand smoke in the workplace or anywhere for that matter against their wishes.

I was a smoker for 33 years. I quit smoking almost three years ago. Even when I was a smoker it was my belief that I had no right to subject others to the health risks associated with my habit. I also did not think that anybody should have to endure the smell of my cigarette smoke or have it permeate their clothes and hair. I think that it is only fair that if folks want to smoke they should do it away from anybody and everybody that does not want to be exposed to it.

Scott Hoy

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interfere with the operations and policies of private business owners. When the residents of Palmer were considering this issue for a city-wide regulation, business owners spoke passionately that a regulation would unjustly harm their business and they would lose revenue. Palmer residents voted and passed a city-wide ordinance. The outcome, from the business sector, has been nothing but remarkable. Instead of losing money, Palmer businesses are making more money than ever before and have increased not only sales but new loyal customers. I ask for your support of HB 328 to support public health, to support public safety, to support increased revenue for businesses and to implement a policy that will require less treatment, hospitalization and State health costs to treat chronic disease. Thank you for your service to Alaska and for the opportunity to express my thoughts on this important issue.