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Granholtm calls on Legislature to move smokefree legislation in her State of the State address

Lansing, Mich – During her fifth State of the State address, Gov. Jennifer Granholtm tonight asked Michigan lawmakers to enact smokefree workplace legislation.

The governor's public support comes one week after the Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) announced new legislation introduced in the House and Senate that would provide statewide smokefree workplaces, including restaurants and bars. The legislation was introduced by Sens. Ray Basham, D-Taylor, Tom George, R-Texas Township and Rep. Brenda Clack, D-Flint.

"We applaud the governor's comments tonight and her leadership on this issue," said Katherine Knoll, CSA spokesperson and senior director of advocacy at the American Heart Association. "We know that all Michigan workers will benefit from a healthy, smokefree environment. And we've learned from the states and countries that have gone smokefree that our economy will benefit too. It's a smart move for the entire state."

Written in her speech, Granholtm said: "Insured or not, we know that working in a smoke-filled environment is bad for your health and expensive for us all. Tonight I call on you to take action. The time has come for us to ban smoking in the workplace."

Knoll agreed with the governor's point that smoke-filled workplaces are expensive for the state. Michigan loses \$3.4 billion a year from smoking-caused productivity losses, and the state's Medicaid program spends \$1.04 billion to cover health costs associated with smoking.

Currently, 26 other states have comprehensive smokefree workplace policies. This is following a national trend where for the first time in the nation's history half of all Americans live in a city or state with smokefree workplace protection laws than without.

In June 2006, U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona released a report on the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, which stated the only way to protect Americans from the dangers of secondhand smoke exposure was through comprehensive smokefree workplace legislation and policies. It was the first report by the Surgeon General's office on secondhand smoke in 20 years.

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Senate Bills 109 and 110 were referred to the Senate Economic Development and Regulatory Reform Committee. House Bill 4163 was referred to the House Commerce Committee.

About CSA

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is a grassroots coalition with more than 50 members, including leadership from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Michigan, Michigan Hospital Association and Michigan State Medical Society, as well as other statewide groups who support eliminating secondhand smoke dangers in workplaces, restaurants and bars. For more information about the Campaign for Smokefree Air, please visit www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.com

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