

OKLAHOMA RESTAURANT

ASSOCIATION

Leading the Hospitality Industry Since 1933

Dear House Member:

We are writing to ask for your opposition to HB 2267, the bill to repeal state preemption on smoking regulations allowing cities and towns to enact their own smoking ordinances. Current law allows cities and towns to enact and enforce ordinances regulating youth access to tobacco that are **no stricter** than the state law. HB 2267 would allow for a probable patchwork of smoking regulations that could be passed and enforced in a variety of ways throughout every community in Oklahoma.

Two years ago, the legislature passed legislation, signed by the Governor, which stated political subdivisions (cities and towns) could not pass food code regulations on restaurants that are not identical to state law. We believe this was a step in the right direction bringing consistency and uniformity to statutes keeping the public safe. Although that law dealt with food codes, and not smoking, it illustrates the legislature's good judgment of maintaining control of those items that are for the greater good of citizens, rather than the whims of local citizenry. Our industry has always supported statutes enforced statewide and in a consistent manner. Tell us what the rules are statewide, and we will comply with those rules. HB 2267 seems to be a step backwards in uniformity and consistency. It has the potential to create a very unlevel playing field for restaurants, bars and other businesses, particularly those who compete with each other in adjoining cities and towns that could have totally different smoking ordinances if HB 2267 passes. In addition, restaurant companies who operate in multiple locations would have to change their training and staffing policies in order to comply with the potential of many different ordinances. This will create an added cost and burden to restaurants and bars in Oklahoma. For this reason, we believe HB 2267 is not a business friendly bill and will greatly increase costs for restaurants to comply with the bill.

We respectfully ask that you **vote no on HB 2267**.

Sincerely,



Jim Hopper
President/CEO



Benny Vanatta
Lobbyist