

The AlaskaPoll



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# Opinions and Attitudes Regarding a Statewide Smoke-Free Workplace Law in Alaska

June 2012

Prepared for:

American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network, Inc.





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# Methodology



**Overview**

During the period June 13-17, 2012, one thousand three hundred forty-five (n=1,345) Alaskan registered voters were personally contacted via telephone concerning their awareness, attitudes and opinions of smoking and smoke-free workplace laws in Alaska. Dittman Research and Communications (DRC) worked with the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) to develop a survey instrument that addresses these topics. All views and data were obtained on a strictly confidential basis.

**Sample Design**

To meet the needs of ACS CAN, a sample design was featured which allows for valid and independent research and analysis of both statewide and regional opinions. An oversample of respondents was conducted in certain areas to achieve this.

Overall results were weighted to bring the sample into correct geographic distribution. Further weighting ensures an accurate representation of Alaskan registered voters in terms of age and political registration.

Respondents were contacted over both landline phones and cell phones – phone numbers were generated randomly, ensuring representation of both listed and unlisted numbers. Approximately 20% of the respondents in each region were contacted via cell phone, with the remaining 80% contacted via household landlines.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Margin of error</u>
Anchorage	±6.9%
Fairbanks	±5.7%
Mat-Su	±5.7%
Kenai Peninsula	±5.8%
Southeast Alaska	±8.5%
<u>Rural Alaska</u>	<u>±9.4%</u>
Statewide	±2.7%

**Processing the Data**

DRC employees completed coding, editing, data entry and verification, while data processing was completed through the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The SPSS program is one of the most sophisticated research-oriented data processing and analytical systems available, and is designed specifically for the processing and analysis of survey research data.

# Summary





### Key Findings

- There is little disagreement among Alaskans that cigarettes are hazardous...
  - 91% Believe smoking is a "serious" or "moderate health hazard"
  - 83% Believe secondhand smoke is a "serious" or "moderate health hazard"
  - 91% "Strongly" or "somewhat agree" that *"Restaurants and bars would be healthier for customers and employees if they were smoke-free"*
  - 93% "Strongly" or "somewhat agree" that *"All Alaskans have the right to breathe clean air"*
  - 82% "Strongly" or "somewhat agree" that *"All Alaskan workers should be protected from secondhand smoke in the workplace"*
- Overall, a considerable percentage of Alaskans (54%) already think a statewide smoke-free law exists. This is not too surprising considering the majority of residents live in areas with strong smoke-free ordinances. However this holds true, to a large extent, even in areas without smoke-free ordinances: Mat-Su (51%), Kenai Peninsula (45%) and Fairbanks (43%).
- In total, two-out-of-three Alaskan voters (66%) favor a statewide smoke-free workplace law – 55% "strongly favor". A majority of residents in all regions of the state favor the law.
- Approximately two-out-of-five Alaskan voters (38%) indicate they would be more likely to vote for a candidate who supports a smoke-free workplace law. A similarly high percentage (43%) say that a candidate's position on this issue would not affect their vote either way. Only 14% would be less likely to vote for a candidate who supports the law.
- Nearly three-out-of-four Alaskans (73%) think a statewide smoke-free law would have a positive or neutral effect on Alaska's bar and restaurant industry.
  - Only 7% of Alaskans say they would go out less often because of the law – the remaining 92% would go out more often or about the same as they do now.
  - Over two-out-of-three Alaskans (68%) indicate they *"would avoid a restaurant or bar that allows smoking indoors"*.

