

December 13, 2007

Chancellor Thomas George,

In June 2006, the Surgeon General of the United States published a landmark report that concluded that secondhand smoke causes death and disease in non-smoking children and adults and that there is no safe level of its exposure. Until this report was published, many people refused to believe that secondhand smoke was dangerous. The surgeon general removed all doubt when he said "The debate is over. The science is clear. Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance but a serious health hazard."

Since that report, smoke-free laws have been spreading like wildfire. Twenty-two states in the United States have passed comprehensive smoke-free laws that prohibit smoking in all public places, including restaurants and bars. Hundreds of cities and towns have done the same. Italy, France, the United Kingdom and Ireland have also become smoke-free countries and have seen extremely positive health effects since the law, such as fewer heart attacks and fewer cases of heart disease.

The evidence about exposure to secondhand smoke is so strong that even college campuses are prohibiting smoking on the entire grounds. Schools like Purdue University in Indiana, University of Minnesota at Duluth, Oklahoma State University and the University of Miami have all enacted or announced that they will no longer allow anyone to smoke on campus.

Smoke-free college campuses are necessary because the college population is the only group of people that has an increasing rate of smoking, and college students are the first population that the tobacco industry can legally target. It is the goal of PASS, or Peers Advocating Smoke-free Solutions to educate our peers on the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke. One day we hope to see smoking cessation readily available on campus and one day be an entirely smoke-free campus.

We thank you for your time and have enclosed a t-shirt that we produced with the help of Colleges against Cancer and Relay for Life for educating during the Great American Smoke-Out in November.

Have an amazing Holiday,

Thanks,

Katie Moore
PASS - Representative
Peers Advocating Smoke-free Solutions