

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 24, 2012

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70 Percent of Indiana Voters Support Law Making Workplaces, Restaurants and Bars Smoke-Free

*Pending legislation, backed by Gov. Daniels, would protect the
right to breathe clean air inside all workplaces*

Indianapolis (January 24, 2012) – A new poll released today finds that Hoosiers overwhelmingly support a law prohibiting smoking inside all workplaces.

By a strong majority (70 percent to 27 percent), Indiana voters support a law that would prohibit smoking in indoor workplaces and public places, including restaurants and bars. This support comes from a broad-based coalition of voters across the state, including 73 percent of Republicans, 66 percent of Democrats, and 73 percent of Independents.

“Voters know that secondhand smoke is a health hazard, and this poll shows that they want a strong law protecting their right to breathe clean air,” said Danielle Patterson, Co-Chair of the Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air. “The Legislature should listen to the people of Indiana and Governor Daniels and act quickly to make all workplaces smoke-free.”

The survey of 500 registered voters was released by the Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air, a coalition of health groups including the American Heart Association, American Lung Association and Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The survey also found among Indiana voters:

- 85 percent believe that secondhand smoke is a health hazard, including 58 percent who say it is a serious health hazard.
- 71 percent believe the right of employees and customers to breathe clean air in restaurants and bars is more important than the right of smokers to smoke and businesses owners to allow smoking.
- 84 percent feel all workers should be protected from exposure to secondhand smoke in the workplace.

Hoosiers recognize the benefits of a smoke-free environment, saying that restaurants and bars would be healthier and more enjoyable if they were smoke-free. Nearly nine out of ten voters (88 percent) believe that these places would be healthier, and 84 percent want to be able to enjoy Indiana’s restaurants and bars without smelling like smoke at the end of the evening.

“Secondhand smoke is harmful to everyone, and everyone should be protected from it,” said Kevin O’Flaherty, Co-Chair of the Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air. “It is a matter of

fairness – everyone should have the right to breathe clean air at work. The Legislature should reject exemptions that would force some workers to continue putting their health at risk in order to earn a paycheck.”

The Indiana House is expected to take up the smoke-free legislation (HB 1149) this week. Governor Daniels has called on the Legislature to pass the strongest possible law with the fewest possible exemptions.

The need for protection from secondhand smoke in all workplaces and public places has never been clearer. Secondhand smoke contains thousands of chemicals, many of which are toxic (such as formaldehyde, arsenic and lead), and is a proven cause of cancer, heart disease and respiratory illnesses. Twenty-nine states currently have strong smoke-free laws that include restaurants and bars.

The statewide survey of 500 likely 2012 general election voters in Indiana was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies. The survey was conducted January 21-23, 2012 and has an overall margin of error of +/- 4.38 percentage points.

Related Materials:

[Poll Results](#)

[Charts of Key Results](#)

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