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**Alaskans Overwhelmingly Support Passage of  
Statewide Smoke-free Workplace Law**

**Anchorage, AK – January 29, 2016** - New poll results released today by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) show an overwhelming and increasing number of Alaskans would like to see the state pass legislation to make all Alaska workplaces smoke-free. The Alaska Legislature is currently considering Senate Bill 1, the “Take it Outside Act”, to protect all Alaska workers from secondhand smoke and e-cigarette aerosol in an indoor workplace.

The poll by Dittman Research shows that 88 percent of Alaskans believe all Alaska workers should be protected from exposure to secondhand smoke in the workplace. Sixty-nine percent favor passage of a law prohibiting smoking in workplaces, public buildings, offices, restaurants and bars.

“We have things in Alaska we disagree about, but this isn’t one of them”, said Dittman pollster, Matt Larkin. “I see poll results on hundreds of issues and rarely do you see this kind of overwhelming support.”

Last year, Senator Peter Micciche (R-Soldotna) introduced Senate Bill 1, the “Take it Outside Act”, which is moving through the legislative process. Micciche states:

During this time of fiscal crisis we continue to work to reduce the exorbitant costs of health care in Alaska. This single “Take it Outside Act” will help to significantly reduce millions of dollars in directly-related costs. As a conservative Alaskan, I continue to support a philosophy limits the role of government in our daily lives. However, I also subscribe to the philosophy that, ‘Your right to swing your arm ends just where the other man’s nose begins.’ SB 1 is not about limiting the rights of the smoker, but helps to protect the rights of working Alaskans who choose not to smoke.

In the same poll, 96 percent of Alaskans agree that all Alaskans have the right to breathe clean air. Regarding statewide legislation, 72 percent favor inclusion of e-cigarettes and 79 percent favor including marijuana in the smoke-free law.

Secondhand smoke kills roughly 42,000 nonsmoking adults in America each year and can cause many of the same diseases and premature death as smoking, such as cancer, heart disease and stroke. According to the Surgeon General, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

Not only is a comprehensive smoke-free law good for public health, but it will improve Alaska's fiscal health too. The state currently spends about \$438 million annually in health care costs associated with tobacco-related illnesses.

"We have known for some time that making all Alaska workplaces, restaurants, and bars 100% smoke-free would prevent about 1,900 youth from becoming smokers, and within five years, save an estimated \$5.04 million in lung cancer, heart attack, and stroke costs." said Emily Nenon, ACS CAN Alaska Government Relations Director. "We can now also confirm that Alaskans are overwhelmingly ready for the legislature's action on Senate Bill 1," Nenon stated.

### **About ACS CAN**

[ACS CAN](#) is the non-profit, non-partisan advocacy affiliate organization of the American Cancer Society, which is dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. ACS CAN works to encourage lawmakers, candidates and government officials to support laws and policies that will make cancer a top national priority. ACS CAN gives ordinary people extraordinary power to fight cancer.

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