

From the Chairwoman's View

By: Danielle Patterson, chair of Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air

This week brought many changes in the Indiana General Assembly, including new leadership. Nearly one-third of the legislators are new members, and the Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air looks forward to meeting with all members of the Indiana General Assembly to urge their support for a statewide comprehensive smokefree air law.



Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air Chair, Danielle Patterson, addresses the media before the Health Finance Commission hearing in October.

Nearly all members of the General Assembly ran on a platform of reducing spending and saving Hoosier dollars. Enacting a statewide smokefree air law would not only save money but also lives. Every year, more than 1,200 Hoosiers die from secondhand smoke and tobacco costs Indiana \$390 million per year, or \$62 per taxpayer.

In 2009, 64 percent of Hoosiers supported a statewide smokefree air law. We saw this number grow in 2010, when 66 percent of Hoosiers polled said they support a smokefree air law and 53 percent stated that they would vote for a candidate who supported a smokefree air law. Pro-business associations, such as the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, have also publicly supported a statewide comprehensive smokefree air law, despite the claims that it would affect small business. Many cross-national studies show that implementing a statewide smokefree air law benefits businesses and increases tax revenue.

