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Nevada State Medical Association
Position Statement
Supporting SB50

To

Senate Judiciary Committee
February 7, 2003

The Nevada State Medical Association is a member of the Nevada Tobacco Prevention Coalition and supports the passage of SB50, which allows local authorities to adopt tobacco related ordinances and policies that may be more stringent than those adopted by the State of Nevada.

The complete preemption of local governments in the area of tobacco regulation is unique for Nevada public health laws. In November 2002, the voters of Washoe County and Clark County supported the ability of local authorities to regulate tobacco use and availability. The continuing adverse impact of tobacco use on the health of Nevadans is significant and undeniable. Developing community based responses to the challenges presented by tobacco products can be an important part of the long term strategy to reduce youth access to tobacco products and to discourage young adults from starting the process which leads to the devastating consequences of tobacco addiction.

SB50 is reasonable and measured. It retains at the State level the exclusive authority to regulate establishments that exclusively serve alcohol and gaming establishments. It permits local school districts, City Councils, County Commissions, library boards, and other local entities to consider alternative policies for other settings. The passage of SB50 can be an important step in dealing with the single greatest cause of preventable illnesses and deaths in our State. The physicians of the Nevada State Medical Association urge passage of SB50.