

Wants to see smoke-free workplaces in Michigan

To the Editor:

I urge Michigan voters to support SB 109, a bill to make workplaces smoke-free, because it will provide a healthier environment for all of us.

This bill is designed to protect Michigan workers, even those employed in bars and restaurants, from the dangers of second-hand smoke.

Health concerns today focus on cancer and heart problems. According to the American Cancer Society, secondhand smoke is the third-leading cause of death in the United States, killing 38,000 to 65,000 nonsmokers annually. Healthcare costs in Michigan alone directly caused by smoking total \$2.65 billion each year.

Smoke-free air legislation will have a huge impact on food service workers. These workers appear to be 50 percent more likely than the general population to develop lung cancer. With 23.2 percent (1,758,000) of Michigan adults smoking, both workers and patrons deserve protection against secondhand smoke.

As a mother of three, I know the importance of a healthy lifestyle for myself and my family. As a daughter of a cancer survivor, I know the impact this disease can have. By eliminating second-hand smoke in workplaces, we can create healthier environments.

Twenty-six states have enacted smoke-free legislation; join the cause, Michigan. I urge the Michigan legislature to pass SB 109 for the protection of the people.

**Debbie Bechtel
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