



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
May 8, 2008

**CONTACT:** Emily Gerkin Palsrok  
517-316-0210 (office)  
517-862-5462 (cell)  
[epalsrok@baileypr.com](mailto:epalsrok@baileypr.com)

## **Senate approves stronger statewide smokefree workplace legislation**

*Concurrence vote expected soon in House of Representatives*

**Lansing, Mich.** – The Michigan Senate today took a monumental step toward making Michigan the next smokefree state by strengthening and passing statewide smokefree workplace legislation, including restaurants and bars.

The Senate discharged House Bill 4163 from the Government Operations and Reform Committee, and then approved substitute language sponsored by long-time advocate Sen. Ray Basham, D-Taylor. Basham's substitute strengthened the version sent over from the House by eliminating exemptions for casinos in Detroit, cigar bars and bingo halls. The bill was then approved on a bipartisan vote of 25-12.

“The Senate has been a major hurdle on this issue for many months and today we are very excited to clear that hurdle and continue moving forward,” said Judy Stewart, spokesperson for the Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) and government relations manager for the American Cancer Society Great Lakes Division. “We appreciate Senate Majority Leader Bishop allowing a vote on this important issue, even though he is still opposed. It shows that he has heard our concerns about the greater good for all Michigan residents.”

CSA has been working with lawmakers in the House and Senate to make Michigan the 34<sup>th</sup> state to embrace smokefree air and protect all workers from exposure to the dangerous toxins in secondhand smoke. Thirty-three other states have smokefree workplace policies and more than half of Americans now live in a city or state with smokefree workplace protection laws.

HB 4163 now goes back to the House for a concurrence vote on the Senate changes. CSA is encouraging the House to support the new, stronger version of the bill, just as it supported the issue in December 2007. Gov. Jennifer Granholm called on legislators in her 2007 State of the State Address to pass statewide smokefree legislation and vowed to sign the bill if it crossed her desk.

### **About CSA**

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is a grassroots coalition with more than 260 members, including leadership from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Michigan, Michigan Health & Hospital Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and Michigan State Medical Society, as well as other statewide groups that support making workplaces, including restaurants and bars, smokefree. For more information about the Campaign for Smokefree Air, please visit [www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org](http://www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org).

#####