



1400 EYE STREET, N.W. • SUITE 1200 • WASHINGTON, DC 20005
PHONE (202) 296-5469 • FAX (202) 296-5427

Smoke-Free Laws are Good for Public Health, Good for Workers, and Good for Business!

✓ Good for Public Health

- **Everyone has the right to breathe clean air.** The [Surgeon General's 2006 Report](#) on The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke confirmed that secondhand smoke causes cancer, heart disease and serious lung ailments. As former Surgeon General Richard Carmona stated when releasing the report, "The debate is over. The science is clear. Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance but a serious health hazard."
- Secondhand smoke contains more than [4,000 chemicals, including 69 that cause cancer](#), including arsenic, ammonia, formaldehyde, and polonium 210.
- According to the [National Cancer Institute](#), at least 38,000 **nonsmokers** die each year in the U.S. as a result of secondhand smoke.

✓ Good for Workers

- A [recent study](#) by ventilation technology expert Jim Repace revealed that the air in a smoky bar is two and a half times more polluted than highways.
- Although 76 percent of white-collar workers are covered by smoke-free policies, just 52 percent of blue-collar workers and [only 43 percent of food service workers](#) benefit from these protections. In other words, the less you earn, the more likely you are to be exposed to secondhand smoke on the job!
- Before New York bars and restaurants went smoke free, 88 percent of hospitality workers reported experiencing sensory symptoms (red or irritated eyes, sore or scratchy throat, runny nose, sneezing or nose irritation). One year after the law took effect, complaints of sensory symptoms among the sample of workers dropped by 57 percent. ([Tobacco Control](#), 2005)
- An examination of the impact of Ireland's smoke-free law on bar workers in Dublin found improvements in measured pulmonary function and significant reductions in self-reported irritant symptoms after the law went into effect. (*American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine*, 2007).

✓ Good for Business

- The [Surgeon General's 2006 Report](#) examined numerous economic impact studies from states and local communities across the country. The report concluded that, "Evidence from peer-reviewed studies shows that smoke-free policies and regulations do not have an adverse economic impact on the hospitality industry."
- A comprehensive review of all available studies on the economic impact of smoke-free workplace laws concluded that: "All of the best designed studies report no impact or a positive impact of smoke-free restaurant and bar laws on sales or employment." ([Tobacco Control](#), 2003).
- The 2006 *Zagat Survey: America's Top Restaurants* of 115,000 Americans found that 58 percent of respondents said they would dine out the same amount if restaurants were smoke-free and 39 percent would dine out more. Only 3 percent said they would dine out less often.
- Smoke-free laws help lessen the economic toll that secondhand smoke already takes on our nation. According to an [August 2005 study by the Society of Actuaries](#), secondhand smoke costs our nation \$10 billion annually in health care and other costs.