



MARYLAND Department of Health

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Maryland Celebrates 10th Anniversary Of Smoke-Free Bars, Restaurants, And Workplaces

BALTIMORE, MD (August 30, 2018) – The Maryland Department of Health, along with several statewide partners, celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Clean Indoor Air Act, also known as Clean Air Maryland, today.

Clean Air Maryland officially went into effect on February 1, 2008 and the Department has been commemorating the anniversary throughout 2018. The law prohibits smoking in virtually all indoor public places, including bars and restaurants, protecting Maryland workers, families, and residents from involuntary exposure to the harmful toxins found in secondhand smoke.

A decade of smoke-free air means all Maryland youth ages 10 years old and younger have never been exposed to a smoke-filled restaurant or indoor public place. All elementary school children today comprise **Maryland's first smoke-free generation.**

“Establishing smoke-free bars, restaurants, and workplaces protects not only Maryland workers, but also children, pregnant women, and all restaurant and bar patrons,” said Maryland Department of Health Secretary Robert R. Neall. “Today we celebrate Maryland’s children — age 10 and under — who make up the first smoke-free generation, while remaining committed to further reducing, preventing, and protecting residents from the harmful effects of tobacco use.”

Throughout the year, the Department and its partners have celebrated this milestone achievement and the benefits with a campaign called *Breathing Easier, Breathing Cleaner*. Volunteers are currently at the Maryland State Fair through Monday, Sept. 3 raising awareness and discussing the impact of smoke-free indoor places, prevention of new electronic tobacco product use, and the availability of free resources to help Marylanders quit tobacco use, such as the free Maryland Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

“Improving the health of Maryland residents was at the heart of our efforts to pass our state’s Clean Indoor Air Act in 2008,” said Jocelyn Collins, Maryland’s government relations director for the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACSCAN). “This law has protected millions of residents and visitors from the proven dangers of secondhand smoke over the last decade. And, it has helped set a healthy example for the young people in our state. Consider that Maryland kids, under the age of 10, have never been exposed to smoking in indoor public places.”

“The American Lung Association is proud to see Maryland as a leader in clean air and we are excited to be part of the celebration of the Clean Indoor Air Act’s 10th year,” said Laura Hale, manager, Advocacy and Public Policy, American Lung Association. “We need to keep leading the

way in protecting our youth from the dangers of smoking, so that we can save more lives from a lifetime of addiction.”

In the coming weeks, free materials, such as window clings, table tents, coasters, and pens, will be available to restaurants across the state to celebrate the 10th anniversary and promote the *Breathing Easier, Breathing Cleaner* campaign in their establishments. Materials will be available to order online at www.smokingstopshere.com.

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Marylanders who need help finding substance related disorder treatment resources should visit MdDestinationRecovery.org, BeforeItsTooLateMD.org or call the Maryland Crisis Hotline, which provides 24/7 support, at 1-800-422-0009. If you know of someone who could use treatment for substance related disorders treatment facilities can be located by location and program characteristics on our page at <https://goo.gl/aRRExJ>.

The Maryland Department of Health is the State agency that protects Maryland’s public health. We work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders through disease prevention, access to care, quality management, and community engagement. Stay connected: <http://www.twitter.com/MDHealthDept> and <http://www.facebook.com/MarylandDHMH>.