Smoking and Bars


- Bar employees’ exposure to secondhand smoke is four to six times higher than other food or beverage service workers. (Siegel, M.; “Involuntary smoking in the restaurant workplace: a review of employee exposure and health effects,” Journal of the American Medical Association. 270(4):490-493, July 28, 1993).

- Bartenders have rates of lung cancer higher than firefighters, miners, duct workers and dry cleaners. (California Occupational Mortality Study, California Department of Health Services, 1979-1981).

- Working one eight-hour shift in a smoke-filled bar is equivalent to actively smoking nearly one pack of cigarettes. For patrons and employees, two hours in a smoke-filled bar is the same as smoking nearly four cigarettes. (Siegel, M.; “Smoking and Restaurants: A Guide for Policy-Makers,” Oakland: American Heart Association, Alameda County Division, 1992).

- The respiratory health of bartenders in San Francisco, California improved in the weeks following the implementation of the state’s smokefree bar law, with 59% of those who had previously reported respiratory illnesses being symptom free two months after implementation. (Eisner, M.D.; Smith, A.K.; Blanc, P.D., “Bartenders’ respiratory health after establishment of smoke-free bars and taverns,” Journal of the American Medical Association 280(22): 1909-1914, December 9, 1998).

- A non-smoking, otherwise healthy waiter who suffered a heart attack as a result of working in a smoke-filled bar received $85,000 in a workers’ compensation lawsuit. (Ubhi v. State Compensation Insurance Fund, Cat ‘n’ Fiddle Restaurant, California Workers’ Compensation Appeals Board, 1990).

- In another survey, 69% of Massachusetts residents predicted no change in their patronage of bars in response to smokefree policies; another 20 percent predicted increased patronage of smokefree bars. (Biener, L. and Siegel, M.; “Behavioral intentions of the public after bans on smoking in restaurants and bars”, American Journal of Public Health. 87(12): 2042-2044, December 1997).

- According to a comparison of California taxable sales data for the 1st quarter of 1997 and the 2nd quarter of 1999, bar revenues increased. (“Final Taxable sales figures for bars and restaurants for the first and second quarters, 1999, “Sacramento: California Department of Health Services, Tobacco Control Section (TCS), August 30, 2000.”)

- A 1996 review of bar sales tax receipts in cities with smokefree bar ordinances confirms earlier findings that these ordinances do not harm bar revenues. (Glantz, S. and Smith,

- An economic impact study of San Luis Obispo’s 1990 smokefree restaurant and bar ordinance found no negative impact on sales based on sales tax data, and restaurant/bar sales did not increase in neighboring cities as a result of the ordinance. *(The San Luis Obispo Ordinance: A Study of the Economic Impact on San Luis Obispo Restaurants and Bars, San Luis Obispo, CA.: Taylor Consulting Group, January 13, 1993).*

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