

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1229

Joelean Lowman
4707 Harbor Trail SE
Mandan, ND 58554
701-220-2482

Chairman Larsen and members of the and members of the Senate Industry and Business Committee. My name is Joelean Lowman. I teach the Medical Related Careers class at Legacy High School and am an Advisor for HOSA- Future Health Professionals. I have lived in Bismarck/Mandan for 25 years. I am here today to testify in opposition to House Bill 1229.

As I think about a time when ND was not Smoke Free it takes me back to 1996 when I was pregnant with my first child. At that time, I was a waitress at a restaurant that had a smoking and a nonsmoking section. I was currently in college to become an occupational therapist and knew the dangers of secondhand smoke to the child I was carrying. As a 23-year-old it was difficult for me to ask my supervisor not to be scheduled in the smoking section. Even when I did ask, the request was not always granted.

I know some people say work somewhere else. That is not always an option. When the choice becomes to protect yourself or pay the rent, the pay the rent may come out on top when taking care of yourself should. The Smoke Free laws in our state help to protect many individuals that are not capable of standing up for themselves. I can relate because I remember being in that situation many years ago.

I think that there are many people that would not have a choice about being exposed. There are some that have less control over where they work or what businesses are next door. I also worry about the dangers of second hand or third hand smoke and how that will affect children of those that work in facilities where smoking is allowed.

Recently during a trip to Anaheim, CA with a group of students for the HOSA - Future Health Professionals International Leadership Conference we made a stop at Downtown Disney. There was a cigar bar there and right next to it was a sports memorabilia store. I had some students in the sports memorabilia store. In going in to visit with them I was shocked to realize that I could not even be in that store due to the smell of cigar smoke from the store next door. If House Bill 1229 were to be passed in North Dakota, I worry about the impact it may have on businesses that may be adjoining the cigar bar.

We have taken so many steps forward in our state ensuring that our residents can breathe clean air when in their communities and buildings, it would be so sad to see us take a huge step back. Please oppose HB 1229 so North Dakota can continue to protect the right of all our citizens to breathe clear air and provide a work environment that is safe. Thank you for your time. This concludes my testimony.