



EXHIBIT 8
DATE 2-16-05
HB 643

February 16, 2005

Representative Ariene Becker
Chair – Human Services Committee
Montana House of Representatives
P.O. Box 200400
Helena, MT 59620-0400

Madam Chair and Members of the House Human Services Committee:

This letter is to lend my support for HB 643 supporting Montana tobacco-free schools and smoke-free public places.

I am a medical oncologist and director of the Deaconess Billings Clinic Cancer Center in Billings, Montana. I have the privilege of taking care of many patients with cancer. Much of the burden of their cancer is related to smoking, either from their own individual smoking or second-hand smoke. There is no doubt in my mind that abolishing smoke in public places and continuing to educate our children will lead to a healthier America with less burden of cancer and other diseases.

I believe it is anyone's right to smoke. That's certainly not what I would like to legislate, but I certainly would legislate affecting others with their smoking, which is causing death every day across the United States.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this. Lives depend on your decision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Thomas Purcell".

W. Thomas Purcell, M.D.
Chair, Department of Hematology/Oncology
Director, Deaconess Billings Clinic Cancer Center

klg

02/16/2005 6:37 A

02/16/2005 8:10 A