

Policy Brief on: *Clean Indoor Air*

Authored by: Andrew Hyland, Ph.D., Health Research, Inc. Roswell Park Cancer Institute

Reviewed By: Lois Biener, Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, Boston; Frank Chaloupka, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Chicago; Brion Fox, J.D., University of Wisconsin

Introduction:

Hundreds of communities across the country and multiple states have passed various forms of clean indoor air laws that restrict or ban smoking in public places to reduce the harmful effect of secondhand smoke exposure. These new measures have prompted interest in learning more about whether they lead to health improvements and, also, how they may adversely affect certain businesses that have historically allowed smoking, such as hotels, bars, and restaurants. During the last ten years, SAPRP has funded 14 studies addressing issues around policies targeting smoking in various places including worksites, restaurants, other public places.

Policy Implications:

In cities and states across America, the movement to restrict cigarette smoking has gained considerable momentum. The need to pass new smoke-free measures raises two fundamental questions for policy makers. First, will a ban on smoking improve the health of my constituents? Second, will a ban on smoking in public places result in substantial revenue loss for restaurants, bars and other segments of the hospitality industry? Extensive research shows that smoke-free policies lead to health improvements by dramatically reducing exposure to secondhand smoke. As for the economic impact of the smoke-free policies, the overwhelming weight of published scientific evidence shows clearly that in communities that restrict public smoking there has been no adverse effect on the hospitality economy. Policy makers pondering smoke-free regulations face other challenges as well. These include how to assure compliance and whether to allow smoking under certain conditions, such as when a bar or restaurant modifies its ventilation system to keep cigarette smoke confined to special smoking sections. The research shows most establishments and individuals willingly comply with the new laws so enforcement does not present significant concerns. The smoothest transition occurs in communities that make a strong effort to educate the public and affected business about the benefits of smoke-free regulations. Compromises such as ventilation or filtration systems have not been shown to eliminate the disease risk from secondhand smoke.

Key Results

- Consensus exists that secondhand smoke causes coronary heart disease, lung cancer, and adverse respiratory ailments in children and adults (CDC, 2006 SGR Report). Some regulatory agencies have also concluded that secondhand smoke causes breast cancer in younger, primarily pre-menopausal women. (Cal-EPA, 2005)
- Compliance with smoke-free regulations is usually high. Launching a comprehensive and carefully planned educational effort well in advance of the implementation date facilitates compliance by providing both the public and business owners with information on the purpose of the law and how to avoid violations. (Sorensen, 1991); (Hyland, 1999); (Weber, 2003); (Skeer, 2004); (Howell 2005)
- Once comprehensive smoke-free policies are adopted, the health benefits are immediate, both among workers as well as the general population. Levels of indoor air pollution decrease by about 90%, providing significant benefits to respiratory and cardiac health. Ventilation and filtration systems do not eliminate disease risk. (Repace, 2004); (Travers 2004); (Eisner, 1998); (Farrelly, 2005); (Allwright, 2005); (REF ASHRAE, 2005); (Repace 2005); (Americans for Non-smokers Rights Foundation, 2005); (Stark 2007); (Pell 2008); (Hyland 2008); (Arheart AL 2008); (Glantz 2008)
- Smoke-free regulations can encourage people to quit smoking because they provide a social environment

Policy Brief on: *Clean Indoor Air*

where there are fewer inducements to smoke. (Fichtenberg, 2002); (Bauer, 2005); (Tauras, 2004); (Longo, 1996); (Evans, 1999); (Farrelly, 1999); Longo, 2001); (Bayer, 2002); (CDC, 1999); (Levy, 2004)

- Studies show that businesses in the hospitality industry do not lose jobs or taxable revenue when smoke-free policies are implemented. (Scollo, 2003); (Hyland, 1999a); (Hyland, 1999b); (Hyland, 2003); (Hyland, 2000); (Bartosch, 1999); (Bartosch, 2002); (Frieden, 2005); (Cowling, 2005); (Hyland, 1999c); (Biener, 1999)

Hyland, A; Clean Indoor Air Knowledge Asset, Web site created by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Substance Abuse Policy Research Program; September 2008.

http://saprp.org/knowledgeassets/knowledge_detail.cfm?KAID=2