



North Dakota Senate Industry, Business and Labor committee
HB 1152 – Cigar Bar Exemption
Do Not Pass Testimony – March 8, 2021
Testimony of Pat McKone, American Lung Association

Good afternoon Chair Klein, vice-Chair Larsen and Committee Members.

My name is Pat McKone and I am the Senior Director for Advocacy and Public Policy for the American Lung Association.

The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy, and research. The work of the American Lung Association is focused on four strategic imperatives: to defeat lung cancer; to champion clean air for all; to improve the quality of life for those with lung disease and their families; and to create a tobacco-free future. I am submitting this written testimony asking you to give HB 1152 – a bill allowing for the establishment of cigar bars in ND, a Do Not Pass,

In November 2012, North Dakota voters wisely opted to become smoke-free, leading the nation with a strong comprehensive model. Voters in **every** county in the state favored the law, which advances public health by protecting more workers, residents and visitors from secondhand smoke exposure in public places and places of employment.

Secondhand smoke (from cigarettes and cigars) has been proven to cause numerous health problems, including heart disease, emphysema, stroke, sudden infant death syndrome and cancer. Secondhand smoke contains toxic chemicals like formaldehyde, cyanide, carbon monoxide, ammonia and nicotine. Exposure to secondhand smoke causes preventable deaths from lung cancer and cardiac-related illnesses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) makes clear that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The proposed bill is concerning as it would allow smoking in bars that sell cigars (10% of their revenue) and so-called cigar lounges would weaken existing protections and pollute the indoor air in North Dakota. The bill also has no mention of enforcement, accountability, and verification.

Everyone deserves the right to breathe clean air and no one should have to choose between their health and a good job. Clearly, North Dakota's smoke-free law is NOT broken and doesn't need fixing.

We strongly encourage the committee to give this bill a Do Not Pass recommendation.

Sincerely,
Pat McKone
Senior Director, Public Policy and Advocacy