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## **Advocates make their case about need for smokefree legislation before House committee**

*Multiple hearings planned throughout March*

**Lansing, Mich.** – Advocates for smokefree workplaces made their case today before the House Regulatory Reform Committee when they testified on smokefree legislation and urged its immediate passage. Multiple bills have been introduced and referred to the house committee, which began a series of hearings this week.

The Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) is continuing to work with lawmakers in the House and Senate to make Michigan the 36th state to embrace smokefree air and protect all workers from exposure to the dangerous toxins in secondhand smoke. Thirty-five other states have statewide smokefree workplace policies and more than half of Americans now live in a city or state with smokefree workplace protection laws.

“This hearing is a step in the right direction in the fight for smokefree air in Michigan,” said Judy Stewart, campaign manger for CSA. “Lawmakers need to listen to their constituents’ persistent demands for smokefree air and pass comprehensive, statewide legislation.”

The House Regulatory Reform Committee today listened as lawmakers, doctors, business owners and victims of secondhand smoke gave their testimonies on why Michigan should go smokefree.

“Protecting all workers from inhaling secondhand smoke is the priority here,” said Rep. Joan Bauer, D-Lansing and sponsor of House Bill 4341. “No one should have to choose between their health and their job. As many as 2,400 Michigan residents die each year from secondhand smoke exposure. It is time for us to do our part in the legislature and protect our constituents.”

Polling sponsored by CSA in April 2005 and January 2008 consistently showed overwhelming support for smokefree workplaces across Michigan. In 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General released a report concluding that the only way to protect workers and residents from deadly secondhand smoke exposure is through comprehensive smokefree air laws.

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Committee hearings will continue over the next few weeks.

Today's testimonies included an anonymous Detroit casino worker who submitted her testimony expressing concern for her health in having to endure secondhand smoke daily in order to stay employed. Daniel Haberman, attorney and co-owner of the Bosco in Ferndale testified that businesses need a level playing field for competition. Haberman also stressed that government has placed other regulations on restaurants and bars for public health and smokefree air should not be any different. Carrie Klein who lost her sister, who never smoked, to lung cancer from secondhand smoke exposure testified about the need for Michigan residents to be protected from suffering the same fate as her sister. David A. Share of the Michigan State Medical Society Board of Directors testified about the health effects of not having smokefree laws in Michigan.

#### **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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