



Marian Medical Center

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2ND DISTRICT OFFICE

Janet Wolf, Chairperson
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
105 East Anapamu Street
Santa Barbara 93101

April 5, 2010

Dear Chairman Wolf and Supervisors:

Greetings! I ask that you stand with what is right and make a decision for life by making the Santa Barbara County beaches, parks, and trailheads tobacco product-free. Recently the various campuses of Marian Medical Center became tobacco product free.

I speak to you today as one who suffers from allergies, bronchitis and asthma so I know first hand what it means to struggle for air.

In 2006, The California Air Resources Board declared second hand smoke a toxic air contaminant and, in the same year, the U.S. Surgeon General stated that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

Tobacco use is the number one preventable cause of death and disease in California. According to the American Lung Association of California, nearly five million Californians have been diagnosed with asthma. It is the number one cause of hospitalization among children and is the leading cause of school absences. Since the lungs of children are not fully developed, they are more susceptible to lung conditions caused by secondhand smoke.

California cities and counties continue to dominate the list of places nationwide with the worst air pollution, and smoke from tobacco contributes to this.

The Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke as a known cancer causing agent. According to the Cancer Institute, there is no safe level of secondhand smoke and it can have an immediate affect on a person's heart and blood vessels. Cigarette butts that are thrown on the ground may be ingested by babies and animals. Also, to clean the beaches, parks, and trailheads of such debris take time of the staff and costs money.

Please join with other cities and counties who are preventing the usage of tobacco products in their beaches and parks.

The following quote by Martin Luther King, Jr. is very apropos to your decision regarding this issue. "Cowardice asks the question, is it safe? Expediency asks the question is it politic. Vanity asks the question, is it popular? But conscience asks the question is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe nor politic nor popular- but one must take it because it is right."

The current trend in the cities and counties is to become tobacco product-free.

Doing what is right calls you to take a stand with a wise healthy decision, by preventing tobacco product usage in our beaches, parks, and trailheads. Thank you for being a life giving presence for our brothers and sisters and all of creation.

I remain, like you, for life, justice, and peace,

Sister Janet Corcoran, O.S.F.
Vice President, Mission Services

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