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Smoke Free Environments

Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Every year secondhand smoke kills 53,000 nonsmoking Americans. With statistics like that, it's clear we must reduce exposure to this deadly indoor air pollution in all workplaces. Smoke free air activity is taking place all across the state including thirty-four communities having local smoke free air ordinances.

Almost every smoke free ordinance campaign includes a discussion on the economic impact of smoke free laws. The tobacco industry and their front groups love to claim that smoke free laws have a negative effect on business, especially on the hospitality sector. In fact, for several decades they have been claiming that businesses will lose "30%" of their profits. However, every legitimate economic study ever done has shown no negative impact, and in a few cases, studies have shown a positive impact. Only studies commissioned or supported by the tobacco industry have shown a negative impact.

For the Wisconsin Nurses Association, we are interested in public policy that support smoke free workplace laws that would prohibit smoking in all indoor public places and workplaces, including restaurants and taverns as a means of reducing exposure to secondhand smoke so that:

- ✍ Reductions in medical costs and economic losses which are estimated to total nearly \$6 billion a year for nonsmokers suffering from lung cancer or heart disease due to secondhand smoke can be realized.
- ✍ Smoke free businesses will have healthier workers which in turn results in fewer missed days of work, more productivity, and lower health care costs.

For more information contact the Wisconsin Nurses Association at 608-221-0383 or info@wisconsinnurses.org