

Testimony in Opposition of HB 1152

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Chairman Senator Klein, and members of the Industry, Business, and Labor Committee. My name is Lynn Duong. I currently serve as the student class representative of University of Mary's Respiratory Therapy junior class. I am writing to provide testimony in opposition of HB 1152.

As a student pursuing a career in respiratory therapy, the protection of North Dakota's Smoke Free Indoor Air law is very important to me and to my classmates. While our class learns about multiple lung diseases and what causes these diseases, we find that a common risk factor of all these lung diseases is the inhalation of or exposure to tobacco smoke. We continually provide care for patients in the hospital and we witness the suffering and detrimental health effects caused by second-hand tobacco smoke. We want to make known the dangers and risks that come along with the inhalation of and exposure to tobacco smoke.

Tobacco is responsible for approximately 480,000 deaths a year and 20.8 million premature deaths in the U.S. The Surgeon General has concluded that second-hand smoke causes lung cancer, heart disease, and stroke. In addition, as we are all aware, COVID-19 is a disease that is infectious to your lungs that continues to reign over our state and world. The exposure of SHS impairs our lung's ability to fight off COVID-19 and other diseases leading to increased symptoms and a prolonged treatment and recovery process.

Furthermore, the nicotine present in cigarettes, cigars, and vapes also causes health problems that affect the cardiovascular, respiratory, and gastrointestinal systems. According to the American Thoracic Society "smoking one large cigar can be the same as smoking an entire pack of cigarettes". While cigarettes have an average of about 8 milligrams (mg) of nicotine, many popular brands of larger cigars have between 100 and 200 mg, or even as many as 444 mg of nicotine. Nicotine is very addictive. According to the American Heart Association, nicotine is just as addictive, or even more so than heroin. Addiction takes away the true freedom to choose.

I, and the rest of the junior respiratory therapy class want to be able to make a difference by providing education on the importance of smoking cessation and looking out for the health of the people in our community. I urge you not to take away one of the greatest public health prevention measures, our North Dakota Smoke Free Law, because it protects everyone equally from the dangers of second-hand smoke.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Duong of Respiratory Therapy Class of 2022

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