

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1152

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Chairman Klein and members of the Senate Industry, Business and Labor, Committee. My name is Sommer Frohlich. I am a junior in college through Minot State at Bismarck State College and was born and raised here in Bismarck. I am here today to testify in opposition to House Bill 1152.

I have asthma and I have personally made the decision to not use tobacco products so I can take care of my body. The current North Dakota Smoke Free law makes it possible for me to go out with friends, to work, and to the mall while still being able to breath fresh air. I love that I can go out in public without having to worry about my asthma acting up from breathing in secondhand smoke.

I am really concerned about allowing smoking cigars indoors. Not only would it limit me to where I could go and enjoy time with friends, but it also exposes workers, and customers. The person who chooses to smoke is not the only one being affected. I am old enough to remember growing up when there were sections in restaurants that were for smoking or nonsmoking. As a child I dreaded going out to eat because the smoke would make me feel sick.

Growing up I have been able to travel to other states in the U.S. Some of the places I visited did not have smoking restrictions. People could smoke in restaurants and our hotel lobby. Being in these states made me appreciate my home state of ND so much more. In the summer of 2019, I also had the opportunity to travel to a country in the Middle East. When we landed in the airport, I could not believe that people could smoke in the terminal and lounges. This was very eye opening to me about how good we have it in ND. Because of my asthma, it was very hard for me to sit in the airport for a layover and constantly breath in the smoky air. In ND I am so grateful that I can be guaranteed safe air to without limitations. I love that we can take care of our community and make public places safe for everyone.

I recognize just how deadly all tobacco products are including cigars. If our smoke free law were to exempt cigars, we would be exposing people who choose not to use these products to secondhand smoke. I also have concerns that if restrictions are loosened, it encourages others to try tobacco products. Especially young adults, like me who are in college, by creating a social norm.

I am a firm believer in North Dakotans looking out for one another, and our current smoke free law does just that. By having a strong statewide smoke free law, we are watching out for one another and protecting youth. Please oppose HB 1152 because why change something that North Dakota is known for? We must continue to care for one another. Thank you for your time. This concludes my testimony.