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CONTACT: Emily Gerkin Palsrok  
517-316-0210  
[epalsrok@baileypr.com](mailto:epalsrok@baileypr.com)

## **Michigan voters support smokefree air**

*New poll shows overwhelming support for smokefree legislation*

LANSING, Mich. – A new poll released today by the Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) shows an overwhelming majority of voters are supportive of legislation to make worksites in Michigan smokefree.

Sixty-six percent -- two-thirds of those interviewed -- favored smokefree workplace legislation, including 52 percent who “strongly favor” it. When asked specifically about legislation including making casinos smokefree, two-thirds, or 64 percent, were in favor of including casinos in the legislation. The numbers are consistent with the poll CSA conducted in 2005 of Michigan voters.

Support for a smokefree law crosses party lines, as 73 percent of Democrats, 58 percent of independents and 62 percent of Republicans say they favor smokefree legislation that includes restaurants, bars, and casinos.

“Smokefree air is not a political issue – it’s a public health issue that will improve the economy of our state and keep all workers from having to inhale secondhand smoke in the workplace,” said Susan Schechter, spokesperson for CSA and advocacy director for the American Lung Association. “We’re hoping that legislators will take this information seriously and listen to what Michigan residents want and pass legislation - with no exemptions.”

Support remained high when voters were specifically asked about including casinos in a smokefree law. Sixty-four (64) percent of voters said that casinos should be included in the law, agreeing that it is only fair that casino employees should have the same protection from secondhand smoke on the job as other workers. Less than a third of voters (30 percent) felt that casinos should be exempt from the law because including casinos could negatively affect casino business and government revenue.

In 2009, four bills have been introduced in the House, three of which were referred to the Regulatory Reform Committee, chaired by Rep. Johnson (D-Detroit). Hearings on smokefree legislation began on Mar. 18 and will conclude this week on Apr. 1.

The poll was conducted by Lansing-based EPIC/MRA from Mar. 19 to 22, and included 600 registered voters. The margin of error is +/- 4.0 percent. According to EPIC/MRA, the frequencies of the two questions were consistent among media markets, education levels, age groups, gender, income and religious affiliation. The poll was commissioned by CSA with funding support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

According to the American Lung Association's national report card released in January, Michigan received a failing 'F' grade for a lack of adequate smokefree air laws, leaving millions of people subject to secondhand smoke. The report graded each state in the nation based on a point system created by the National Cancer Institute. The rating system assigned points to states with smokefree air laws for areas including workplaces, schools, restaurants, and public recreations centers.

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**About CSA**

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is a grassroots coalition with more than 270 members, including leadership from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Michigan, Michigan Health & Hospital Association, and Michigan State Medical Society, as well as other statewide groups that are committed to passing a smokefree workplace law. For more information about the Campaign for Smokefree Air, please visit [www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org](http://www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org).

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