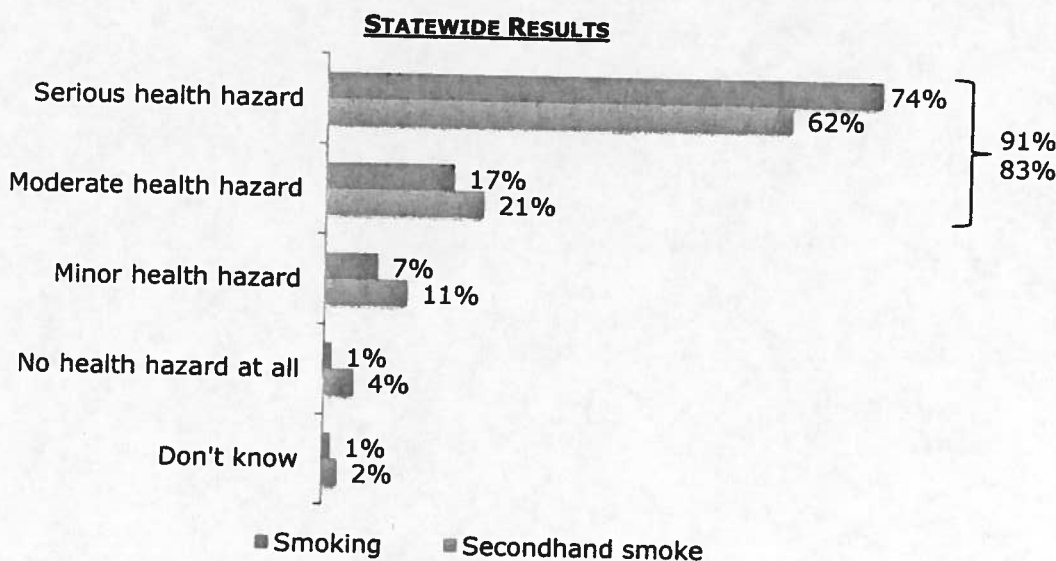
# Findings



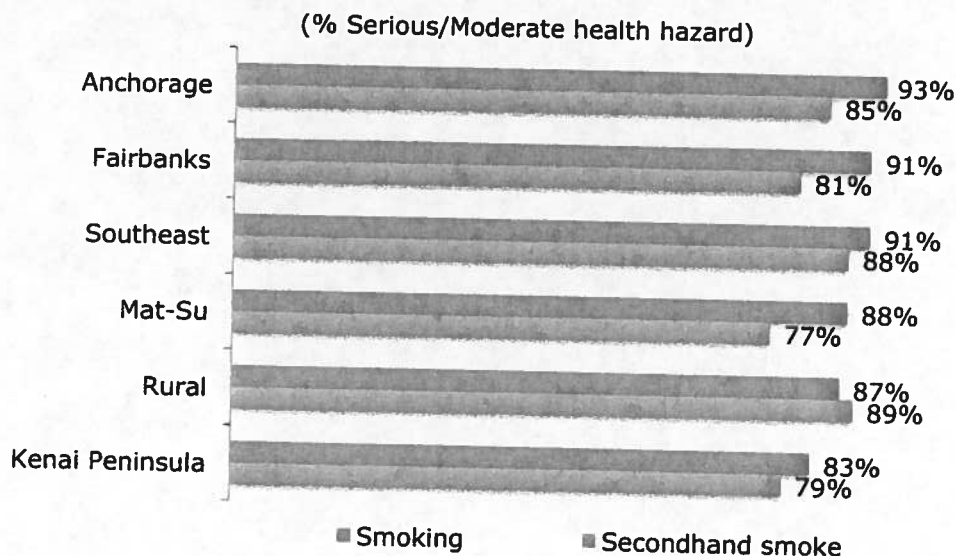
Approximately three-out-of-four Alaskans (74%) believe smoking is a serious health hazard, and nine-out-of-ten (91%) report it is at least a moderate health hazard. Similar percentages report exposure to secondhand smoke as hazardous. Interestingly, the belief that smoking is a "serious health hazard" increases with age, education level and household income.

**Question:** *In general, do you feel that smoking is a serious, moderate, or minor health hazard, or no health hazard at all?*

*And do you feel that exposure to secondhand smoke is a serious, moderate, or minor health hazard, or no health hazard at all?*



Opinions on the effects of smoking and secondhand smoke are fairly consistent across the state...

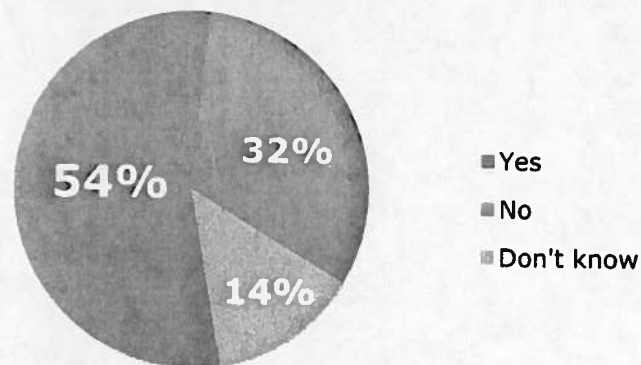




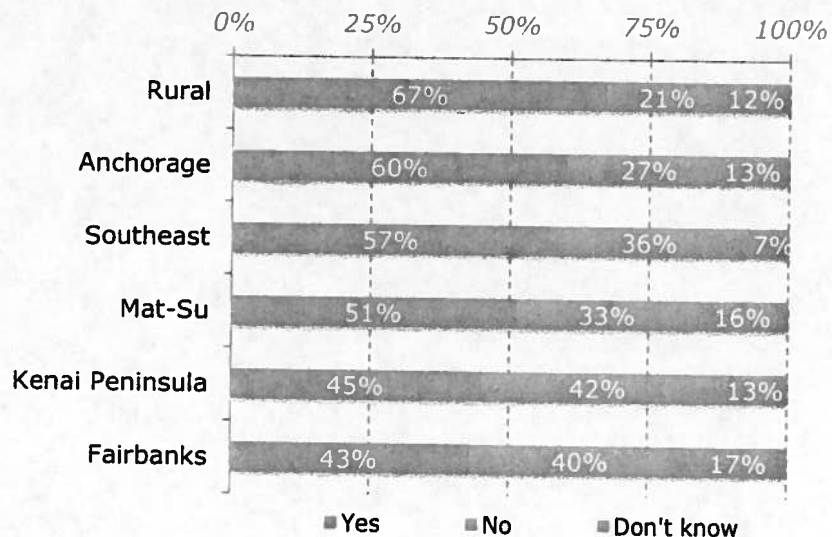
Overall, the majority of Alaskans (54%) already think a statewide smoke-free law exists. This is consistent across all demographic subgroups.

