



## Association for Nonsmokers - Minnesota

January 2014 Vol 28 Number 1

### **ANSR Works on 24/7 Smoke-Free Foster Care**

*Thank you for all you  
do for ANSR. Please  
consider sharing this  
newsletter with a friend!*

The Ramsey Tobacco Coalition, a program of ANSR, is teaming up with state advocates to protect foster care children from exposure to tobacco smoke.

ANSR joined ClearWay Minnesota, American Lung Association (ALA), the Leadership and Advocacy Institute to Advance Minnesota's Parity for Priority Populations (LAAMPP) program and the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) in testifying in front of the House of Representatives' Health and Human Services Committee on Jan. 28, 2014. Committee Chair Tina Liebling introduced HF1966 and will champion this bill through the upcoming legislative session.

Liebling held a preliminary hearing on the bill in the committee before the official start of the 2014 session to save time during the session which starts in late February. Rose Hauge, who joined the ANSR staff in January and is a former foster care provider, testified about her experience fostering a teenage mom and her infant. Also testifying were ClearWay's Molly Moilanen, LAAMPP's Jack Ayim, ALA's Pat McKone and Scott County's Judith Brumfeld, representing AMC.

Here are some excerpts from their testimony:

**Tina Liebling:** "It's hard to believe foster care kids aren't protected from secondhand smoke already."

**Molly Moilanen:** "Minnesota is a leader for healthy kids but not children in foster care. We are behind the times. Half the U.S. states have policies. Smoke-free foster care is an overdue step in Minnesota."

**Rose Hauge:** "It never made sense why providing a smoke-free environment wasn't on the health and safety checklist."

**Jack Ayim:** "This is your chance to make sure every foster care child in Minnesota is protected from the dangers of secondhand smoke."

**Lend your support to foster care by writing to the entire committee.**

**Go online to this site:**  
<http://bit.ly/1okWts9>

**Pat McKone:** “In states where these policies are in place, implementation and enforcement have not been an issue.”

The proposed bill would require foster care providers to provide a smoke-free environment in their homes and cars used to transport youth. Concerns surrounding this include enforcement and ensuring the availability of foster homes. “Kinship care,” which is the placement of a child in the home of extended family, is also a concern. However, the bill includes provisions for those families who weren’t seeking to be foster care providers but are helping out in a time of family crisis.

There are 26 states (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin and Wyoming) that already have smoke-free foster care policies. Note that two states surrounding Minnesota have already adopted these measures.

Seven Minnesota counties and one American Indian reservation have these policies in effect, including St. Louis, Lake, Redwood, Jackson, Steele, Beltrami and Cottonwood and Bois Forte American Indian reservation.

Ramsey County is looking at implementing a smoke-free policy for its foster homes. Ramsey Tobacco Coalition members met with Ramsey County Commissioners Toni Carter, Blake Huffman, Jim McDonough, Mary Jo McGuire, Rafael Ortega and Victoria Reinhardt to discuss instituting this measure in the county. The commissioners voiced their support for protecting these youth, who are wards of the state. The commission seeks to pass a resolution in February directing the Ramsey County Community Human Services department to implement this policy in Ramsey County.

Ramsey County is looking to introduce smoke-free homes to protect the children and ensure a safe environment even if the proposed state law does not pass.



**The ANSR Bulletin is published quarterly. For more information, contact ANSR at: 2395 University Ave. West, Ste. 310, St. Paul, MN 55114 or at (651) 646-3005.**

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## Seven Ramsey County cities perfect on compliance checks

The North Suburban Tobacco Compliance Project (NSTCP), a program sponsored by ANSR, reported 100 percent compliance with tobacco age-of-sale laws during checks in 2013 for seven Ramsey County cities.

Falcon Heights, Gem Lake, Little Canada, Mounds View, North Oaks, Shoreview and Vadnais Heights, which combine for a total of 59 vendors, finished with perfect compliance on the two checks.

The checks ensure vendors are not selling tobacco products to minors. The NSTCP mission is to reduce youth access to tobacco. Tobacco compliance checks are conducted by trained students between the ages of 15-17 years old. They are accompanied by law enforcement. The project conducts a minimum of two compliance checks per year at all licensed tobacco vendors in participating cities. The program also provides free educational materials and training for businesses that sell tobacco to help ensure adherence to tobacco laws.

The 12 participating cities had an average of 95 percent compliance, which is up from 91.5 percent in 2012.

“It’s great to see,” project coordinator Katie Engman said. “Ramsey County is setting the standard for the rest of the state. Thank you to all the cities that make preventing youth access to tobacco a priority.”

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Thanks to all of ANSR’s supporters, members, board members and family and friends for their generous support in our first year of participation in GiveMN’s Give to the Max Day. The event was a huge success.

In 2013, ANSR celebrated its 40th year of helping to reduce the cost of tobacco’s harms to Minnesotans, but there is more work to be done. Members and supporters have always been generous with donations, both monetary and in garage sale items, and it was no different in November with Give to the Max Day. Members, supporters, friends and family combined to contribute almost \$2,500.

