

## TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION OF HB 1152

Name Eric L. Johnson, M.D.

Address 1812 Belmont Road, Grand Forks, ND 58201

Phone 701 739 0877

Chairman Senator Klein, and members of the Industry, Business, and Labor Committee:

My name is Eric L. Johnson, M.D. I am providing written testimony and oppose HB 1152.

Tobacco in all forms remains a deadly and highly addictive substance. Secondhand smoke deaths are a reality, with about 41,000 deaths annually in the U.S.

[https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fast\\_facts/index.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/index.htm)

As a physician, I see many patients with smoking related illness, some of whom never smoked themselves. North Dakota has one of the strongest smoke-free laws in the country. I personally did a study that was published in a leading medical journal that showed a decrease in heart attacks in Grand Forks after the smoke free ordinance was passed there, consistent with other data in other studies.

(E.L. Johnson, J.R. Beal Impact of a comprehensive smoke-free law following a partial smoke-free law on incidence of heart attacks at a rural community hospital. Nicotine and Tobacco Research, 15 (3) (2013), pp. 745-747 <https://academic.oup.com/ntr/article/15/3/745/1092398?login=true> )

Cigar bars are merely a loophole to bypass our law, which remains popular among North Dakotans. Over 80% of adults favor the smoke-free law. Cigar smokers make up only 4% of our adult population. About 20% of North Dakotans overall smoke. Changing our law, an action which would affect the 80% who don't smoke, seems counter-intuitive. North Dakota's smoke free law has been praised by the U.S Surgeon General as an example for other states to follow – it doesn't make sense to change something a law that is considered one of the best laws in the U.S.

Please feel free to contact me with additional questions.

Eric L. Johnson, M.D.