



Legislative Update
June 26, 2006

Please read and forward to your colleagues and networks!

HB 1133 to be Heard this week in House Health Committee

We want to thank everyone who took the time to communicate with their House member last week about HB 1133. Your contacts helped to ensure that efforts to make all areas of the General Assembly 100% smoke-free will keep moving in the House this week, and hopefully be voted on by the full House before adjournment (rumors at this point indicate they will try to be done by mid-July).

HB 1133 continues to have momentum. Late last week the bill was scheduled for a hearing before the House Health Committee. HB 1133 is scheduled to be heard at the Committee's next meeting scheduled for tomorrow (Tuesday, June 27) at noon in room 544 of the Legislative Office Building. However, because there are at least eight other bills on the Committee's calendar, the bill may be held over until the Committee's other scheduled meeting for the week, Thursday, June 29 at noon. If possible, please plan to attend the hearing to show your support for the bill.

IF the bill is heard by the House Health Committee this week and receives a favorable report with no amendments, it will be sent to the House floor and will hopefully be voted on before adjournment.

Since we had so much good contact with House members last week, we are not issuing another request for calls to House members at this time. However, should we see evidence of the bill stalling, we will be asking for additional contacts – so stay tuned.

IF you happen to have an opportunity to talk with your House member this week, our message to House members continues to be: ***vote "yes" to concur with HB 1133 to make the General Assembly buildings 100% smoke-free.***

Some talking points about why the General Assembly buildings should be 100% smoke-free:

- **Because secondhand smoke is harmful to health and everyone has a right to breathe smoke-free air.**

- **Making the General Assembly buildings 100% smoke-free is an opportunity to protect children from the harms of secondhand smoke.** Of the thousands of visitors to the buildings each year, a large portion of them are school-aged children. In 2005, 46,232 middle school students visited the General Assembly and 1146 high school students served as General Assembly pages for a week at a time.
- **The General Assembly buildings are the place where our state's business gets done and must be open and available to all citizens, regardless of their health status.** We properly make the General Assembly buildings accessible for wheelchairs; it's time to make it accessible to asthmatics and others with serious lung ailments.
- House and Senate members made their chambers smoke-free in 2004 and 2005, respectively. The 500-600 legislative employees deserve the same protection.
- Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke have been shown to have many of the same tobacco-related diseases as active smokers. Secondhand smoke has been shown to increase nonsmokers' risk of heart disease, stroke, and cancer³.

For a full set of talking points about the dangers of secondhand smoke, go to the Alliance website at: http://www.rtpnet.org/alliance/pdfs/general_assembly.pdf

For additional information about secondhand smoke issues or NC's cigarette tax, access the Alliance website at www.ncallianceforhealth.org for talking points and other resources.

Call 919-463-8328
or e-mail ncalliance@heart.org for more information