

Testimony of Richard P. Sargent, MD, House Business & Labor Committee, HB 661

February 18, 2005

Second hand tobacco smoke is toxic. The data is very clear: This is a health issue.

\* 8 hours of work in a smoke filled workplace is the health equivalent of smoking one pack daily

\* This applies to non-smokers and to smokers. Sidestream tobacco smoke is an indoor air pollution problem.

\* Phillip Morris Tobacco Company knew in 1961 that five sixths of a cigarette smolders into the room for everyone to breath. Only one sixth gets filtered through the smokers lungs.

\*The same tobacco companies that told us nicotine is not addictive offer ventilation as an alternative. But it takes a crosswind of 22 miles per hour or an updraft of 13 miles and hour to adequately clear smoke from a room. That is not mechanically or financially feasible.

\*Opponents will claim impending financial disaster. But studies emphasizing objective, verifiable data, such as sales and liquor tax receipts, unemployment claims and bankruptcies show no discernable effect. From Texas to Maine, New Mexico to New York and even in Ireland, there is no objective data to back up the forecasts of economic gloom and doom.

\*Our state and communities regulate the tavern, casino and restaurant industries, always in the name of protecting public health. We regulate water temperature, soap quality, frequency of cleaning and temperature of food storage, how often the bathrooms are cleaned and what soap is used. We do this to prevent disease. Those same rules state toxic chemicals not necessary for the operation of the facility are not allowed, and if they are necessary the business needs to provide protective equipment.. HB 661 is in conflict with workplace safety law. Tobacco smoke does not deserve to be above the law.

\* Opponents will argue business rights, but we have heard about the limitations on personal liberty rights. In the free exercise of your rights, you may not harm others. We have barely scratched the surface in showing the effects of a poison, Second Hand Smoke, and the harm it causes to all those exposed.

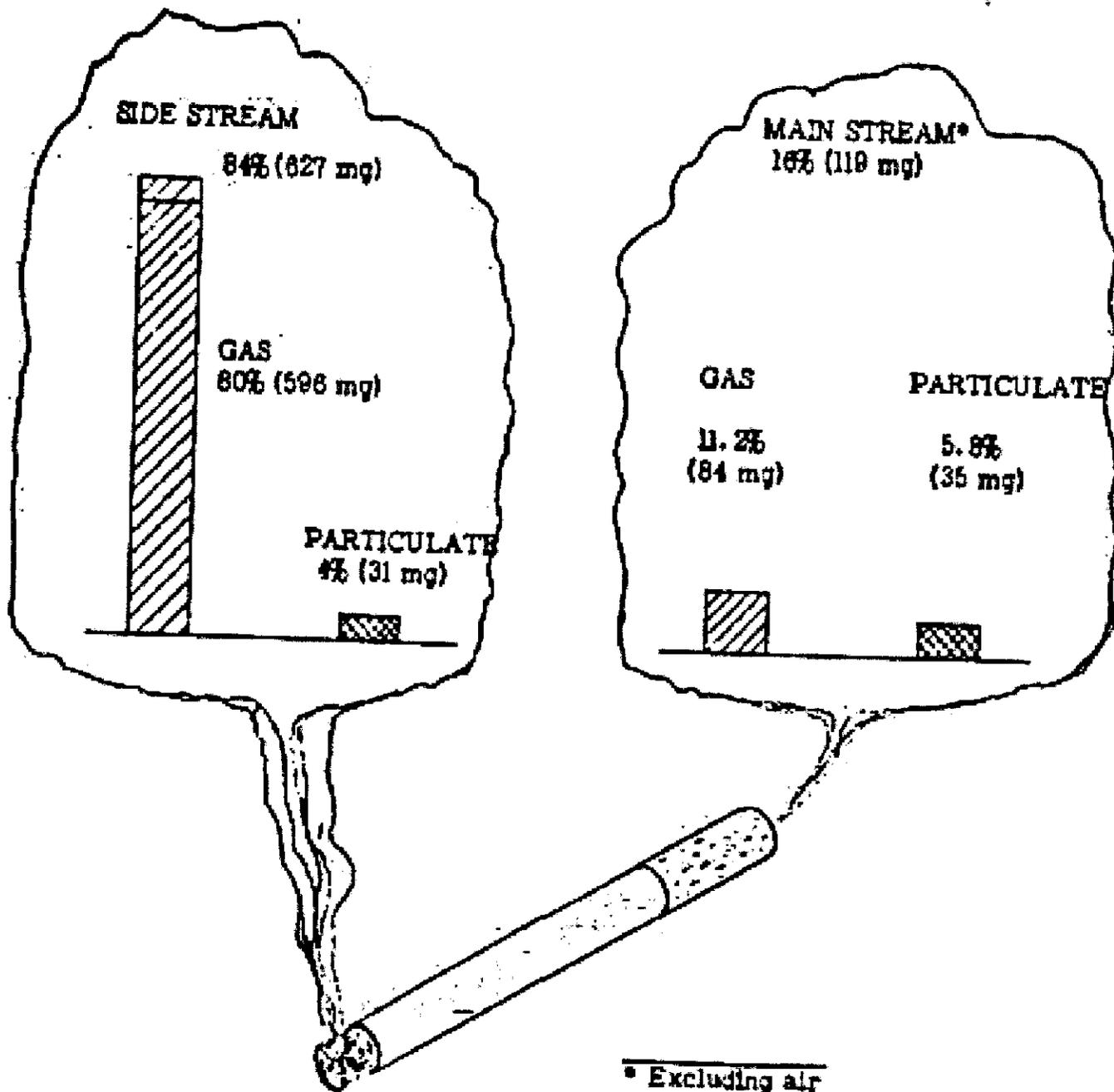
\*The most recent exposure carries the highest risk. Just 30 minutes to two hours of exposure gives all of us the same risk factors as active smokers. The toxins in tobacco smoke are a big risk factor for employees but also for patrons. Second hand smoke does not discriminate. It poisons everyone who comes in contact, non smokers and smokers alike.

\* Dr. Shepard talked about the effects we found on heart disease. After reading our study the Centers for Disease Control recommended all people with known heart disease avoid second hand smoke exposure. Their scientific conclusion was second hand smoke is too hazardous for any exposure.

\* Sixty per cent of Montanans say it is time to clear the air. To be fair the law needs to apply to everyone equally. I urge you to vote do not pass on HB 661

CHEMISTRY OF CIGARETTE SMOKE

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Total of more than 400 compounds of which about 50 have been identified for the first time by the Philip Morris Research Center.

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