

## **Public Hearing on L.D. 468, An Act to Protect Public Health at Public Institutions of Higher Education**

Greetings Senator Craven, Representative Farnsworth and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services. My name is John Eder, I am a student at Southern Maine Community College [SMCC], a smoking campus, and I am asking you to please safeguard me and my fellow students from secondhand smoke by providing a healthy, smoke-free environment conducive to learning and success. I ask you to please support this legislation with your unanimous ought to pass support for this bill.

As you know SMCC is a very compact campus on a narrow neck of land jutting into the ocean in South Portland. It's gorgeous. The secret is out about SMCC; it's a fantastic college with a talented faculty and a caring, committed administration that offers a stellar education at very affordable prices. The student population has doubled in the past several years and with that the number of smokers so that unfortunately, the smell of secondhand cigarette smoke is an omnipresent feature of going to school at SMCC. There is no other way to avoid it, smokers gather near the doors and around the entrances to the classroom buildings so that students have to pass through a cloud of smoke to get to class. Smokers are supposed to be a minimum of thirty feet from the entrance or in a designated smoking area but this policy is not enforced nor is it enforceable because smoke on the air cannot be contained.

We've known for a long time that smoking is bad for the smoker. Now we are finding out more all that time about just how harmful secondhand smoke is for the non-smoker. The American Lung Association tells us that secondhand smoke causes close to 50,000 deaths per year. But did you know that even very brief exposure can immediately exacerbate numerous negative health effects such as allergies, headaches, respiratory infections, and asthma? The Surgeon General reports that is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke and that even brief exposure, of the type students are repeatedly exposed to at a smoking college, can cause a heart attack.

If you think about it, smoking has no rightful place on a college campus, an institution of higher learning and science. It is incongruous and out of step with the current trend in workplaces, college campuses and public parks which are instituting smoke free policies. Employers are discouraging smoking because they want no part of smoking or secondhand smoke. They know well the data, that workers who smoke are less productive and more likely to call out sick and that secondhand smoke puts their nonsmoking employee's health at risk as well.

The motivation is high right now for young Mainers to get their college education and in this moment we have the opportunity to support healthy choices before addictive and destructive habits are formed. The results of a campus wide poll at SMCC found that over eighty percent of us students were nonsmokers and on the question of campus wide smoking ban a majority of students supported the ban. Please support us and protect us.

Armed with this information we now know that we simply cannot safeguard the health of students where there is smoking on any Maine College or university campus. Given these facts about smoking and secondhand smoke, we leaders and advocates for good health, would be shirking our responsibility to protect Maine's college students would be continuing needlessly endangering their health every day. Please support healthy smoke free college campuses by giving this legislation your unanimous out to pass recommendation; our health is in your hands.

## ACHA Guidelines

# Position Statement on Tobacco on College and University Campuses

The American College Health Association (ACHA) acknowledges and supports the findings of the Surgeon General that tobacco use in any form, active and/or passive, is a significant health hazard. ACHA further recognizes that environmental tobacco smoke has been classified as a Class-A carcinogen and that there is no safe level of exposure to environmental tobacco smoke (ETS), a recognized toxic air contaminant. In light of these health risks, ACHA has adopted a NO TOBACCO USE policy and encourages colleges and universities to be diligent in their efforts to achieve a 100% indoor and outdoor campus-wide tobacco-free environment. *This position statement reflects the viewpoint of ACHA and serves only as a guide\** to assist colleges and universities with evaluating progress toward becoming or maintaining tobacco-free living and learning environments that support the achievement of personal and academic goals.

ACHA joins with other professional health associations in promoting tobacco-free environments. According to the ACHA-National College Health Assessment (ACHA-NCHA) conducted in spring 2011, 85% of college students described themselves as non-smokers (never smoked or have not smoked cigarettes in the last 30 days); 92% reported being non-smokers for hookah/water pipes (never used or have not used in the last 30 days); and 96% described themselves as non-users of smokeless tobacco (never used or have not used in the last 30 days). ACHA supports the health goals of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2020 initiative to reduce the proportion of adults who smoke to below 12% by the year 2020 and to positively influence America's college students to help them remain

or become tobacco-free. Additionally, ACHA actively supports the Healthy Campus 2020 goals to reduce cigarette use (within the last 30 days) by college students to below 14% and smokeless tobacco use (within the last 30 days) to below 3% by the year 2020.