**Question:** *As far as you know, is there a statewide law in Alaska that prohibits smoking indoors in public places?*

#### STATEWIDE RESULTS

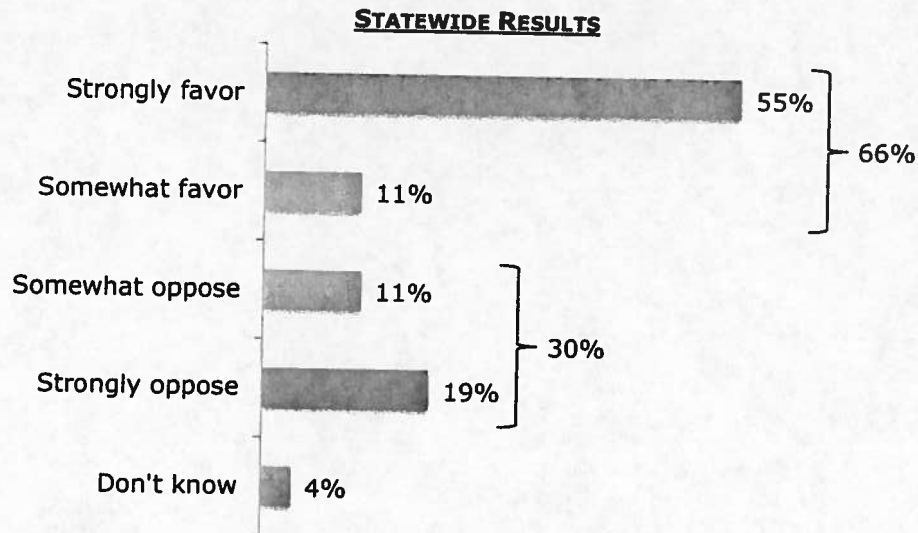


A significant number of Alaskans in all regions report they believe a statewide smoke-free law is already in effect.

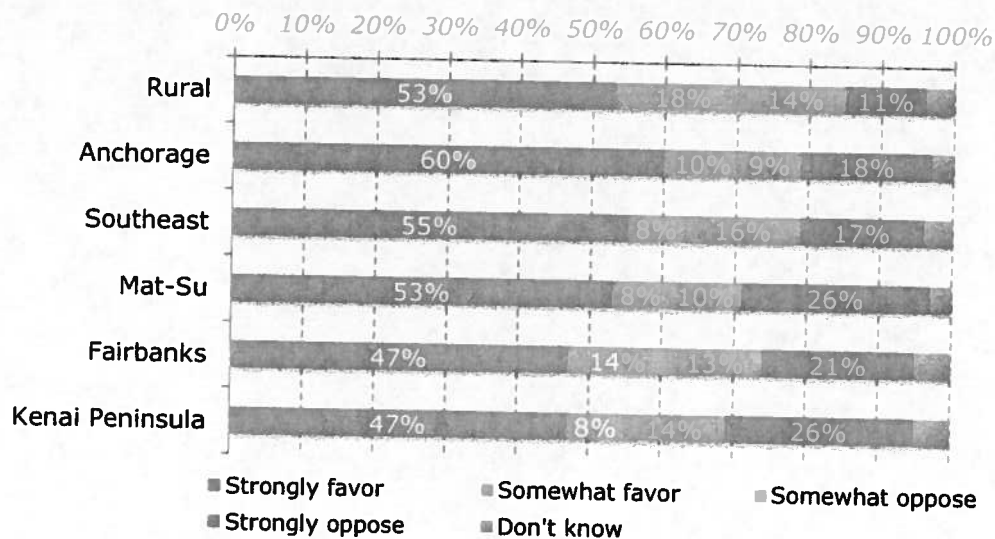


By a margin of over 2-to-1, Alaskan voters report they would favor a statewide smoke-free workplace law – the majority indicating they “strongly favor” (55%).

