Public Health Advisory Board:

2577 NE Courtney Drive

Bend, Oregon 97701

February 27, 2012

Deschutes County Board of Commissioners

Anthony DeBone, Chairperson

Alan Unger, Vice Chairperson

Tammy Baney, Commissioner

Re: Support of 100% Tobacco Free County Properties

Dear Board of Commissioners:

The Deschutes County Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB) would like to request that you take the lead in protecting the health of Deschutes County residents. Specifically, expand the current restriction on the use of tobacco products to include the entire campus of all Deschutes County properties. PHAB asks for your formal support to better protect the health of clients, visitors and employees who frequent our properties. With this request, PHAB is aligning with the Triple Aim framework; by improving the health of our population, and reducing or, at minimum, controlling the costs of care, major benefits will be realized by our visitors, our county residents, and our employees.

With your leadership, we could remove second-hand smoke and other tobacco in and around our public spaces. This would reduce health safety risks for all who access our campus and ensure equal access to the facilities for those who are medically sensitive to the effects of tobacco smoke, such as people with asthma and pregnant women. This would achieve an exponential effect: motivating current smokers to quit smoking and safeguarding visitors, clients and staff—86 percent of whom are nonsmokers—from the toxic effects of secondhand smoke. It is our understanding that county dollars would be saved, by a reduction in county staff time utilized in cleaning up litter created by cigarettes and putting out landscaping bark fires.

Research further shows that any exposure to secondhand smoke, even outdoors, has harmful biological consequences. Further, removing all smoking cues facilitates quitting, and research demonstrates that 70 percent of smokers wish to quit.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the world today and in Central Oregon. Smoking-related deaths from cancer, heart and lung diseases, and other conditions account for more than 440,000 premature deaths each year, about one in five deaths in the United States. Let’s make Deschutes County a key stakeholder in the statewide tobacco free movement by being proactive in our policies.

Sincerely,

Public Health Advisory Board DCHS Health Officer

Kim Curley-Reynolds, Chair Dr. Richard Fawcett

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