

CONTACT:
Allison Miller
Media Advocacy
Office: 608.662.7559
Cell: 608.358.0259
Allison.miller@cancer.org



Michigan Senate Approves Strong Smoke Free Law

Wisconsin moves closer to becoming only Midwest state without smoke free law

May 9, 2008—Michigan is one step closer to passing a statewide smoke free law. The Senate passed a bill ending workplace smoking including inside bars and restaurants Thursday by an overwhelming vote of 25 to 12. The bill now goes before the House for a concurrence vote.

“We’d like to congratulate the people and the Michigan Legislature for taking this important step toward better public health,” said Alison Prange, Wisconsin Government Relations Director for the American Cancer Society. “Michigan is moving to become the 25th state to pass such legislation; we hope Wisconsin will soon follow.”

If passed, Michigan’s law would leave Wisconsin as the only state in the Upper Midwest without a statewide smoke free law. Minnesota went smoke free in October, Illinois in January and Iowa will be smoke free starting this July.

“What kind of message does that send Wisconsin workers that everyone around them deserves protection from increased risk of lung cancer, heart disease and emphysema caused by secondhand smoke, but they do not?” asked Maureen Busalacchi, Executive Director for Smoke Free Wisconsin. “People in Wisconsin shouldn’t have to accept anything less than their neighbors when it comes to workplace health. The public wants this law and lawmakers need to listen.”

A bipartisan poll released last month showed 69 percent of Wisconsin voters support a comprehensive statewide smoke free law—an increase of five percentage points in just 12 months. Moreover, 78 percent of all respondents including those who oppose the law believe it will pass soon.

Currently several Wisconsin communities are considering local ordinances to protect workers in lieu of state action including the cities of Middleton and Monona. Eau Claire and Marshfield already passed comprehensive policies in just the last two months.

###