



Judith B. Robson

Senate Majority Leader

November 25, 2008

Governor Jim Doyle
Wisconsin State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707

Dear Governor Doyle,

As you put together the 2009-2011 state budget, I respectfully request that you include provisions to prohibit smoking in places of employment, restaurants, taverns and other indoor areas.

I thank you for your past support for a ban on indoor smoking in Wisconsin. I believe that the people of Wisconsin are ready for our state to join our neighbors in Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois, who have already enacted this kind of legislation. The move to ban indoor smoking is part of a national trend. At this time, 25 states have laws requiring smoke-free workplaces including bars and restaurants. The number of states with no smoking restrictions has dropped to less than ten.

There is an abundance of compelling information in favor of this legislation. That includes scientific evidence of the health risks associated with secondhand smoke, data showing a decline in teen smoking where bans are in place, and polls indicating strong support among Wisconsin residents.

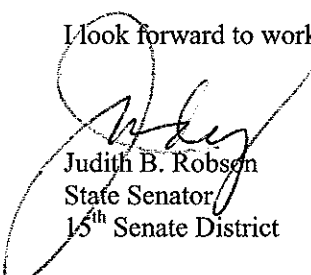
As a registered nurse, I have seen the devastating effects of smoking and second-hand smoke. I believe that the people are well served by policies and laws that discourage smoking, prohibit smoking in workplaces and public places, and protect people against the effects of secondhand smoke.

A decline in teen smoking is an unanticipated benefit of indoor smoking bans. The May 2008 issue of *The Archive of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* reported findings that young people in Massachusetts who live in towns with strict bans are 40% less likely to become regular smokers than those in communities with no ban or weak ones.

In Wisconsin, there is solid public support for a statewide smoking ban. For example, in April 2008, the Mellman Group surveyed 700 Wisconsin residents and found that more than two-thirds (69%) favor a statewide law that would prohibit smoking in most indoor public places, including bars. Even more compelling is the intensity of support for a ban. A large majority (60%) strongly favor the ban while only 21% strongly oppose it.

Wisconsin is ready for the state to pass a strong smoking ban. Including this legislation in the state budget will indicate our commitment to the health and well-being of everyone in our state.

I look forward to working with you on this important public health issue.


Judith B. Robson
State Senator
15th Senate District

JBR: ng

State Capitol, Post Office Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882 • Telephone (608) 266-2253
District Address: 2411 East Ridge Road, Beloit, WI 53511
Toll-free 1-800-334-1468 • E-Mail: sen.robson@legis.wi.gov