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Testimony in Opposition to HB 1229

My name is Pat McKone. I'm the Senior Director for Public Policy and Advocacy for the American

Lung Association. I am here to testify in opposition to House Bill 1229 – A bill to amend North Dakota's clean air act to exempt bars and cigar lounges.

"In order to protect the public health and welfare and to recognize the need for individuals to breathe smoke-free air, smoking is prohibited in all enclosed areas of: a. Public places; and b. Places of employment."

These words set the foundation for the legislation as it was initiated and voted on by the voters in 2012 and speak to why this amendment should not be passed.

Secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard causing or making worse a wide range of diseases and conditions, including lung cancer and heart disease. Secondhand cigar smoke from any type of cigar, including premium cigars, poses the same health risks.

Workers in locations where indoor smoking is allowed bear the greatest burden as they often are exposed for 8 or more hours a day while at work. Multiple studies have found that the air quality in hospitality establishments like bars can rate as hazardous to human health on the EPA-scale used to measure outdoor air pollution putting workers at even more risk. Everyone deserves the right to breathe clean air.

Opening up North Dakota's smokefree law to give favored treatment to certain businesses is a solution in search of a problem. The law was approved

overwhelmingly by voters - 66.67% in 2012 with every county in the state in support of the ballot measure. It is has only gotten more popular since then, and is one of the strongest types of such laws in the country. The law was a great victory for public health and one all North Dakotans can be proud of.

