



Statewide Smoking Ban: An attack on property rights, an attack on small businesses, an attack on liberty Vote NO on HB 5/SB 544

HB 5/SB 544 would ban owners of restaurants, bars, bowling alleys, bingo halls, and other businesses from allowing their patrons to smoke inside their establishments. If HB 5/SB 544 were to pass, it would strip property owners of their right to decide how best to conduct their business. Additionally, this sets a precedence for government to ban behavior it deems “unhealthy” and that is a dangerous trend for government to be involved in.

The following are reasons why the Young Conservatives of Texas oppose HB 5/SB 544:

- Regardless of the health hazards associated with smoking, smoking cigarettes is not illegal. Every Texan has the right to weigh the consequences of this activity and the personal liberty to choose whether or not they should smoke.
- It is true that all Texans enjoy the *privilege* of breathing air that is free of second-hand smoke, but it is the *right* of individual business owners to run their operations in a way that maximizes their profit. If a proprietor decides that his business would be more profitable if it were a nonsmoking establishment, then he has every right to do so. Additionally, any person who wishes to avoid second-hand smoke has the ability in a free-market system to spend their money at establishments that do not permit smoking.
- As consumer demand for clean air begins to outweigh concerns for smokers, businesses can make the decision to ban smoking. The beauty of a free-market system is that owners have the ability to make decisions just like this one.
- Houston, Dallas and Nacogdoches are just a few examples of cities that have already enacted their own city-wide smoking bans. These municipal actions are proof that a statewide smoking ban is unnecessary. Local control more adequately assures that Texans are served according to their values – not the values of special interests or legislators who represent geographical areas rather than municipalities.
- While YCT feels that even city-wide smoking bans are over burdensome, they are preferable to any statewide mandate by the Texas Legislature. By allowing cities to continue debating this issue, citizens can have more input in the process at their local level.
- Banning people from smoking in specific locations is just a step towards an outright ban on smoking. Despite what some advocacy groups may say, this is the ultimate agenda and the next logical, legislative step that lawmakers will be encouraged to take.

The Young Conservatives of Texas (YCT) is an independent, nonpartisan youth organization dedicated to the preservation of individual liberties and freedoms through limited government.

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