

The Prohibition of smoking in the home, in workplaces and public places

The Barbados Cancer Society which has been actively engaged since 1982 in advocating educational, social, economic and legislative measures to prevent and reduce tobacco consumption and eradicate or reduce to a minimum the diseases, disabilities and deaths caused by its use, is in full agreement with the prohibition of smoking through voluntary agreements in the home and the legal prohibition of smoking in workplaces and public places

These are our reasons.

1. Clean air is as essential for health as clean and nutritious food and drink.
2. Freedom to breathe clean air is a fundamental and inalienable human right, and according to the World Health Organization [WHO] the air pollution caused by smoking causes more diseases, disabilities and deaths in non smokers than any other man made pollutant.
3. The prohibition of smoking in the home through voluntary agreements, and the prohibition of smoking in the workplace and public places through legislation or voluntary agreements is a decisive factor in preventing and reducing the present and future use of tobacco of all age groups children, adolescents and adults. It also helps smokers, 80% of whom would like to quit, to do so successfully.
4. Smokers do not have the right to inflict on others the harmful consequences of their own foolish and thoughtless behavior.
5. All the diseases, disabilities and deaths caused by active and passive smoking are unnatural disasters because being preventable they are unnecessary.
6. In countries where the economic impact of the Tobacco Industry has been studied e.g. Canada, the USA it has been found that the net costs of the Tobacco Industry exceed by 3 or 4 times its contribution to the national economy.
7. The prohibition of smoking is the only way to eliminate the air pollution caused by smoking in indoor places because according to the Environmental Protection Agencies of the US Federal Government and the state of California, and the North American Society of Engineers for heating, refrigeration and ventilation the

pollution caused by smoking cannot be eliminated or reduced to harmless levels by ventilation or air cleaning.

8. It is common knowledge that nearly all Barbadians [more than 94%] understand and fully accept the reasons for bans on smoking in workplaces and public places, since smoking is already banned in Barbados through voluntary agreements in 80% of homes, 86% of government offices, and 92% of private workplaces.
9. It is unlikely that banning smoking in the bars, restaurants and hotels of Barbados would reduce the number of tourists visiting our island because nearly all of them come from countries where 70% or more of the adult population are non-smokers, and contrary to the arguments advanced by the Tobacco Industry that smoking bans would harm the Tourist Industry, studies which examined the revenues of bars, restaurants and hotels in California, Utah, Vermont, Colorado, Arizona and New York City before and after the prohibition of smoking in these regions, showed that their revenues either stayed the same [California, Vermont and Colorado] or increased [Utah, Arizona and New York City]. A recent survey carried in Hong Kong by Professor A.J.Hedley of the Hong Kong research team found that tourists visiting this city preferred hotels, bars and restaurants where smoking was banned, and that if smoking were banned in all bars, restaurants bars and hotel the number of tourists visiting Hong Kong would increase to such an extent that their revenues would increased by 2 billion dollars annually.
10. Finally it is reasonable to expect that bans on tobacco smoking would have the whole hearted support of everyone in Barbados with the exception of the tobacco industry and those who promote their products and that such a ban would, as in Hong Kong, increase rather than decrease the number of tourists visiting Barbados.

Yours truly
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