



NC's Smoke-Free Restaurants and Bars Law is Saving Lives Why Mess with a Success?

September 2012

North Carolina's Smoke-Free Restaurants and Bars Law is Popular and Effective.

Strong Business and Public Support of the Smoke-Free Restaurants and Bars Law:

- A new poll released February 2012 by Public Opinion Strategies found that **83 percent of North Carolina voters support the state's smoke-free law**. The poll found support for the smoke-free law cut across party lines, including 86 percent of Democrats, 83 percent of Republicans and 77 percent of Independent voters.
- **N.C. Restaurant and Lodging Association reports that this law has had an overall positive effect on restaurants and hotels in North Carolina, and has been very well received by the public.** In addition, a March 2011 study conducted by an independent contractor, entitled "Evaluation of the Impact of Non-Smoking Legislation on Gross Collections of NC bars and Restaurants: Comparison of Pre and Post- Implementation of Legislation--An Update One-Year Post-Implementation," found that **bars and restaurants in NC have seen an increase in business since the implementation of the law, both grossly and in comparison to other retail industries.**
- There is a **high level of compliance and few reported complaints of potential violations**. According to the Division of Public Health (DPH), the state receives fewer than 10 complaints per week out of 24,000 establishments in the state of North Carolina.

Health Benefits of the Law are Clear: The Law is Effective in Eliminating a Serious Health Risk to which there is NO SAFE LEVEL of Exposure.

- There have been significant positive changes in air quality since the law's implementation: According to study results released by the N.C. Division of Public Health in April 2010, **the law resulted in an 89 percent improvement in air quality inside restaurants and bars.**
- According to study results from the NC Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch Surveillance and Evaluation Unit, in 2010, the first year the law was implemented, **North Carolina saw a 21% decline in average weekly Emergency Department visits from heart attacks, which is an estimated \$3.3 to \$4.8 million in health care cost savings.**
- Data from the CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) show that **the current smoke-free restaurants and bars law contributed to a 42 percent reduction in workers exposed to secondhand smoke in the workplace**, declining from 14.6% in 2008 to 8.4% in the first three quarters of 2010.

Keep NC's Smoke-Free Law STRONG!

For more information, go to www.NCAllianceforHealth.org
or contact NC Alliance for Health Executive Director Pam Seamans at Pam@ncallianceforhealth.org.