

Testimony submitted for HB 1229
Senate Industry and Business Committee
Senator Larson, Chairman

Nancy Neary

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Director of Tobacco Prevention
Central Valley Health District
Jamestown

Dear Chairman Larson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Neary and I am the director of the tobacco prevention at Central Valley Health District in Jamestown. I have served in this position for the past twenty years.

Currently under the state smoke-free law, all businesses are treated equally, no business is allowed an exemption. Allowing an exemption for one group dissolves the level playing field which guarantees none are given special treatment. If an exemption is made for cigar bars, more requests for exemptions will follow.

Nothing has changed in the past twenty years regarding the reasons smoke-free laws have been passed in local communities and at the state level.

Smoke-free laws were put in place to protect the right of workers to breathe smoke-free air and to prevent the disease, disability, and death caused by secondhand smoke, a Class A Carcinogen, from which there is no safe exposure level. In as little as five minutes, secondhand smoke causes the aorta to stiffen and platelets to become sticky and potentially form clots. The rate of heart attacks decreases in places that implement smoke-free laws.

The debate over ventilation systems was settled years ago. No amount of ventilation can remove all secondhand smoke and the carcinogens it leaves behind. No manufacturer of ventilation systems will make claims that it will.

North Dakotans overwhelmingly voted in favor of the smoke-free law, passing in every county in the state. This law protects all workers and the public. The law is fair to all businesses. No one small group of niche businesses is favored over another. Keeping the law intact is fair to all.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

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