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April 5, 2012

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To: Multnomah County Board of Commissioners

From: Colleen Hermann-Franzen, Regional Advocacy & Outreach Manager

Re: Resolution Adopting a Tobacco Free Campus Policy for Multnomah County

Members of the Board of Commissioners, my name is Colleen Hermann-Franzen, and I am the Regional Advocacy & Outreach Manager for the American Lung Association of the Mountain Pacific, which serves Oregon. Our mission is to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. The American Lung Association is here today in support of the resolution to adopt a tobacco free campus policy for Multnomah County campuses.

The Lung Association supports tobacco free policies because they protect people from secondhand smoke, encourage tobacco users to quit, and reinforce healthy lifestyles for the entire community.

First, secondhand smoke is a significant cause of disease and premature death. A recognized cause of lung cancer, secondhand smoke is also associated with heart disease and respiratory problems in nonsmoking adults. Ninety percent of Oregon adults say that people should be protected from secondhand smoke.

Secondly, tobacco free policies create healthy environments that help people to quit. Seventy percent of Oregonians who smoke report that they want to quit. However, quitting can be a difficult process, with a person making repeated quit attempts before quitting for good. The adult smoking rate in Multnomah County is 15.3%. Of those adults, more than 48% attempted to quit last year. This policy would provide another motivator for those adults who attempted to quit.

Thirdly, this policy will reinforce healthy lifestyles for Multnomah County employees, visitors and the public by modeling healthy behavior. Changing the community norms around tobacco use is a proven way of preventing youth initiation and reducing overall tobacco use. Tobacco free policies in our public places send a strong message to the entire community that we are committed to protecting their health.

Please adopt the tobacco-free resolution to make Multnomah County campuses a healthy environment for employees, visitors and the general public. Thank you.

Fighting for Air

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