**Question:** *Would you favor or oppose a statewide law in Alaska that would prohibit smoking indoors in public places, including workplaces, public buildings, offices, restaurants and bars?*

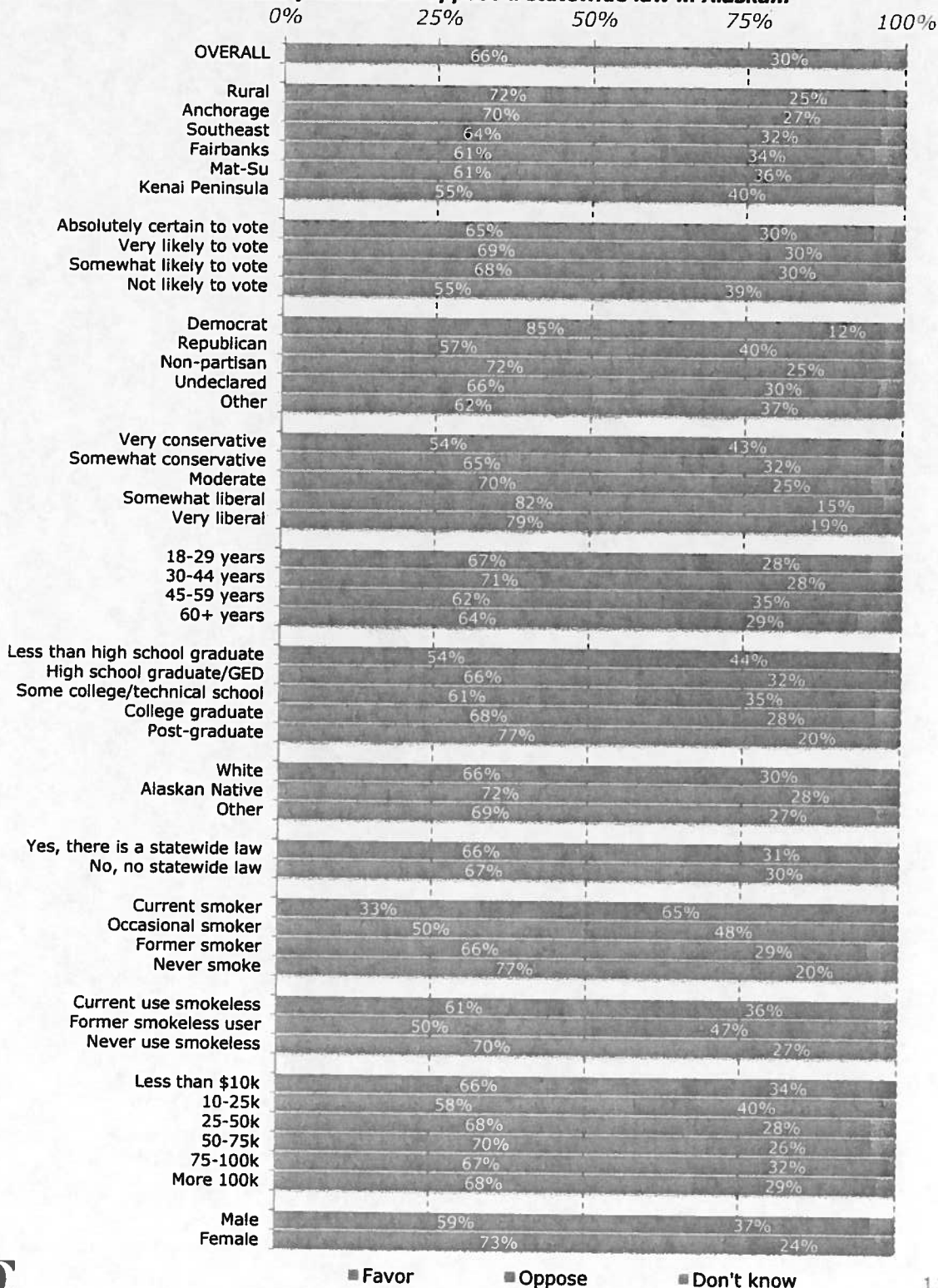


A sizable majority in all regions report they would favor a statewide smoke-free law. In fact, aside from Fairbanks and the Kenai Peninsula, the majority of residents in all regions “strongly favor” the law.



