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New Report Shows Improved Bar Revenue Under Smoke-Free Law Study examined five years of taxable retail sales in Washington State

Madison, Wis.—July 1, 2010—There's good news for tavern owners worried about the start of Wisconsin's statewide smoke-free law next week. A new report from Washington state proves getting the smoke out isn't just good for health; it's also good for business.

The report, published in the July edition of the journal *Preventing Chronic Disease* and highlighted by the Centers for Disease Control, found taxable retail sales for bars and taverns increased in the two years after Washington state went smoke-free .

Researchers analyzed 24 quarters of inflation-adjusted receipts during 2002-2007, before and after the state went smoke-free, and found revenue, "grew significantly" in the two years after going smoke-free. In fact, bar revenue was \$105.5 million higher than expected.

"This study is more proof that going smoke-free works," said Maureen Busalacchi, Executive Director of SmokeFree Wisconsin. "Not only does going smoke-free improve public health by reducing the risk for cancer, heart disease and chronic respiratory illness, it also improves business. Getting the smoke-out could open businesses up to welcoming in new patrons while keeping the long-time customers. We're confident Wisconsin's experience will be similarly positive to that of Washington's."

Pete Hanson, Government Relations Director for the Wisconsin Restaurant Association, says this report is among dozens of similar studies showing smoke-free laws do not harm business. He says the WRA is proud it supported the statewide law.

"This study confirms past research that sales continue to grow in states that are smoke-free. Here in Wisconsin, thousands of WRA member restaurants have already gone smoke-free, prior to the state law. They have overwhelmingly reported positive results," said Hanson

In preparation for the start of Wisconsin's smoke-free law on July 5th, Governor Jim Doyle has been making stops at recently smoke-free establishments across the state and supporters will host dozens of celebration events at bars and restaurants from Superior to Kenosha and everywhere in between.

"Public support for this law is really remarkable," said Allison Miller, spokesperson with the American Cancer Society in Wisconsin. "People are excited to go out and have a good time without worrying about the health hazards of secondhand smoke. What's more, all Wisconsin workers will finally have the right to smoke-free air; bartenders and bankers, waiters and web designers, they'll all be protected equally."

Anyone with questions about the state law is encouraged to visit the website www.wibettersmokefree.com for more information.

Wisconsin's statewide smoke-free law passed the Legislature with strong bipartisan support last May. Wisconsin joins 27 other states, including all its neighboring states, in going smoke-free as a matter of public health.

To view the full report visit: http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2010/jul/pdf/09_0187.pdf

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