Efforts to promote tobacco-free environments have led to substantial reductions in the number of people who smoke, the amount of tobacco products consumed, and the number of people exposed to environmental tobacco hazards. ACHA acknowledges that achieving a tobacco-free environment requires strong leadership and support from all members of the college/university community. Because the improvements to health can be so significant, ACHA recommends the following positions be taken to address policy, prevention, and cessation as it pertains to tobacco issues:

1. Develop a strongly worded tobacco policy that reflects the best practices in tobacco prevention, cessation, and control. These include the following recommendations:
  - a. Tobacco is defined as all tobacco-derived or containing products, including, but not limited to, cigarettes (clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, cigars and cigarillos, hookah-smoked products, and oral tobacco (spit and spitless, smokeless, chew, snuff).
  - b. Tobacco use is prohibited on all college and university grounds, college/university owned or leased properties, and in campus-owned, leased, or rented vehicles.
  - c. All tobacco industry promotions, advertising, marketing, and distribution are prohibited on campus properties.
  - d. The sale of tobacco products and tobacco-related merchandise (including logo

\* Compliance with the elements of this position statement is not and cannot be mandated by ACHA; nor is compliance a condition for institutional membership in ACHA.

- containing items) is prohibited on all university property and at university-sponsored events, regardless of the operating vendor.
- e. The distribution or sampling of tobacco and associated products is prohibited on all university owned or leased property and at university-sponsored events, regardless of the venue.
  - f. Tobacco industry and related company sponsorship of athletic events and athletes is prohibited.
  - g. The college/university does not permit tobacco companies on campus to conduct student recruitment or employment activities.
  - h. The college/university does not accept any direct or indirect funding from tobacco companies.
  - i. The campus provides and/or promotes cessation services/resources for all members of the college/university community.
2. Inform all members of the campus community by widely distributing the campus tobacco policy on an annual basis. The tobacco policy is clearly posted in employee and student handbooks, on the college/university website, and in other relevant publications. Key components of the policy are also shared with parents, alumni/ae, and visitors. The general policy should be included in prospective student materials in both printed and electronic formats.
  3. Offer and promote prevention and education initiatives that actively support non-use and address the risks of all forms of tobacco use.
  4. Offer and promote programs and services that include practical, evidence- and theory-informed approaches to end tobacco use, including screenings through health and counseling services, free/reduced-cost tobacco-cessation counseling, free/reduced-cost nicotine replacement therapy, and medication options on campus.
  5. Advocate for requiring the inclusion of tobacco use cessation products, medications, and services in student health insurance plans.
6. Provide a comprehensive marketing and signage effort to ensure that all college/university visitors, vendors, guests, and others arriving on property owned or leased by the institution are aware of the tobacco-free policy.
  7. Plan, maintain, and support effective and timely implementation, administration, and consistent enforcement of all college/university tobacco-related policies, rules, regulations, and practices. Provide a well-publicized reporting system for violations.
  8. Collaborate with local, state, and national public health entities and tobacco prevention and control public, private, and national non-profit tobacco-related organizations in support of maintaining a healthy tobacco-free environment.
  9. Develop and maintain a tobacco task force on campus to identify and address needs and concerns related to tobacco policy, compliance, enforcement, and cessation. Key individuals and departments to invite/include:
    - a. Undergraduate and graduate students (particularly from student-elected/representative organizations)
    - b. Health and counseling center professionals
    - c. Faculty (including faculty senate or other faculty governing bodies)
    - d. Residence life/housing
    - e. Judicial affairs
    - f. Campus safety/police
    - g. Human resources
    - h. Neighborhood liaisons
    - i. Facilities
    - j. Other important stakeholders specific to your campus

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