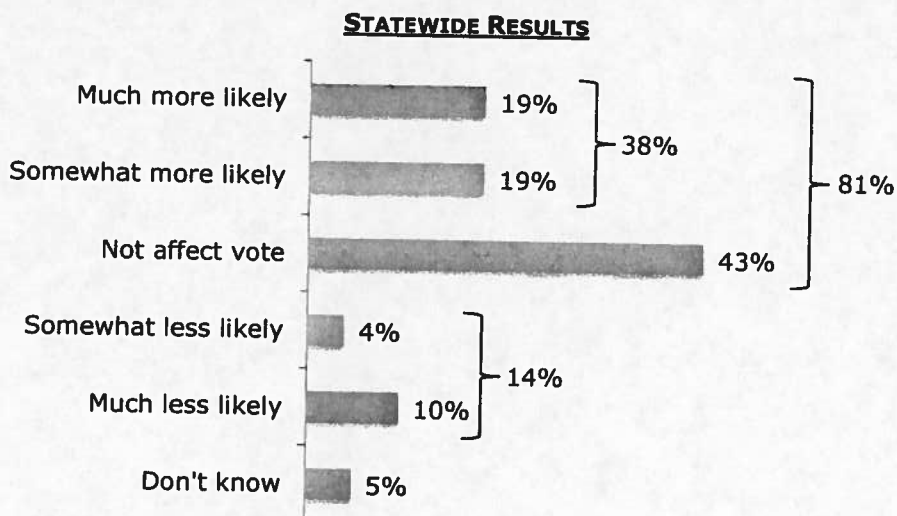
Taking a closer look at support and opposition for a statewide smoke-free law, we see strong support across nearly all subgroups. The only instance of less than majority support is among current smokers.

**Question:** *Would you favor or oppose a statewide law in Alaska...*

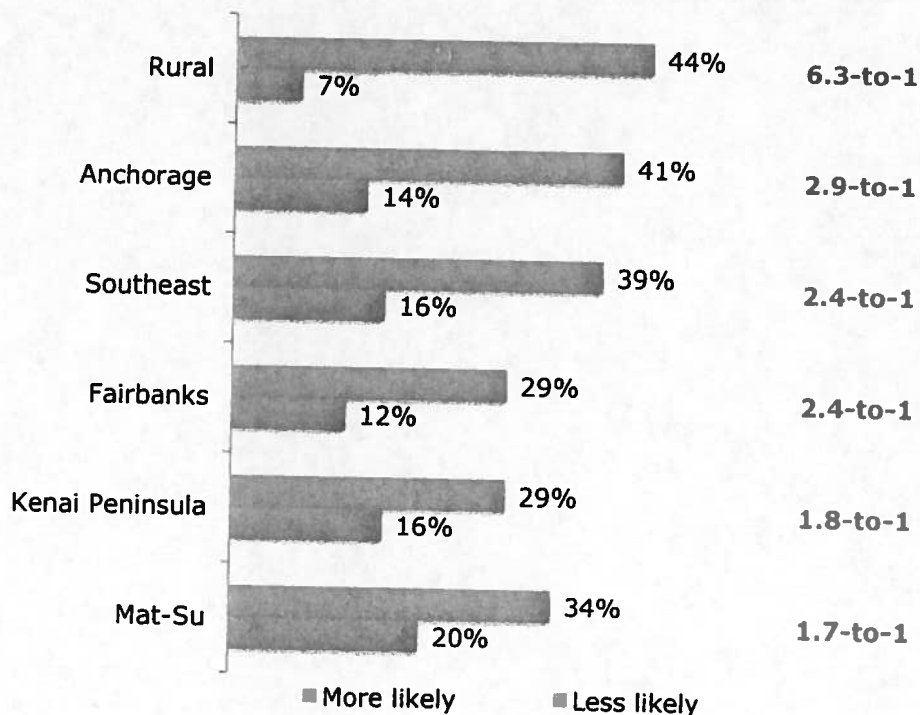


In total, a considerable percentage (38%) report that a candidate's support for a smoke-free workplace law would make them more likely to vote for that candidate. An additional 43% indicate that a candidate's position on a smoke-free workplace law would not affect their vote.

**Question:** *Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who supports a law that would prohibit smoking indoors in public places and workplaces in Alaska, or would their opinion on this issue not affect your vote?*

