



**Senate Industry Business & Labor
HB 1229
March 1, 2023**

Chair Larsen and Committee Members, my name is Dr. Joan Connell. I am a general pediatrician and also serve as the pediatrician for North Dakota's Children's Regional Asthma Clinic. I consider my role in growing healthy children into healthy, productive North Dakotan adults as my vocation. I am a member of the North Dakota Medical Association, serving as the medical association's Sixth District president. I present this testimony on behalf of the North Dakota Medical Association, the professional membership organization for North Dakota physicians, residents, and medical students.

NDMA OPPOSES HB 1229.

More than a decade ago North Dakotans did the right thing by choosing health and voted to no longer allow smoking in enclosed public spaces. Voters chose the healthy option, not only for themselves but to also protect the next generation- our children- from becoming addicted to nicotine and exposed to harms caused by tobacco use, including secondhand smoke.

This bill seems innocent enough by itself, but tobacco companies know it is much more than a cigar bar bill. This is actually an attempt to begin unwinding healthy smoke-free policy, which will invariably reverse the financial and personnel investment by our state to prevent people from

becoming addicted to tobacco use. It's an attempt to renormalize tobacco use by saying, "It's ok...try it".

Our state has made great progress in tobacco prevention. Let's not go backwards. Let's keep our future generations free from addictions. Let the Senate walk the walk in supporting legislation that promotes North Dakotan children growing into healthy North Dakotan adults. **Please vote NO on HB 1229.** Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.