
PRESIDENT

REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM A. OBERLE, JR.
24TH REPRESENTATIVE DISTRICT
LEGISLATIVE HALL OFFICE
P.O. BOX 1401
DOVER, DE 19903
(302) 744-4173 PHONE
(302) 739-2773 FAX

NATIONAL OFFICE
385 JORDAN ROAD
TROY, NY 12180
(518) 687-0615 PHONE
(518) 687-0401 FAX

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: SUSAN NOLAN
NCLGS NATIONAL OFFICE
(518) 687-0615

STATE LEGISLATORS VOTE TO SUPPORT 100% SMOKE-FREE GAMING

Scottsdale, AZ, January 13, 2009—State legislators this past weekend took a bold stand on a highly controversial issue—that of smoke-free gaming. The National Council of Legislators from Gaming States (NCLGS) Executive Committee here on January 10 voted to support efforts encouraging 100% smoke-free gaming facilities in the states. The [resolution](#) was passed by the NCLGS Committee on Casinos by an overwhelming margin on January 9 and was subsequently adopted by the group’s governing Committee the following day.

The resolution acknowledges that in many states gaming venues are smoking-permitted, exposing workers and patrons to secondhand smoke, which has the potential to lead to serious health effects.

The resolution backs efforts to promote smoke-free gaming by advocates, state legislators and gaming commissions and control boards, as well as efforts by tribal nations and those involved in tribal-state gaming compact negotiations. It was originally offered for consideration by the New Jersey Group Against Smoking Pollution (NJ GASP) and sponsored for discussion by NCLGS President Rep. Bill Oberle (DE) one year ago on January 4, 2008.

In speaking to the resolution, Rep. Oberle said, “NCLGS stands behind what it believes to be sound public policy that will promote a healthy atmosphere in the states for both consumers and businesses. This resolution supports efforts to bring casinos in line with the increasing number of state no-smoking policies aimed at public areas, such as workplaces, restaurants and bars.”

“We thank Rep. Oberle and NCLGS for addressing this important public policy issue to protect workers and patrons from hazardous second-hand smoke,” said Karen Blumenfeld, Executive Director of New Jersey GASP.

The resolution was the culmination of more than a year’s investigation of this divisive issue and input at NCLGS Committee meetings and hearings from—among others—legislators, regulators, and smoke-free gaming advocates.

“NCLGS endorses efforts to achieve what we believe is a very worthwhile goal. The organization has exercised due process in its examination of the issue and has ensured that all interested parties have had an opportunity to weigh in on the debate.” said Rep. Oberle.

Rep. Oberle said, “NCLGS will continue to work with interested parties to meet the resolution’s objectives and will distribute the resolution to the appropriate state and federal legislative leaders and gaming regulatory authorities.”

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During its exploration of the issue, NCLGS received oral and written testimony, as well as data, from representatives of the American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, Arizonans Concerned About Smoking, Black Hills Center for American Indian Health, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, California Clean Air Project, New Jersey GASP, Iowa Gaming Association, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, and casino workers and patrons.

NCLGS is the only organization of its kind where legislators can hear all sides of gaming-related issues in an unbiased format. NCLGS is neither pro- nor anti-gaming. NCLGS exists to educate state legislators and other policymakers on issues dealing with gaming; seeks appropriate regulation of gaming; and works to preserve the traditional rights of the states to regulate and tax gaming within their borders.

The resolution is available on the NCLGS Web site at www.nclgs.org. For more information, please call the NCLGS National Office at (518) 687-0615.

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