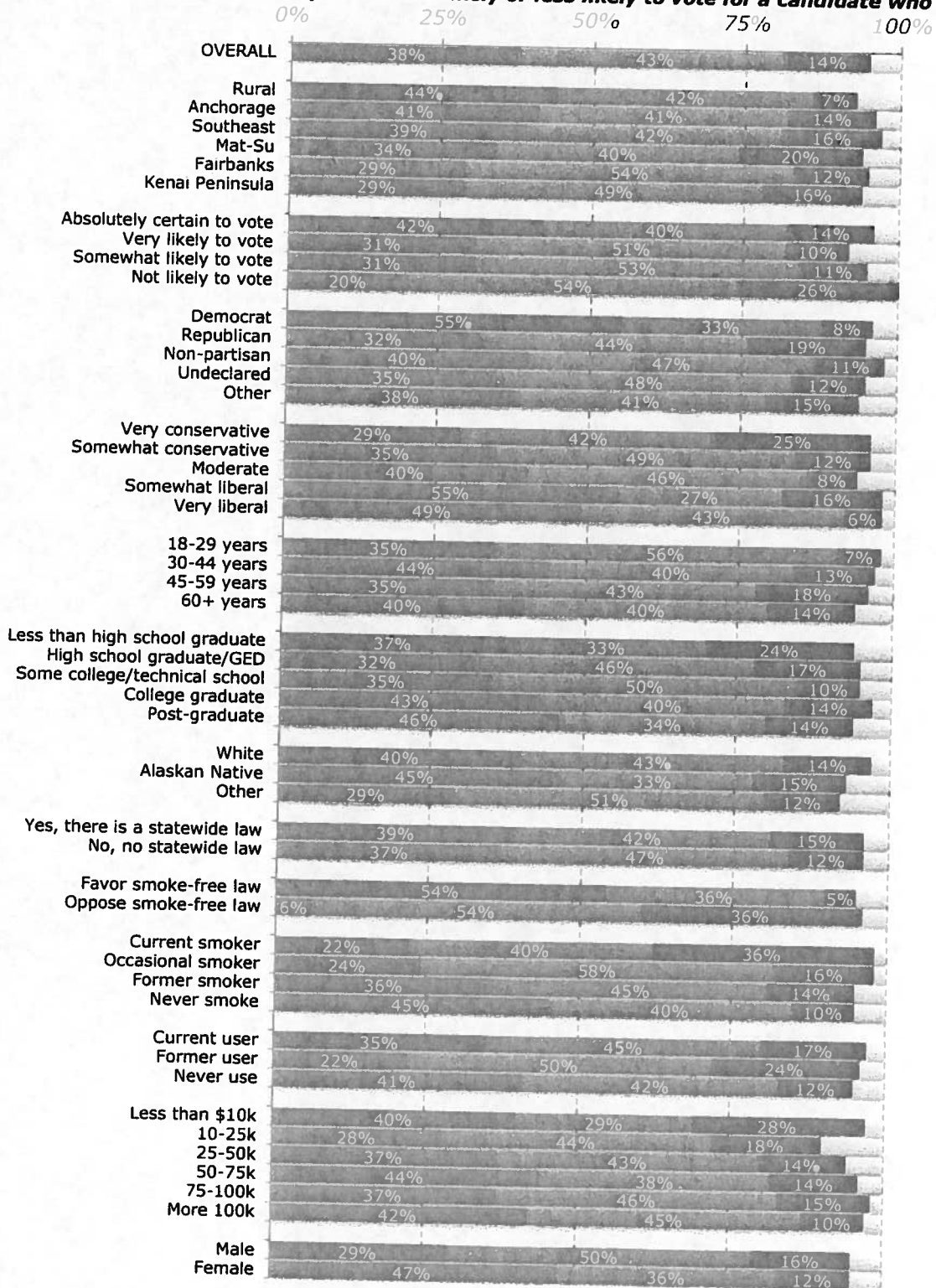


The net effect of a candidate supporting a smoke-free law would be very positive across the state.



A candidate's support for a statewide smoke-free law would have an overwhelmingly positive/neutral effect across all demographic subgroups.

