



Support HB 24 Make State Government Buildings Smoke-Free March 2007

HB 24 will make all state government buildings smoke-free and provide an option to local governments to make local government buildings and transportation systems smoke-free.

Secondhand Smoke is Harmful to Health

- According to the US Surgeon General, *there is NO safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke*. The 2006 Surgeon General's Report on the Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Secondhand Smoke found that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke¹.
- Every year secondhand smoke causes the deaths of 35,000 Americans.² In North Carolina, 1,220 to 2,180 adults, children and babies die each year from others' smoking.³ Secondhand smoke has been shown to increase nonsmokers' risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer.^{1 2 4}
- *As little as thirty minutes of exposure can trigger a heart attack* in someone with heart disease or risk factors for heart disease.² The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns, "...all patients at risk of coronary heart disease or with known coronary artery disease should be advised to avoid all indoor environments that permit smoking."⁵

The Public Supports Smoke-free Policies for ALL Workers

According to a September 2006 Elon poll, 86 percent of respondents said that they agree or strongly agree that employees in North Carolina *should be able to work in a smoke-free environment*.

Local Control

Currently, North Carolina state law restricts the authority of local decision-makers to pass smoke-free policies in their communities. Article 64 of North Carolina state law §143 prohibits local governments from determining their own public health ordinances for clean indoor air after October 15th, 1993. There are certain exemptions from this state law, including the General Assembly buildings, schools, prisons, college dormitories, health departments, social service departments and community colleges. *Local policy-makers have the authority to make only these venues smoke free.*⁶

Making all state government buildings smoke-free is a logical next step after making the General Assembly buildings smoke-free. It is time to protect *all* state workers.

Our state government has an obligation to protect state and local workers from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke.

Vote YES on HB 24

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General—Executive Summary*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006

² National Cancer Institute. *Health Effects of Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke*. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No. 10. Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute; 1999.

³ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids "The Toll of Tobacco in North Carolina" Fact Sheet, downloaded March 1, 2006 at: <http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/reports/settlements/toll.php?StateID=NC>

⁴ California Air Resources Board, Sacramento, CA. January 25, 2006. <http://www.arb.ca.gov/toxics/ets/factsheetets.pdf>

⁵ Pechacek, TF and Babb, S *How acute and reversible are the cardiovascular risks of secondhand smoke?* BMJ. 2004 Apr 24;328(7446):980-3.

⁶ NC Gen. Stat. 143-595 et seq.