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June 28, 2006

Letter to the editor:

It comes as no surprise that the U.S. Surgeon General released a scientific report that conclusively states there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. The 600-page report confirms what the tobacco industry and the health community have known for years – exposure to second-hand smoke is deadly. The only way to protect workers and the public from the known cancer-causing chemicals in second-hand smoke is to eliminate it from all indoor places.

Yet in BC, we are one of the last three jurisdictions in Canada that has not implemented province-wide 100% smoke-free legislation in all public places. Hospitality workers in BC must choose whether to work in indoor designated smoking rooms and breathe the toxic chemical soup called second-hand smoke. No other workers in the province have to choose between a safe workplace and their health.

It is unacceptable for the BC government to allow smoking in any indoor workplace or public place, especially given the US Surgeon General's report. The evidence is irrefutable - exposure to second-hand smoke is harmful at any level. For the safety of all British Columbians, we implore this government to immediately commit to fully implementing 100% smoke-free legislation across the province.

Respectfully,

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

Scott McDonald  
Executive Director  
BC Lung Association