



**Testimony of Hilary Schneider, Maine Director of Government Relations
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network**

In Support of LD 269 “An Act To Prohibit Smoking in Bus Shelters”

March 4, 2021

Good morning, Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Hilary Schneider and I am the Government Relations Director for Maine for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN). ACS CAN, the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society, supports evidence-based policy and legislative solutions designed to eliminate cancer as a major health problem. As the nation’s leading advocate for public policies that are helping to defeat cancer, ACS CAN ensures that cancer patients, survivors, and their families have a voice in public policy matters at all levels of government.

On behalf of ACS CAN, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit the following testimony in support of LD 269. As you have heard, this bill clarifies our smoke-free public places law to ensure public bus shelters are included in the law.

ACS CAN advocates for comprehensive smoke-free public place and workplace laws to protect workers and the public from the harmful effects of secondhand exposure and to create communities that support tobacco-free living. ACS CAN supports everyone’s right to breathe clean smoke-free air. Tobacco users are not the only ones who breathe the deadly smoke—all the people around them are forced to inhale it too. Secondhand smoke causes nearly 42,000 deaths, including up to 7,300 lung cancer deaths among nonsmoking adults each year in the United States.^{i,ii} Exposure to secondhand smoke causes many of the same tobacco-related diseases as active smoking, including heart disease, stroke, and cancer.ⁱⁱⁱ In addition, secondhand smoke increases the risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems, and more severe asthma.^{iv} Multiple Surgeon General’s reports have confirmed that the scientific evidence indicates there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.^{v,vi}

Bus shelters are important in helping protect those who wait for public transportation from the wind, rain and snow. They can also provide safety and a place to sit. It is not uncommon for individuals waiting in a bus shelter to be sitting or standing in close proximity within an enclosed space with some walls and a roof. Many Mainers take public transportation to commute for work, to shop, worship or travel for recreation, entertainment or spend time with family or friends. These Mainers deserve to be protected from secondhand smoke exposure while waiting in a bus shelter. Moreover, smoke-free public places help support healthy communities by helping support tobacco-free living as the social norm.

For these reasons, we ask you to vote “ought to pass” on LD 269. I would be happy to answer any questions you have about this testimony.

ⁱ Max W, Sung HY, Shi Y (2012). Deaths from Secondhand Smoke Exposure in the United States: Economic Implications. *American Journal of Public Health*;102(11):2173-80.

ⁱⁱ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). (2014). *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Center for Diseases Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. Printed with corrections, January 2014.

ⁱⁱⁱ National Cancer Institute (NCI). (1999). *Health Effects of Exposure to Environmental Tobacco Smoke: The Report of the California Environmental Protection Agency*. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph 10. Bethesda, MD: NCI.

^{iv} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (2006). *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.

^v HHS (2006).

^{vi} U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (2010). *How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology and Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.