

Testimony in Support of the City of Milwaukee Ordinance to
Regulate Smoking Inside Buildings Open to the Public

John Meurer, MD, MBA

Good morning. I'm John Meurer.

I'm a local pediatrician.

I'm privileged to serve as director of a central city clinic that serves 4,400 low-income children in Milwaukee.

I also serve as director of a coalition of parents, community leaders, health care and public health professionals who have trained more than 10,000 people in the past few years how to better control childhood asthma in Milwaukee.

Help us to control asthma by passing a smoke-free ordinance.

Tobacco smoke is the #1 root cause of death in America, Wisconsin and Milwaukee. 1,400 Milwaukee County residents, our public and your constituents, die of smoking related illnesses every year.

15% of deaths in Wisconsin are caused by tobacco smoke.

Smokers struggle with one of the most addicting substances known to man.

Nearly one-half of smokers will die from their addiction, an average of 10 years earlier than non-smokers, often in agonizing pain from cancer.

Tragically 1 of 3 teens who smoke becomes addicted, thus more than 3,000 Milwaukee youth every year.

3 times more kids die of environmental tobacco smoke-related illnesses than die from cancer.

Employees in businesses with tobacco smoke have 50% higher risk of heart attack.

Cigarette smoking in Milwaukee increases health care costs \$228 million and reduces work productivity \$173 million.

88% of Wisconsin smokers agree that secondhand smoke is harmful.

When tobacco smoke is eliminated, workers are healthier, more productive, and absent less which reduces health care costs.

Ventilation, air cleaners, and filters don't eliminate 60 cancer-causing toxins in smoke. 2000 cities in the US including NY, LA, Chicago and even Ireland have passed ordinances that regulate smoking in public places.

Bar license applications increased after Madison went smoke-free.

After workplaces became smoke-free, bars, restaurants and hotels in cities like Milwaukee earned the same or more revenue.

Remember 71% of adults in Milwaukee don't smoke and 70% of smokers want to quit. Public safety means protecting workers and customers from harmful and dangerous activities and substances.

For all these reasons, Milwaukee and surrounding suburbs must pass the smoke-free workplace ordinance.

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Thanks in advance for your support.

Testimony in Support of the City of Milwaukee Ordinance to
Regulate Smoking Inside Buildings Open to the Public

John Meurer, MD, MBA

Good morning. I'm John Meurer.

I'm a local pediatrician.

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