**Question:** Would you be more likely or less likely to vote for a candidate who supports...



More likely Not affect vote Less likely Don't know

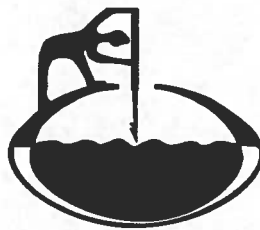
Dittman Research & Communications

**THE IMPACT OF ANCHORAGE'S 2000 AND 2007  
SMOKE-FREE POLICIES  
ON SELECT RESTAURANTS AND BARS**

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January 2014



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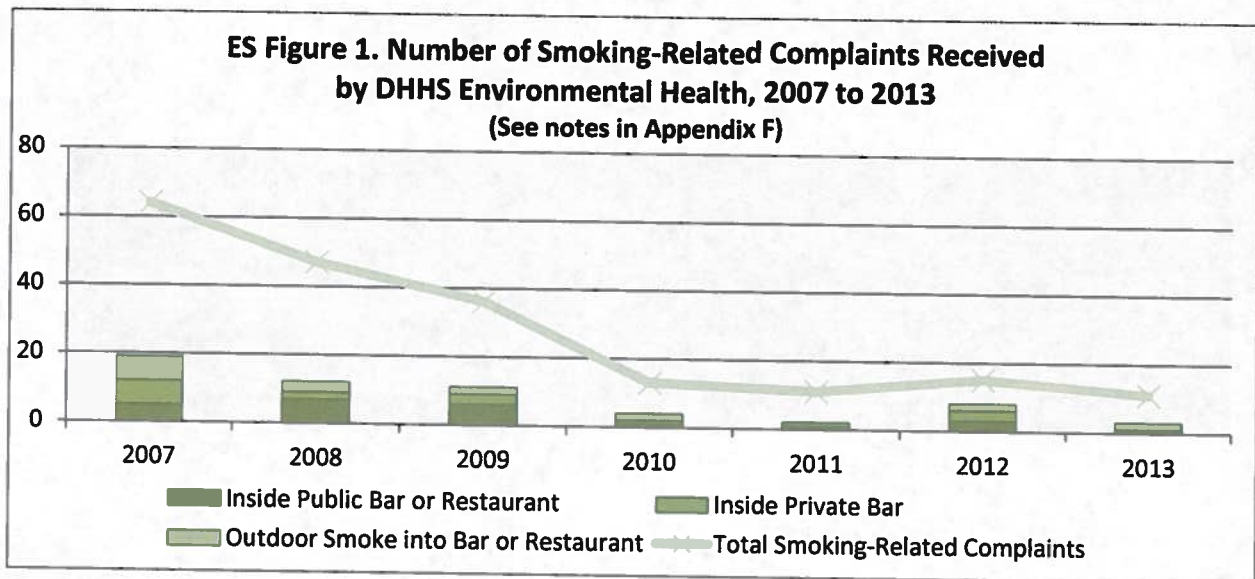


## Executive Summary

The American Lung Association in Alaska (ALAA) asked the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) to investigate the impact of the Anchorage 2000 and 2007 Clean Indoor Air (CIA) municipal ordinances on selected restaurants and bars. As previous U.S. studies have been conducted that speak to the economic and health impacts of CIA laws, ALAA also requested that ISER synthesize results of these existing studies and conduct a survey on restaurant and bar representatives' perceptions of the impact of the ordinances.

## Policy Enforcement

The Municipality of Anchorage (MOA), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Environmental Health, Food Safety and Sanitation Program is responsible for enforcing the smoke-free ordinances. Key informants shared that less than 5% of annual complaints received are for smoking related issues, and less than 5% of the investigations conducted are for smoking related issues. The number of organizations investigated for violations varied from three to six per year, and the number of complaints reported is summarized below:



## Literature Review

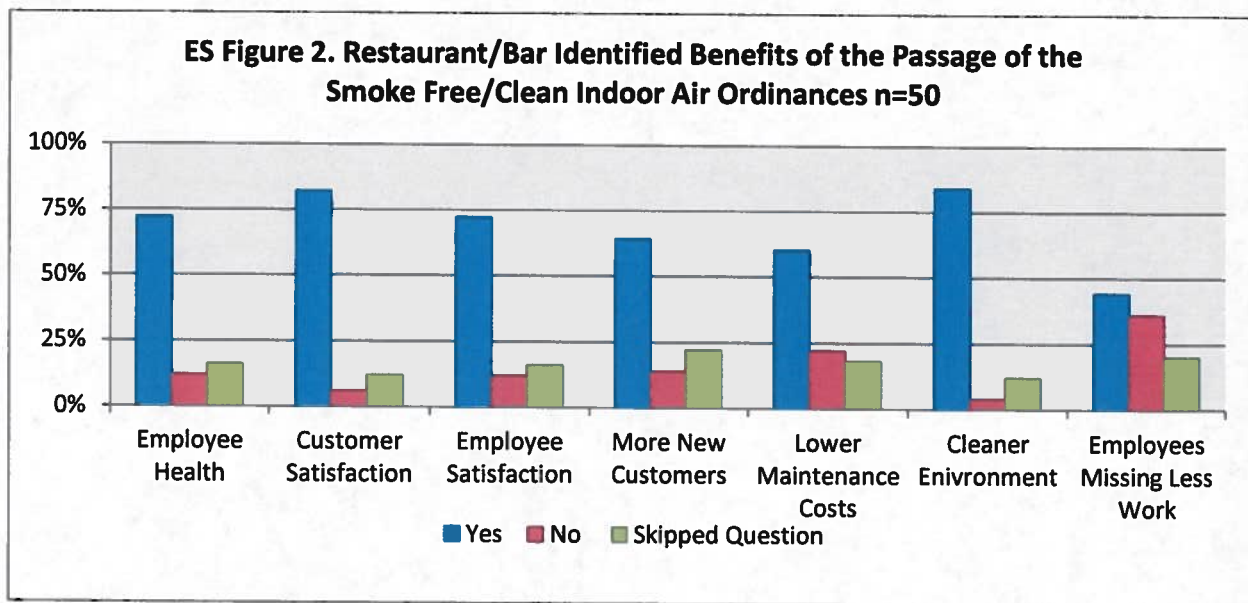
In a preliminary estimate of the economic impact of the 2000 CIA ordinance in Anchorage, Larson (2001) found that there was no detectable negative effect on employment in the hospitality industry by August of 2001. Between 2000 and 2001, employment increased by 10% in restaurants that went from restricted smoking before the ordinance to non-smoking after the ordinance, while employment increased by only 6% in restaurants that continued to allow restricted smoking after the ordinance.

