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CONTACT:

Megan Myers  
Director of Communications  
South Dakota State Medical Association  
605-336-1965  
605-610-4878 cell  
[mmyers@sdsma.org](mailto:mmyers@sdsma.org)

**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION ENCOURAGES  
BUSINESSES TO GO SMOKE-FREE AHEAD OF NOVEMBER VOTE**

SIOUX FALLS, SD – April 6, 2010 – The South Dakota State Medical Association (SDSMA) is encouraging business owners across the state to make their establishments smoke-free before the November 2010 vote on the state’s smoke-free legislation.

The law - which was to take effect July 1, 2009, before a court challenge- will protect the health of South Dakotans by adding to the existing ban on smoking in other businesses and public buildings. Tobacco shops, existing cigar bars and lodging rooms will be exempt from the ban.

Scientific research has proven that secondhand smoke is dangerous to employees and patrons. Restaurant, bar and casino workers involuntarily inhale enough secondhand smoke to suffer some of the same health effects seen in people who smoke one pack of cigarettes a day.

The SDSMA, which is a member of the South Dakota Tobacco-Free Kids Network, applauds the bar and restaurant owners of our state who have made the smoke-free switch voluntarily.

Other business owners can satisfy their customers’ wishes for smoke-free restaurants and bars and prepare for the November vote by eliminating smoking in their establishments right now, said SDSMA President Thomas J. Huber, MD, of Pierre.

“South Dakotans already have spoken on their desire for smoke-free workplaces,” Dr. Huber said. “Why wait for the ballot vote to make the change? Business owners can start to protect their employees and patrons by going smoke-free today.”

*The SDSMA serves more than 1,900 physician members who are dedicated to the health of South Dakotans. The mission of the SDSMA is to promote the art and science of medicine, to protect and improve the health of the public and provide leadership and advocacy in the field of quality health care.*

Learn more about the SDSMA at [www.sdsma.org](http://www.sdsma.org).

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