



City of Bethel Proclamation

Marking 2008 As The 10th Anniversary Of The City Of Bethel Smokefree Public Places Ordinance, The First Smokefree City Ordinance In Alaska

WHEREAS, in the United States more than 50,000 people die each year from exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke; and

WHEREAS, The United States Surgeon General, as the most highly respected scientific authority on smoking and health, stated in his June 2006 report that the conclusion from scientific evidence available to date is crystal clear: There is no question that secondhand smoke causes serious disease and death, including lung cancer, heart disease and respiratory illnesses such as bronchitis and asthma. There is no longer a scientific controversy or any scientific debate; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General's report confirms that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and that separating smokers from nonsmokers in the same air space, cleaning the air and ventilating buildings are not effective at eliminating exposure of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, the Surgeon General's report states that establishing smoke-free workplaces is the only effective way to ensure that secondhand smoke exposure does not occur in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, scientific studies demonstrate a clear and immediate health benefit following the implementation of smokefree workplace policy, in the example of Helena, Montana, Pueblo, Colorado and Piedmont, Italy, where communities recorded a significant reduction in heart attack rates; and

WHEREAS, the right of smokers to smoke ends where their behavior affects the health and well-being of others; and

WHEREAS, more than 90 percent of all Alaskan adults and 83 percent of Alaskan adult smokers agree that secondhand smoke is harmful; and

WHEREAS, in 1998 the City of Bethel adopted an ordinance to protect citizens from involuntary exposure to secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, reflecting a global trend, and following Bethel's lead, more Alaskan communities have been making the decision to protect workers from the toxins in secondhand smoke – the nearly 50 Alaskan communities include Barrow, Chenega Bay, Dillingham, Kenai, Soldotna, Seward, Fairbanks, Anchorage, Juneau and Sitka; and

WHEREAS, when smokefree policies happen, experience has shown that there is a positive secondary result – people become more serious about quitting tobacco; and

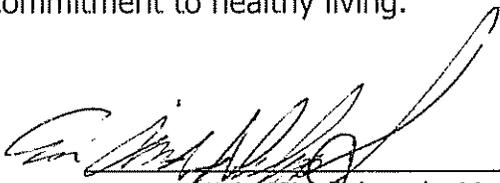
WHEREAS, the Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation and the State of Alaska Tobacco Quit Line are ready to provide cessation services, counseling and nicotine replacement therapy for all in the YK region who want to quit; and

THEREFORE, we the members of the Bethel City Council, do proclaim February 5 through 6, 2008 as Bethel's 10th Anniversary "Got Air" Celebration, in partnership with the Alaska Tobacco Control Alliance, and, in doing so, urge all communities, businesses and families in Alaska to adopt smokefree indoor air policies as a commitment to healthy living.

Signed this 29th Day of January, 2008



Sandra Modigh, City Clerk



Eric Middlebrook, Mayor