Using employment data on Anchorage bars from 2001 to 2010, a report commissioned by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (2011) found that bar employment within the Municipality was 10% higher than it would have been if the 2007 Clean Indoor Air law would not have been implemented. Travers & Dobson (2008) compared the air quality in 13 smoke-free Anchorage bars after the passage of the 2007 CIA to seven Juneau bars where smoking was permitted. Similar to the results of previous studies, they found that the levels of respirable suspended particles (RSP) were 33 times higher in the Juneau bars when compared to those in

Anchorage. These particles are emitted from tobacco smoke and are particularly harmful because of their small size, making them easily inhalable into the lungs.

### Survey of Selected Restaurants and Bars

ISER interviewed representatives of 50 full-service restaurants and bars in the Anchorage municipality on their perceptions of the smoke free indoor ordinances. A total of 96% (48/50) identified at least one benefit from the passage of the ordinances, with responses summarized below:



The majority of survey respondents (78%) indicated that customer feedback about the clean indoor air ordinances (CIA) was either very positive or somewhat positive, while 2% reported that customer feedback was very negative. The majority of respondents (76%) indicated that employee feedback on the CIA was either very positive or somewhat positive, while 6% reported that employee feedback was either somewhat negative or very negative.

The majority of survey respondents (92%) reported that customer compliance with the CIA was either excellent or good, while 2% reported customer compliance as fair. Similarly, 86% of respondents indicated employee compliance with the CIA was either excellent or good while 8% reported that employee compliance was fair.

Restaurant and bar representatives reported that they required smokers to stay an average of 30.5 feet away from the entrances to their establishments. At 58%, a little more than half of respondents (29/50) reported that the mandated minimum distance for their establishment was appropriate (5 ft. for bars or restaurants that serve alcohol, 20 feet for restaurants that do not serve alcohol); 38% (19/50) reported that the mandated distance for their establishment was inappropriate. A majority of respondents, 62% (31/50), felt that a different mandated distance would be more appropriate, suggesting an average of 30 ft.

### Limitations

The survey results are not necessarily representative of Anchorage full service restaurants and bars. However, the consistency of the findings suggests agreement on the effects of the ordinance and the lack of any systemic issues arising from implementing smoke-free workplace policies.

## **Introduction**

The American Lung Association in Alaska (ALAA) has asked the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) to investigate the impact of the Anchorage 2000 and 2007 Clean Indoor Air municipal ordinances on selected restaurants and bars. As previous U.S. studies speak to the economic and health impacts of Smoke Free and Clean Indoor Air Laws., ALAA also requested that that ISER synthesize results of these existing studies, and conduct a survey on restaurant and bar representatives' perceptions of the impact of the ordinances. ALAA outlined three areas of focus for this project, including:

- Previous work and findings related to the impact of smoke free ordinances on businesses, including potential changes in employment
- Enforcement of the smoke free ordinances in Anchorage
- Restaurant and bar representatives' perspectives on the impact of the smoke free ordinances

To inform these areas of interest, ISER conducted a literature review of previous work related to smoke free policies, a survey of restaurant and bar representatives in Anchorage, and key informant interviews with individuals responsible for enforcement of the smoke free policies.

This report begins with an introduction, followed by the results of a review of the previously published literature related to smoke free policies in Alaska. The methodology for both the key informant interviews and the survey of restaurants and bars are described in the next section. The methodology includes information on the selection of respondents and details of how the data was collected and analyzed. Finally, we describe findings from the key informant interviews and survey. Appendices contain the questions posed to key informants, the survey used with restaurant and bar representatives, and verbatim comments on the impact of the Anchorage smoke free ordinances.

## **Anchorage Municipal Ordinances**

### **Anchorage Municipal Ordinance 2000-91(S), Effective December 31, 2000**

In 2000, the Anchorage Assembly amended title 16 of the municipal code, adding chapter 16.65 about smoking in work and enclosed public spaces. The law took effect December 31, 2000. The code prohibited smoking in the Anchorage municipality in:

- Enclosed public spaces
- Places of employment

Exempted from this regulation were:

- Private residences
- Places of employment with four or less employees
- 25% of hotel and motel rooms rented to guests
- Retail tobacco stores
- Private functions in restaurants, hotel and motel conference or meeting rooms and public or private assembly rooms
- Bars -defined as a "...premise licensed under AS 04.11.090 [beverage dispensary license that authorizes selling or serving of alcohol] which does not employ any person under the age of 21 and which does not serve any person under the age of 21 unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian and where tobacco smoke cannot filter into any other area where smoking is prohibited through a passageway, ventilation system, or other means."