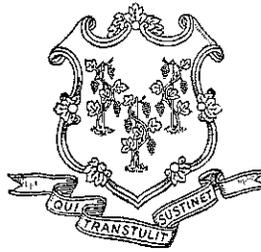


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State of Connecticut
SENATE

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Chair
Environment Committee

Ranking Member
Internship Committee

Member
Public Health Committee
Transportation Committee

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

Senator Ted Kennedy Jr.

March 11, 2015

In support of:

H.B. 6285, An Act Concerning Smoking in Motor Vehicles.

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee: thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on **House Bill 6285, "An Act Concerning Smoking in Motor Vehicles."** As State Senator from Connecticut's 12th Senate District, it is my pleasure to offer my support for this important legislation.

Nothing is more important than the health and welfare of our young citizens, and there is no secret regarding the health risks posed by exposing children to cigarette smoke. Children who are forced to breathe secondhand smoke have a greater incidence of lung diseases such as bronchitis and pneumonia, while asthmatic children are far more likely to suffer an asthma attack. The enclosed nature of a car guarantees prolonged exposure to secondhand smoke, and children who ride as passengers in a smoker's car have no defense against contact with the harmful carcinogens that cigarettes contain.

While I respect the rights of adults to make their own decisions, children have no safeguard from these decisions when forced to share the same environment. It is not fair to these defenseless citizens to be exposed to dangerous toxins, especially at a time when their bodies are still rapidly developing. By passing this law, the General Assembly can proudly stand as an advocate for children ages 6 and under by offering an important level of protection against tobacco smoke and the health risks it is known to cause. For these reasons, I am proud to support HB 6285 and encourage the Public Health Committee to approve this legislation for consideration by the full General Assembly.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on **HB 6285**. If you have any questions regarding my testimony, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Ted Kennedy Jr.

Ted Kennedy Jr.
Connecticut State Senator, 12th District