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June 28, 2006

Hon. Gordon Campbell, Premier
Room 156
Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
V8V 1X4

Re: 100% Smoke-Free Legislation

Dear Mr. Campbell:

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 BC, we are following up on a letter sent to you and dated November 16th, 2005 to which we did not receive a response. Previously, we wrote to strongly urge your government to re-examine your position on smoke-free legislation in BC. Since we last wrote, there have been a number of significant events that we wanted to bring to your attention.

In January 2006, the California Environmental Protection Agency's Air Resources Board declared second-hand smoke to be a Toxic Air Contaminant (TAC). This is a serious designation that is reserved only for those air pollutants which may cause or contribute to an increase in deaths or serious illness, or which may pose a present or potential hazard to human health. Second-hand smoke now joins benzene, arsenic and diesel exhaust on the TAC list.

Effective May 31, 2006, the provinces of Ontario and Quebec took the step of protecting the health of all their citizens by making their provinces 100% smoke-free in public places, with no provisions for Designated Smoking Rooms (DSRs). In Ontario this decision affected over 700 establishments, which means that the spaces previously used for smoking rooms can now be used for patrons to enjoy smoke-free.

On June 27, 2006 the U.S. Surgeon General released a report entitled *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. The report conclusively finds that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke and that the only way to protect non-smokers from the known carcinogens in second-hand smoke is to eliminate all smoking indoors. The report found that non-smokers exposed to second-hand smoke at home or in the workplace increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25 to 30% and lung cancer by 20 to 30%. Even brief exposure can adversely impact the cardiovascular system, increasing the risk of a heart attack. The scientific evidence is indisputable and the only way to protect people from the dangerous chemicals in second-hand smoke is to eliminate smoking indoors.

Most notably and regrettably, on May 22nd, 2006, Heather Crowe, the ultimate Canadian anti-smoking advocate, died of lung cancer as a result of working in smoky restaurants for years, even though she never smoked a day in her life. After her diagnosis, Heather spent her remaining time traveling the country on a nation-wide campaign to alert people to the thousands of Canadians who die each year as a result of being exposed to second-hand smoke. She wanted to be the last person to die from second-hand smoke. Residents in Quebec and Ontario, as well as other provinces and territories, will benefit from Heather's advocacy efforts as she was instrumental in encouraging governments to implement 100% smoke-free legislation. Heather put a face to the issue of worker exposure to second-hand

smoke, and to the tragic consequences of lax and ineffective policies built on unfounded fear, hearsay and conjecture.

British Columbia was once considered a Canadian and world leader in tobacco control. We now have the dubious distinction of lagging behind ten other provinces and territories in Canada that have implemented 100% smoke-free legislation in public places and work places, with no allowances for DSRs. We are even lagging behind Quebec, which historically had one of the highest smoking rates in the country, and which now has 100% smoke-free public places legislation with no allowances for DSRs.

Mr. Premier, no more reports are needed; the evidence is clear that any level of exposure to second-hand smoke is harmful. For the benefit of all British Columbians, we urge you to commit to fully implementing 100% smoke-free legislation across the province and make Heather Crowe's wish a reality. We look forward to your timely response on this issue.

On behalf of our thousands of volunteers and donors, and the vast majority of British Columbians who support smoke-free legislation, we encourage you to ActNow.

Respectfully,



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