

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR SAMPLE #1

*The strongest letters to the editor explain who you are and why you care about smoke-free workplaces and the dangers of secondhand smoke. The letter can come from a member of the public health or business communities, but often the most influential letters are submitted by community members who simply care about their health and that of their friends and families.*

- *State why this issue is important to you.*
- *Include personal stories: Have you been affected by secondhand smoke? Has the law that exists today affected you? If all workplaces were smoke-free, would you go out to hear music in bars again? Are there still indoor public events that are so smoky that you won't take your kids there? Is your own workplace smoke-free? Whatever your story is, share it!*
- *Share your letter with friends, family and co-workers and encourage them to submit their own.*
- *Use this letter as an example only.*

[DATE]

To the Editor -

As a resident of North Dakota, I am looking forward to the day when our state will ensure that every workplace, including bars and hotels, is smoke-free. Employees of these places (and the rest of us!) have the right to breathe smoke-free air and to be protected from the serious health hazards of secondhand smoke. Bismarck has done good work in keeping most workplaces smoke-free with some exceptions, and I commend the cities of Fargo and West Fargo for getting ahead of the curve and protecting all workers and the public from secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke causes premature death and disease in children and nonsmoking adults. It's a fact, and that's why a growing number of states, communities and even entire countries already have adopted strong smoke-free laws that cover all workplaces - including bars. Studies show that these smoke-free communities are experiencing a dramatic drop in serious health issues like heart attacks. It's time North Dakota joined others who realize the importance of protecting all our citizens.

I'm looking forward to a time when I can enjoy hearing live music or meeting a friend for a beer without the smoke. More importantly, we need to do something about the 80-140 people who die from secondhand smoke each year in North Dakota. Residents and workers should not have to put their health at risk in order to earn a paycheck or enjoy a night out.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Contact Information]