

Written Testimony in Favor of HB 1024  
(ND Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Budget)  
February 2, 2015  
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House Appropriations Committee, Human Resources Division  
Representative Chet Pollert, Chair

KUDOS! This is the magic word floating around the City of Hazen when it comes to protecting our youth from the dangers of second-hand smoke and the infamous Tobacco Industry! Not only the Hazen City Commission, but the Hazen Park and Recreation Board of Directors have taken very active policy steps fighting an industry that is known to grab our youth and get them started on a life-long addiction.

On July 31, 2014 the Hazen City Commission adopted, by unanimous decision, an electronic-cigarette ordinance. All City Commissioners were concerned with the lack of jurisdiction that these products have when it comes to age restrictions and product placements. As Tobacco Outreach Coordinator for Custer Health, I began visiting with the Hazen City Commission back in May, 2014, and shared some of my concerns with youth being able to purchase electronic-cigarettes at any age and that these same products do not have to be behind the counters. During the May meeting, it was decided that a committee be formed from within the commissioners to look into some of my concerns. Two City Commissioners, Mayor Jerry Obenauer and Commissioner Judy Brunmeier volunteered to be on this committee along with myself. Not only did the Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control provide a model policy for this ordinance, but they also held a conference call with these two commissioners. The Center also sent Barb Andrist to attend a meeting in Hazen to answer any questions that the commissioners would have.

In addition to the electronic-cigarette city ordinance, the Hazen Park and Recreation Board of Directors passed, by unanimous decision, a tobacco-free parks policy on January 13, 2015. Again, the Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control provided a model policy for me to present. Much discussion was held over three separate meetings deciding which parts of the parks should be tobacco-free, and which parts should be exempt. It was finally decided to have no exemptions in order to protect our families from the dirty cigarette butts that were thrown on the ground as well as the second-hand smoke. As one director said, "We take our children to the parks to be in a fun environment to promote health and wellness and the last thing I want is to be breathing in someone else's smoke". I have submitted for a mini-grant for 24 tobacco-free signs to be purchased with funds from The Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control to be placed around the city's parks as well as the play areas at Hazen Bay. All of this is done with help from the Center.

The Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control has been a wonderful resource for me in my policy work for electronic-cigarettes as well as the park board policy. I placed many calls into Kelli Ulberg, Donna Thronson, and Barbara Andrist asking questions and seeking clarification. Without funding for this entity, I couldn't do the job that I love to do.