ANSR staff members developed personal goals and created fundraising pages within Give to the Max Day. Chris Farmer-Lies was the top fundraiser among ANSR staff.

“ANSR supporters came through for us again. This was our first Give to the Max outing, and the results are most satisfying,” Weigum said.

## ANSR raises almost \$4,000 through GiveMN’s Give to the Max Day

## **RTC assists cities in updating tobacco ordinances**

ANSR board members also gave generously, combining to donate almost \$1,500.

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The Ramsey Tobacco Coalition (RTC) is assisting cities throughout the Metro in updating their tobacco ordinances. Much of the work centers on adding language on e-cigarettes and other new products to the ordinances. As a result of the updated ordinance, many cities now regulate electronic cigarettes just like other tobacco products.

Cities that have updated their ordinances since October include South Saint Paul, Roseville, Little Canada, West Saint Paul, Mendota Heights, Falcon Heights, Lilydale, Brooklyn Center and Mounds View. Several other cities are also in the process of making updates, including White Bear Lake, Shoreview and Bloomington.

In West Saint Paul and Mendota Heights, students from Henry Sibley High School testified in support of the updated tobacco ordinance. The students are part of a group called ALMAS, which stands for Anglos Latinos Motivated to Succeed. The group's advisor, Robert Hanson, has done a great job of fostering leadership in his students. The group is committed to reducing tobacco use among young people.

"It is important for students, like the ALMAS group, to be involved in combating the influence of tobacco. Teens are the target of a large portion of the industry's marketing and promotion," Alicia Leizinger, a program and policy specialist at ANSR, said. "Testifying in support of stronger tobacco ordinances is one way teens can take the power back from the tobacco industry and feel pride and ownership in the improvements they've helped to make in their communities."

RTC continues to engage communities in creating safe and healthy environments for all Minnesotans.

The ALMAS work did not go unnoticed as the *Saint Paul Voice* and *La Voz* each published stories on the group.

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## **ANSR's Brock presents results of tobacco tax increase**

Director of Research Betsy Brock represented ANSR at the 2014 Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco Annual Meeting in Seattle Feb. 5-8. She participated in a symposium organized by ClearWay Minnesota that focused on the impact of the recent Minnesota tobacco tax increase. She shared findings from an ANSR study that explored the tobacco industry response to the tobacco tax increase.

## University of St. Thomas tobacco-free as of Jan. 1 with ANSR help

The data reveal that average cigarette prices increased by more than the \$1.60 tax increase, which suggests the tobacco companies increased their prices simultaneously. For example, Marlboro's average price went up \$1.90. The tobacco documents reveal this is a common strategy used by the tobacco companies, who often increase prices with a tax increase and use this opportunity to blame the entirety of the price increase "on the government."

The data also reveal that point-of-sale price promotions are common but do not reduce the average price of cigarettes substantially. Finally, the data highlight the end of 20-packs of little cigars in Minnesota. The tax on these little cigars, which are packaged like cigarettes, increased, and they are now taxed like cigarettes. After this tax increase, these cheap, little cigars are largely unavailable in Minnesota.

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The University of St. Thomas became a tobacco-free campus on Jan. 1, 2014. The policy was announced on Nov. 21, in conjunction with the Great American Smokeout, a day sponsored by the American Cancer Society each year to encourage people to quit smoking. St. Thomas' new tobacco-free policy means the use of all tobacco products, including cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco and electronic cigarettes, will be prohibited everywhere on the Saint Paul and Minneapolis campuses. Through our partnership with Saint Paul-Ramsey County SHIP, ANSR worked with St. Thomas throughout the policy process. We were also able offer assistance with policy promotion, including permanent signage for campus and a wrap on a campus bus that says

## ANSR Membership Form

*Already a member? Not your renewal date? Pass this form along to someone you think might be interested. Share your newsletter.*



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### **Time to think annual Garage Sale!**

“Follow Me to a Tobacco-Free UST!”

With the adoption of this policy, St. Thomas joins a growing list of post-secondary institutions in Minnesota and across the country that have comprehensive tobacco policies in place. Since 2009, the number of smoke- and tobacco-free campuses in the U.S. has nearly tripled, from 305 campuses to 1,127 campuses. There are more than 40 Minnesota campuses that are completely tobacco-free, with additional campuses set to adopt policies in the near future.

Read more about St. Thomas’ tobacco-free policy at <https://www.stthomas.edu/tobaccofree/>.

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It is the dead of winter, but it is not too soon to think ANSR garage sale, which will be May 16-17. Again this year, we need your stuff. We no longer take clothing, TVs, exercise equipment or furniture. Best for us are small items, such as housewares, jewelry, tools, books, CDs/DVDs, collectables and decorator items. This sale supports our public policy work, which we can not do with most of the grants we receive. Funds raised at the sale are essential to our mission.

Do you have time to help? We always need help collecting saleable items before the sale, organizing and pricing things the day before the sale, and working the sale itself. We would love your help. Please call Jeanne at 651-646-3005 to volunteer or talk about other ways you can help.