



Physicians *for a* Smoke-Free Canada

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December 10, 2003

The Honourable Ralph Klein
Premier of Alberta
Room 307, Legislature Building
10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton Alberta
Canada T5K 2B7

By fax: 1 780 427 1349

Dear Mr. Klein,

Part of my 40-year career as a waitress was spent in Alberta during the years when you were the Mayor of Calgary. I had great respect for the fine job you were doing then as Mayor of Calgary and I continue to admire the leadership you show as Premier of Alberta.

And that is why I am appealing to you now. I have terminal lung cancer even though I never smoked. I got lung cancer from second-hand smoke at work. From 1962 to 2002 I worked in restaurants and banquet rooms in Toronto, Calgary and Ottawa. The air was blue everywhere I worked. I want to be the last person in Canada to die from second-hand smoke. And you can help me realize this wish.

With your leadership, you can generate the support within your government that is apparently needed so that your Ministers Mr. Gary Mar, the Minister of Health and Mr. Clint Dunford, the Minister of Labour can move quickly to ban smoking in all workplaces in Alberta. That is how current and future generations of workers in the hospitality industry and other industries in Alberta will be protected from suffering my fate.

Both Mr. Mar and Mr. Dunford recently told me that more political support was needed before all workplaces in Alberta would be smoke-free (see attached news stories from the Edmonton Journal, November 25 and 27.)

Alberta's patchwork of municipal smoking bylaws does not provide all residents with uniform and effective protection from secondhand smoke. Provincial legislation is required to ensure that all Albertans are adequately protected from tobacco smoke in the workplace.

Ontario, Manitoba, Nunavut and the Northwest Territories will be requiring all employers to provide a completely smoke-free workplace within the next 1-3 years. Alberta can improve the quality of life of its residents by taking similar action.

As you know, the Mazankowski report called for more smoking restrictions in order to improve the health of Albertans and to help reduce demands on the healthcare system. Your government promised to implement all of the recommendations of this report.

The need for provincial government action to make all workplaces smoke-free is even more urgent now that the federal government has amended the Criminal Code through Bill C-45 to place a duty on all employers and managers to provide safe and healthy workplaces (See attached Question-and-Answer sheet). My own unhappy experience tells me that any indoor workplace where smoking is allowed is not a healthy workplace. All Albertans, without exception, deserve to be protected from second-hand smoke at work.

Mr. Klein, I would welcome the opportunity for me and my colleagues to discuss with you personally what could be done to build the needed political support to make all Alberta workplaces smoke-free. I hope to be in Alberta during the period January 12-23, 2004. I would be grateful if a member of your staff could contact Neil Collishaw, Research Director at Physicians for a Smoke-Free Canada (1 613 233 4878) to arrange a mutually convenient time during that period for such a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "H. Crowe".

Heather Crowe
Volunteer

Attachments(3):

"Smoke-free workplace campaign stalls in Alberta," Edmonton Journal, November 25, 2003

"Falling behind on smoking," Edmonton Journal, November 26, 2003

"Questions and Answers about Bill C-45 ("The Westray Bill") and Second-Hand Smoke in the Workplace"