

# Title: *Advocating for Casinos to go Smoke-Free!*

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## BACKGROUND

- Smoking is prohibited in the majority of U.S. workplaces and public places because of evidence that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke<sup>1</sup>
- Yet, 28 states, including PA, still allow smoking in casinos, putting thousands of workers and patrons at risk for heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer<sup>2</sup>
- In 2020, all PA casinos went 100% smoke-free indoors due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Unfortunately, as soon as the mask mandate lifted, so too did the restrictions on smoking

## BREATHE FREE PENNSYLVANIA

- Breathe Free PA (BFP) is an advocacy group aiming to ensure that all people have access to safe, smoke-free air in their workplace
- BFP encourages lawmakers to pass a comprehensive clean indoor air law in Pennsylvania
- BFP also works with organizations, like the American Heart Association and American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, to have a larger impact across the U.S.

## Breathe FREE Pennsylvania



Image: KUNR.org

## OUR PROJECT

- Objectives
  - Raise awareness of the dangers of exposure to secondhand smoke and highlight the importance of smoking cessation
  - Close loopholes in the Clean Indoor Air Act and push lawmakers to create permanent smoke-free laws in casinos
- Interviews / Surveys:
  - Gathered various narratives from current and former casino employees and patrons
- Town halls:
  - Conducted numerous virtual town halls for current and former casino employees that created an outlet for employees to share their stories and experiences working in smoke-filled casinos
- School Policy Review:
  - Evaluated the existing policies within various school systems in Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, and South Carolina that address tobacco use



Image: act.yourethechance.org



Image: heart.org/

American Heart Association®



Image: unicef.org/

## REFLECTIONS

- “As a future physician, this summer taught me how important it is to consider the environmental factors impacting someone’s health when offering advice and empathy.” -Sarah
- “Our work this summer taught me how important it is to learn from and advocate for individuals from vulnerable populations, and how I can use my position as a future dental practitioner to amplify these voices and raise awareness.” -Anabel

## SOURCES

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke. 2020. Accessed at [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/secondhand\\_smoke/health\\_effects/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/health_effects/index.html)
2. American Non-Smokers' Rights Foundation. Statewide Laws Requiring 100% Smokefree Gambling Venues. 2021. Accessed at <https://no-smoke.org/wp-content/uploads/pdf/100smokefreecasinos.pdf>