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## Smoking Ban



[Anti-Smoking Campaign](#)

### Group pushes for more restrictions



An anti-smoking organization has launched a new attack to restrict tobacco use in Omaha. The group, Citizens for a Smoke-Free Omaha wants the issue put to a vote.

The organization is circulating a petition to place a "smoke-free" ordinance on the November ballot. The petition contains language specific to day cares operations.

Spokesperson Mark Welsch says, "Right now smoking is allowed in in-home day cares when the children are not there. So children can walk into a very, very smoky home in some cases because they just snubbed the cigarette out."

Steve and Brandi Goldapp have already made the switch at Goldeez. They took their business smoke-free for 30 days to honor a friend who died from smoking and then kept their ban on smoking in place. Business dropped by 75 percent.

Steve says, "At the beginning, it was kind of a struggle. We were all going, Oh God, are we the smartest people in business or are we silly, you know, for doing this. And a lot of other bar owners told us you guys are crazy."

Steve says business has picked up since the initial collapse and the Goldapps believe they made the right decision.

Other bar owners find themselves facing the same issue but Crescent Moon owner Bill Baburek says the debate is settled. It just has to be done the right way.

Baburek says, "I wouldn't be opposed to a smoking ban at all as long as it's fair, equitable and across-the-board; included everybody."

That's what Smoke Free Omaha says it is after: smoke-free business, across-the-board with no exceptions and very few "sunset" or temporary exemptions.

Smoke-Free's Mike Salkin says, "Business people are faced with change on a daily basis and those that refuse to change or don't recognize the change, they're going to become obsolete."

The only business sunsets in this ordinance would be stand-alone bars without kitchens that will have two years to come up with a different smoke-free business model or close.

Organizers believe they'll need a little more than 9,300 voter signatures to get this on the November ballot. They're aiming for 12,000.

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