

THE FACTS ABOUT...

Smoke-free bars and restaurants

For years the tobacco industry has been manipulating the bar and restaurant industry into believing that if they didn't allow patrons to smoke they could go out of business. This fact sheet will help dispel some myths about smoking in bars and restaurants.

Won't bars and restaurants lose business if they go smoke-free?

No! Numerous economic studies have shown that going smoke-free does not harm business. This is a belief that has been inaccurately circulated for many years. Looking at objective sales indicators, every reliable economic study finds bar and restaurant sales are just as strong after a smoke-free measure goes into effect as they were before. If anything, going smoke-free can attract new business, and that's been observed across the country. To find a database of studies that have been done on the economic impact of clean indoor air laws on business, visit www.tobaccoscam.ucsf.edu.

Allowing smoking in a bar or restaurant can often cost a business money in terms of higher maintenance expenses (carpets, drapes, cloths, paintwork), higher insurance premiums (fire, medical, workers comp, liability) and higher labor costs (absenteeism, productivity).

What about separate ventilation?

One option that restaurants often pursue is separate ventilation in their smoking sections. The fact is, no feasible ventilation system can reduce secondhand smoke exposure to safe levels. Ventilation systems costing tens of thousands of dollars may reduce odor, but fail to guard against secondhand smoke's real health dangers.

What about groups that represent the bar and restaurant industry?

Many of these groups are simply fronts for the tobacco industry. Associations are often funded by the tobacco industry, and in turn, become mouthpieces for Big Tobacco.

So, why aren't more restaurants smoke-free in Michigan?

Many Michigan restaurants have gone smoke-free. Over 3,500 Michigan restaurants have already gone smoke-free and are still thriving. To find out about more bars and restaurants near you that are smoke-free you can pick up a guide or go to www.smokefreemichigan.org.

What about the workers in bars and restaurants?

The hospitality industry is a major employer in Michigan. It takes thousands of workers to keep bars and restaurants in business; many who are exposed to high levels of secondhand smoke daily. Just 30 minutes of exposure to secondhand smoke in a bar or restaurant has the same effect on blood and blood vessels as being a pack-a-day smoker.

Why does Big Tobacco trick bars and restaurants into fighting clean indoor air?

- Smoke-free restaurants deeply undermine smoking's social acceptability — basic to tobacco marketing.
- Bars attract Big Tobacco's young adult demographic target — and link smoking with social status.
- Big Tobacco needs another industry as a political front — so it hijacks "legitimate" hospitality groups and sets up fake ones.

Source: www.tobaccoscam.ucsf.edu



A GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO PROMOTING TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENTS AND TO IMPROVING HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.