



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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# **Springfield's One Air Alliance Announces the Introduction of a Comprehensive Smokefree Workplace Ordinance**

Amendment to current ordinance will protect smokefree air in all indoor public places throughout city

**Springfield, Missouri, Thursday, June 10, 2010** – During a **press conference** on Thursday, the **One Air Alliance**, a local grassroots community health coalition, announced the introduction of a **comprehensive smokefree workplace ordinance** to the Springfield City Council. If approved by Council, the new ordinance will amend City Code, Chapter 58, Article One to protect smokefree air inside **all indoor public places**. In order to protect the health of all people, this amendment removes exemptions outlined by the current city ordinance related to smokefree air.

To demonstrate their support, many representatives of the more than **120 businesses and community organizations** that have signed on to support the One Air Alliance's efforts were in attendance at Thursday's press conference. In addition to Springfield **Mayor Jim O'Neal**, featured speakers at the press conference included **Kevin Gipson**, Director of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department; **Pat Duran**, Owner of Metropolitan Grill; and **Carrie Reynolds**, One Air Alliance Co-Chair. The new ordinance will be introduced during the Springfield City Council meeting on **June 28**.

*"This has been a extensive process of community engagement undertaken over the course of many months, and as a result of those efforts, the path leading to our announcement today became clear,"* said **Carrie Reynolds**, One Air Alliance Co-Chair. *"Springfield deserves smokefree air. And an overwhelming majority of public feedback indicates that smokefree air is not only what Springfield needs, but it is what Springfield wants."*

*"This decision was made after the completion of local indoor air quality testing, a detailed review of the city's current policy, and an extensive and ongoing dialogue with individuals from all walks of life,"* said Springfield Mayor Jim O'Neal. *"We have a moral obligation to protect people from what we know causes cancer, heart disease and chronic respiratory disorders. Missouri is the Show-Me State, and it's time for Springfield to step forward and show all Missourians that we care for the health and well-being of every person who lives, works and visits in this community."*

*"Establishing a comprehensive workplace ordinance is the only effective way to protect he community from exposure to secondhand smoke,"* said **Kevin Gipson**, Director of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department. *"The good news is that Springfield is not alone in making this important step. At the local level, more than 3,100 municipalities have laws that restrict where smoking is allowed. At the state level, a total of 32 U.S. States and the District of Columbia now have laws protecting smokefree air in public places. Our neighboring state of Kansas recently passed comprehensive smokefree workplace legislation that will go into effect in July."*

*"By embracing a comprehensive smokefree workplace ordinance, all business owners in Springfield will soon be able to operate under one set of rules,"* said **Pat Duran**, Owner of Metropolitan Grill in Springfield. *"This would be a welcome change, because a comprehensive ordinance helps us level the playing field, making it fair for all business owners. Out of concern for the health of employees and patrons, because it makes sense from a business perspective, and because I'm all about fairness, I'm fully supportive of this effort. I also encourage my fellow business owners to join me in supporting this change."*

### **About the Dangers of Secondhand Smoke**

In 2006, the **U.S. Surgeon General** issued a landmark study that officially classified secondhand smoke as **"a serious health hazard."** The Surgeon General went on to proclaim that "scientific evidence indicates there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke."

Smoke from a burning cigarette contains more than **4,800 chemicals** – more than 250 of which are known to be toxic. At least **60** are defined as **carcinogens**. This means that the smoker, and every single person in proximity to the lit cigarette,

inhales these toxic chemicals and known carcinogens. The effects of exposure to secondhand smoke can be nearly as large as **chronic, active smoking**. Even brief exposure has an immediate negative impact and can lead to a variety of **life-threatening ailments**, including coronary heart disease and lung cancer. In addition to heart disease and cancer, the Surgeon General has linked secondhand smoke exposure to stroke, emphysema, bronchitis, asthma, respiratory infections and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

### **About Recent Local Indoor Air Quality Testing**

A recent study of local indoor air quality, commissioned by the One Air Alliance with results analyzed and reported by the **University of Missouri's School of Medicine** and **Campus-Community Alliances for Smoke-Free Environments** (CASE), was conducted discreetly and anonymously. Air quality samples were obtained inside smoking and non-smoking venues throughout Springfield in December of 2009 and in March of 2010. These samples measured the amount of **particulate matter pollution** contained in the shared air we breathe. This includes the particles that are easily inhaled deep into the lungs. Particulate matter pollution is associated with pulmonary and cardiovascular disease and mortality.

The results were staggering. Air sampling revealed that restaurants, bars and other entertainment venues that allowed smoking contained **10 times more particulate matter pollution** than those that were smokefree. Even more shocking, the workers exposed to that pollution on a daily basis were inhaling **250% more air pollution** than is recommended by the **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**. The study's findings indicate that **greater than 90%** of the fine particle pollution may be attributed directly to secondhand smoke. Furthermore, an average of **only 5% of the business patrons** were actually smoking during the air sampling tests, yet those 5% contributed to 10 times more air pollution and subjected workers to 250% more toxicity than anyone should be forced to endure.

### **About the One Air Alliance Public Education Campaign**

Armed with these findings, the One Air Alliance has been engaging civic leaders, health partners, business executives, neighbors and colleagues over the past several months to determine its next steps, while also launching a **strategic public education campaign**. Thanks to a grant from the **Missouri Foundation for Health**, the One Air Alliance has been equipped to reach the Springfield community with its important health message. The Missouri Foundation for Health is a philanthropic organization whose vision is to improve the health of the people in the communities it serves.

The One Air Alliance's targeted message continues to reach the public through **awareness opportunities** on commuter buses, in movie theatres, online, and in print through billboards and newspapers. In addition, **drop-boxes** have been strategically placed inside the facilities of local business supporters and contain educational literature. Many of those business supporters are also displaying One Air Alliance **signage, window decals and yard signs**.

One Air Alliance members have begun **presentations in the community**, accepting invitations to large events and health fairs. A **PowerPoint** has been developed as a resource for volunteers interested in reaching their peers. A **website** has also been launched for people to learn more about the One Air Alliance, including its supporters, what it stands for, and how they can get involved. That website is [www.OneAirAlliance.org](http://www.OneAirAlliance.org) and the public is encouraged to visit the site and help spread the word. **Video testimonials** from local supporters have recently been added to the site.

### **About the One Air Alliance**

The One Air Alliance is a grassroots community health coalition comprised of Springfield citizens from all walks of life, including business leaders, healthcare professionals and civic volunteers. The coalition was formed to protect the health of all people living, working and visiting the Springfield community from the harmful effects posed by secondhand smoke. The One Air Alliance was formed to promote the importance of clean indoor air while protecting the right of every individual to breathe clean air. For more information, the public is encouraged to visit [www.OneAirAlliance.org](http://www.OneAirAlliance.org).

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