

EXHIBIT 19  
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HB 643

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Testimony before the House Human Services Committee In Support of HB 643 of  
**TOBACCO FREE SCHOOLS & SMOKEFREE PUBLIC PLACES LAW**

Chairperson Becker, Members

I am here today, not only as a private citizen, but as a Licensed Addictions Counselor to speak in support of HB643-Tobacco Free Schools & Smokefree Public Places Law.

I also supported the Initiative 149-the tobacco tax. I supported Initiative 146 the funding of the tobacco disease prevention program. I did so because, as a cancer survivor and an addictions counselor, I believe tobacco is one of the worst addictions and health hazards in our country.

I started smoking in the late 50's when the tobacco companies were telling us, "nicotine is not addictive" while all the time adding nicotine to cigarettes so that we would continue to smoke. I quit two years after I had surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation for bi-lateral breast cancer, not because I was afraid of for my health, I was too addicted to cigarettes to think that constructively; I quit because smoking became extremely inconvenient to me. The side effects of my quitting smoking 17 years ago are that I can breathe without wheezing, I don't cough all the time, my blood pressure is no longer high and I am no longer rated for insurance because of lung disease.

We have definitive proof that tobacco causes cancer. Now, thanks to a study done in Helena Mt. by Drs. Sargent and Sheperd, we have definitive proof that second hand smoke causes heart attacks. The tobacco companies will say that this study is too small to prove anything, but pharmaceutical companies have quoted smaller studies as proof of the efficacy of their drugs for years.

In conclusion, we know that tobacco causes cancer in the user. We know that tobacco is addictive to the user. Now we know that second hand smoke can be fatal to the people around the user. I believe it is necessary to protect the unsuspecting people around the user. Please vote in favor of HB 643 to protect Montana lives.

*Nancy H. Semenza*