

Coral Gables City Commission

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to kindly ask that you voice your support for [HB 105](#) and [SB 224](#), bills to give our communities the choice to make our beaches and parks smoke-free.

[HB 105](#) and [SB 224](#) are what the people want. In a [statewide poll of likely Florida voters](#), the overwhelming majority want to prohibit the use of cigarettes and other tobacco products on beaches and in state parks.

[Gilchrist County](#) and [Martin County](#) have passed resolutions asking the Florida Legislature to repeal the preemption on regulating secondhand tobacco smoke, and numerous Florida cities have passed similar resolutions. Among them are:

Atlantic Beach	Indian Harbour Beach	Orlando
Cape Canaveral	Indian Rocks Beach	Port Orange
Cocoa Beach	Key West	South Daytona
Fort Lauderdale	Miami Beach	Sunrise
Hialeah	Naples	Winter Park

American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, March of Dimes, Florida Cancer Control and Research Advisory Council, QuitDoc Foundation, Florida Association of Counties, Florida League of Cities, Surfrider Foundation, Sierra Club, and Ocean Conservancy are among the many organizations that strongly support this legislation. And so does world famous [Doctor Beach](#).

Current Florida law exposes seniors, families with young children, and others, to harmful secondhand smoke while

at our beaches and parks. The deleterious [effects of secondhand smoke](#), especially in children, are numerous and well documented, and so is [tobacco's impact on the environment](#).

According to [Keep America Beautiful](#), cigarette butts remain the most littered item in America. They make up one third of the litter found on beaches and in parks.

Tobacco litter is toxic, non-biodegradable, and devastating on marine wildlife. According to the United Nations International Maritime Organization, 177 species of marine animals and 111 species of shorebirds are affected by tobacco litter, causing unnecessary malnutrition, starvation, and death. Cigarette filters have been found in the stomachs of fish, birds, whales and other marine creatures who mistake them for food.

People who visit our state parks and beaches expect to experience clean fresh air. Tobacco smoke mars this experience.

That is why all the parks and beaches of [California](#), [Hawaii](#), [Maine](#), and [New Jersey](#) are smoke-free, and [over 1500 municipalities](#) across America prohibit smoking in their parks.

Having tobacco-free parks and beaches would provide families and children healthy environments, and allow Florida to fairly compete with smoke-free vacation destinations for tourist dollars.

[HB 105](#) and [SB 224](#) will do much more than to keep tobacco litter off our beaches and out of our parks. If enacted, they will restore local control of our beaches and parks to our communities. They will also protect the

environment and our children, reduce cleanup costs, improve the health of our citizens, and increase tourism. It is the right thing to do. So please voice support for [HB 105](#) and [SB 224](#) to give us the freedom to make our parks and beaches smoke-free.

Two additional bills have been introduced this year, HB 6081 and SB 1022. They both seek to reverse bills passed last year establishing state preemption over tobacco retail licensing. Regulation of tobacco and nicotine dispensing devices such as e-cigarettes is best accomplished by local jurisdictions. These bills deserve support as well.

These bills received motions of support from the Senior Citizen Advisory Board during their November and December meetings. Please refer to the meeting minutes.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Richard J. Thurer, MD

Professor of Surgery (Emeritus)

Miller School of Medicine, University of Miami

Chair, Tobacco Free Workgroup

Consortium for a Healthier Miami-Dade

Member, Senior Citizens Advisory Board