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www.bc.lung.ca

April 29, 2009

Mayor Stewart Alsgard and Members of Council
City of Powell River
6910 Duncan St
Powell River BC V8A 1V4

Dear Mayor Alsgard and Members of Council:

SUBJECT: *Support for Smoking Regulation Bylaw 2232*

On behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. & Yukon and the BC Lung Association, which make up the Clean Air Coalition of B.C., we encourage you to take a leadership role in increasing the overall health of your residents by approving Smoking Regulation Bylaw 2232 being presented to City Council on May 7, 2009 to ban smoking:

- within buildings open to the public (including restaurants, bars and pubs) without exception
- within customer service areas (including outdoor patios of restaurants, bars and pubs)
- on sports fields, playgrounds and school yards
- within enclosed or partially enclosed public transit shelters
- within a six metre minimum (a seven metre minimum is preferable) distance from doors, windows and air intakes of buildings, and from the other banned areas listed above
- within public transit vehicles
- within vehicles for hire

While there are still some people who believe that second-hand smoke is solely a nuisance, especially when it occurs outdoors, nothing could be further from the truth. In a 2006 report, the U.S. Surgeon General concluded that second-hand smoke causes cancer, coronary heart disease, and respiratory illnesses, and that there is no safe level of exposure to it. Evidence shows that second-hand smoke is harmful not only in enclosed spaces such as in buildings and vehicles with no ventilation system fully mitigating the smoke, but also in outdoor spaces as well. Scientific studies have reported that smoke levels in most outdoor settings generally do not decrease to the background level for fine particles or carcinogens until approximately seven metres from the source.

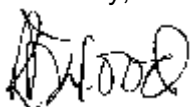
There is strong public support for expanding smoke-free laws in British Columbia. A BC Stats poll conducted for the Clean Air Coalition of B.C. in January 2008 for the *IMAGINE! A Smoke-Free BC* campaign found that 73% of British Columbians support smoking bans in outdoor public places. People clearly desire breathing fresh air while being outside, especially during their outdoor dining experience. Those working in the service sector should also be afforded the protection of not being exposed to second hand smoke while at work. Since 86% of British Columbians don't smoke, a decision by your Council to ban smoking specifically on patios would be good for public health as well as good for business.

The provinces of Alberta, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island and the Yukon Territory have banned smoking on outdoor patios. Several municipalities in the province have already followed the lead of these other provincial jurisdictions by banning smoking in many outdoor settings. On April 7, 2009, the Resort Municipality of Whistler became the latest to join this group, their bylaw which includes smoking bans similar to those in Bylaw 2232, but with a 25 metre buffer to playgrounds, playing fields, locales where sporting events are taking place, and school properties.

We encourage you to take the lead on this issue and approve Bylaw 2232 that would improve public health, cater to the wishes of the majority of residents and provide a healthier environment for all in Powell River.

If you have any questions on the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact Jack Boomer, Director of the Clean Air Coalition of B.C. at telephone in Victoria 250.721.4268 or by email at jackboomer@shaw.ca.

Sincerely,



R.F. Bobbe Wood, MA
President & CEO
Heart and Stroke Foundation
of B.C. & Yukon



Scott McDonald
Executive Director
BC Lung Association

cc. Jack Boomer, Director, Clean Air Coalition of B.C.
Patti Diplock, Tobacco Reduction Coordinator, Vancouver Coastal Health Authority