



Kristie Wolff – Program Manager, American Lung Association in North Dakota

SB 2024

North Dakota House Appropriations Committee

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Chairman Pollert and members of the House Appropriations Committee, my name is Kristie Wolff, I am the Manager of Tobacco Prevention and Advocacy for the American Lung Association in North Dakota.

Today I am here to speak in support of a fully funded tobacco prevention program following CDC best practices, as voted on by the people.

Currently 80% of my work at The American Lung Association is funded by a grant from the Center for Tobacco Prevention and Control Policy also known as BreatheND.

Over the past year my work has included developing a partnership with Fire Depts. across the state and with the ND Fire Prevention Association. This partnership has focused on education related to smoking material fires.

According to the National Fire Prevention Association, smoking material fires are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States and 25% of people who die in a smoking-material fire are not the smoker.

In the spring of 2016 cities across the state saw a significant spike in smoking material fires. To help bring awareness to the issue, several ND fire departments adopted Operation Butt Out, a locally developed education program that focuses on how to safely extinguish smoking materials “all the way, every time.”

The American Lung Association in ND became a resource for participants in this program by providing education on smoke free multi-unit housing policies and e-cigarette fires and explosions. BreatheND’s numerous resources have been a valuable tool used during this education process.

This important work has only just begun. There is so much more to do. The next step in this partnership is to help guide rental property owners through the process of implementing smoke free policies. These policies save lives and save money.

Another primary focuses of my work funded through BreatheND is statewide education related to electronic cigarettes. These flavored high tech products are addicting the next generation. Currently 22.3% of ND high school kids use electronic cigarettes. Continued education and monitoring of these emerging products is vital. The tobacco industry is not going to stop, therefore we cannot stop either.

Tobacco is still a problem in ND, so it is critical to continue to fully fund North Dakota's tobacco prevention program through BreatheND. This agency has a single focus and a proven track record of success. Thank you for your time and consideration, I would be happy to answer any questions.