



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 22, 2007

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Three more states go smokefree - bringing national total to 28

*Michigan continues to lag behind national trend on protecting
workers from secondhand smoke*

Lansing, Mich. –The Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) applauds the state Legislatures in three more states who have decided to provide smokefree worksites for their residents.

Legislation has been signed by governors in Maryland and Minnesota this week, and Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich pledged to sign legislation recently sent to his desk.

Maryland Gov. O'Malley signed the comprehensive Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007, which was overwhelmingly approved by the Maryland General Assembly. The law will take effect February 1, 2008, and will cover all worksites, restaurants, bars, and private clubs.

Blagojevich announced this month that he will sign smokefree legislation into law for the entire state -- the city of Chicago has been smokefree since January 2006.

Most recently, the Minnesota legislature passed smokefree legislation and Gov. Tim Pawlenty sign the legislation into law, the law will go into effect October 1, 2007. Minnesota becomes the 28th state to pass smokefree legislation.

“Michigan lawmakers must take notice of the growing demand for smokefree air and pass statewide legislation,” said Judy Stewart, spokesperson for CSA. “They have the responsibility to protect the health of all Michigan residents.”

In June 2006, U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona reported that the only way to protect Americans from the dangers of secondhand smoke was through comprehensive smokefree workplace legislation and policies.

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A recent study conducted by the Research Institute for a Tobacco Free Society in Dublin (RITFS) revealed an 83 percent reduction in air pollution in Irish pubs and an 80 percent reduction in airborne carcinogens for patrons and staff since the country when smokefree in March 2004.

Sen. Ray Basham (D-Taylor), Sen. Tom George (R-Texas Township) and Rep. Brenda Clack (D-Flint) are sponsoring bills to make all workplaces smokefree, including restaurants, bars. Senate Bills 109 and 110 and House Bill 4163 are awaiting Senate and House committee action.

In October, Gov. Jennifer Granholm stated during the third gubernatorial debate that she would sign smokefree legislation if it was put on her desk and called out to legislators to pass smokefree legislation in her 2007 State of the State address.

About CSA

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is a grassroots coalition with more than 140 members, including leadership from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Michigan, Michigan Hospital Association and Michigan State Medical Society, as well as other statewide groups who support eliminating secondhand smoke dangers in workplaces, including restaurants and bars. For more information about the Campaign for Smokefree Air, please visit www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org.

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