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Raised Senate Bill 990

Chairman Gerratana and Johnson,

I am writing to you and the distinguished members of the Public Health Committee to vehemently oppose SB 990. This bill if enacted would ban smoking in private clubs. The operative word in 'private clubs' is 'private'. If you do not want to smell the smoke, do not join or go to the private club.

We pay exorbitant taxes in order to enjoy cigarettes and cigars in Connecticut. Private Clubs are the last refuge for me and my fellow smokers.

We join private clubs not only to smoke, but to give back to the community. Private clubs are made up of a cross-section of the individuals of the towns they serve. They include clubs like Elks Lodges, Moose clubs, VFW's, American Legions and many more. What all of these clubs have in common is their charitable mission in their communities. Their benevolence is so beneficial to their surrounding towns. Restrict private club privileges and you restrict the membership; the very membership that help fundraising for the community. With all the cuts in state and federal funding, towns need all the help they can get.

In my years of watching the legislative process in Connecticut, I am always amazed at the bills that are proposed that do nothing else than waste valuable time.

We have projected and real billion dollar deficits with the State Budget for the future. We have billions in long term unfunded liabilities of state spending, and this is how we waste our valuable time.

To close, simply do not go to or join a private club if you are concerned about the smoke. I urge all of you to vote NO on SB 990 and concentrate on the real problems in Connecticut.

Keith J. Robbins