



## TOBACCO FREE KANSAS COALITION

HB 2622 Testimony: Proponent  
Sara Prem, President Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition  
February 7, 2024  
Written

The Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition (TFKC) is a statewide alliance of health, medical, education, law enforcement, health coalitions, parents, youth, and individuals advocating for policies, and evidence-based programs to significantly reduce tobacco use and addiction in Kansas. Our mission is to eliminate the use of commercial, non-sacred tobacco to achieve health equity through advocacy, education, and collaboration. TFKC opposes the effort to strip local governments of their right to make their communities healthier.

On behalf of the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition Board of Directors and nearly 300 members across the state, TFKC is providing testimony in support of HB 2622 which will remove the exemption for the gaming floor from the Indoor Clean Air Act.

Smoke-free laws have proven to be the only effective way of eliminating secondhand smoke exposure, a public health hazard responsible for the deaths of more than 41,200 adult non-smokers nationally each year and over 4,400 deaths of Kansans annually. Deemed entirely preventable by the 2006 Surgeon General's Report, secondhand smoke has been linked with cancer, heart disease, and respiratory illness in non-smokers, and is considered to be a leading cause of indoor air pollution.

Recent data suggests that thirdhand smoke is also harmful. Thirdhand smoke is made up of the pollutants that settle indoors when tobacco is smoked. The chemicals in thirdhand smoke include nicotine as well as cancer-causing substances such as formaldehyde, naphthalene and others.

Thirdhand smoke builds up on surfaces over time. It can become embedded in most soft surfaces such as clothing, furniture, drapes, bedding and carpets. It also settles

as dust-like particles on hard surfaces such as walls, floors and in vehicles. Thirdhand smoke can remain for many months even after smoking has stopped.

According to the Mayo Clinic, thirdhand smoke poses a potential health hazard to nonsmokers — especially children. Substances in thirdhand smoke are known to be hazardous to health. People are exposed to the chemicals in thirdhand smoke when they touch contaminated surfaces, such as casino workers' clothing, hair, and personal items that come home with the worker.

Though the effects from long-term exposure to the toxins in thirdhand smoke are not as well studied as secondhand smoke, research has shown that indoor smoking raises the risk of exposure to harmful chemicals, and that ventilation and cleaning cannot adequately eliminate these hazards.

The only way to protect nonsmokers, especially young children, from the dangers of second and thirdhand smoke is to remove all forms of smoking from indoor areas. Casinos and other gaming establishments remain one of the few public places in Kansas where employees and patrons are likely to encounter secondhand smoke indoors at high levels. Creating a 100 percent smokefree workplace for workers is the only effective way to eliminate exposure to second and thirdhand smoke.

TFKC supports the casino workers in their effort to secure a smokefree workplace. Everyone has the right to breath smokefree air regardless of where they work. The Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition urges this committee to vote yes on HB2622 and make Kansas casinos smokefree.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sara Prem  
President  
Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition

Mayo Clinic, 2024. "What is Thirdhand Smoke, and Why is it a Concern"

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/quit-smoking/expert-answers/third-hand-smoke/faq-20057791#:~:text=People%20are%20exposed%20to%20the,food%20items%20in%20their%20mouths,>