

*State - Wife
Pending Legis
General*

WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE
ASSEMBLY CHAMBER
MADISON
53702

January 13, 1981

Dear Colleagues:

We are writing to ask your support for legislation that will limit smoking in certain public places. We plan to introduce identical bills in January, and at this time are actively seeking co-sponsors.

In the presence of cigarette smoke, many nonsmokers experience eye and throat irritation, headache, and coughing; allergic persons report wheezing and nausea as well. These symptoms can be particularly acute in infants, children, persons with cardiovascular or respiratory disease, and wearers of contact lenses.

Clearly, indoor air pollution from tobacco smoke presents a serious risk to the health of nonsmokers. Since this risk is involuntary, we feel it deserves our attention in the form of legislation that regulates smoking in certain public facilities.

Our bill does not prohibit smoking in places covered, but requires that smoking be limited to those areas specifically designated as smoking areas. The bill covers many public places where people now suffer from side stream smoke, specifically: public conveyances, educational facilities, inpatient health care facilities, indoor movie theaters, offices, passenger elevators, restaurants, retail establishments, and any enclosed, indoor area of a state, county, city, village or town building.

We have not included such places as taverns and small restaurants, where compliance might be difficult, or offices occupied exclusively by smokers.

Penalties would be deferred for a year to allow time for voluntary compliance and public education, and would apply only to failure to post appropriate signs or arrange seating to provide a non-smoking area.

Recent polls show that a sizable majority of Wisconsin residents favor separate areas in public places for smokers and nonsmokers. For example, a poll taken by Representative Jackamonis in his district this fall resulted in 76.6% of the respondents answering

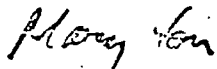
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yes to the question: Should smoking be banned in indoor public places except for designated smoking areas?

A number of health organizations, including the State Medical Society, and the Wisconsin Chapters of the American Cancer Society and the American Lung Association are actively supporting this legislation because of the mounting evidence that tobacco smoke is injurious to the health of nonsmokers as well as smokers.

We hope that you, too, will support our efforts and become a sponsor of both bills by calling Peg Davey in Representative Munt's office by Friday, January 16 (266-3784).

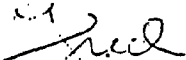
Sincerely,



MARY LOU MUNT
State Representative



WARREN BRAUN
State Senator



FRED RISSE
State Senator

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