

Oklahoma's Harm Reduction Experience

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ALEC American Legislative Exchange Council

- Limited Governments
 - Free Markets
 - Federalism

- July 2012

Harm reduction interim study

- * Interim study in the Senate requested by a tobacco-friendly Senator (Sept 2012)
- * Interim study in the House requested by a physician Representative to assure the public health voice was represented (Oct 2012)

Outreach for support

- * Worked with local ACS and ALA colleagues
- * Contacted Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids to find out what was happening across the states
- * Indiana shared testimony from their hearing
- * CTFK prepared testimony and references

Hearing lineup

Public health representatives

- * Physician or Dentist
- * State Department of Health
- * Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- * Personal testimony from oral cancer survivor
- * Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids/ Other advocates

Senate hearing

Tobacco industry representatives

- * Dr. Brad Rodu – Professor, Dept. of Medicine, James Graham Brown Cancer Center, Louisville, KY
- * Joel L. Nitzkin, M.D., MPH, DPA – American Association of Public Health Physicians, R Street Institute, Heartland Institute
- * Stephen Buyer – Former Indiana Congressman, and current RJ Reynolds consultant
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7uLmwUhOtY>

They said

- * Smokeless less harmful
- * FDA standards too high
- * Current tobacco control efforts have failed
- * Credible public health groups support THR
- * Free market solution
- * Want to bring public health to the table
- * Presenter: Tobacco company did not pay my way
- * Senator: No tobacco company approached me

We said

- * Population impact unknown
- * THR state-by-state is a planned strategy
- * Industry guilty of racketeering
- * Industry can create the price difference
- * Smokeless is not harmless
- * FDA has infrastructure
- * Data on smokeless use
- * Data on dual use
- * Tobacco use reduces likelihood of recovery from substance abuse

Their message frame

Earned media

- * Quit or Die
- * Prohibitionists
- * Switch & Quit
- * Free Market Strategy

Industry asks

- * Government agencies publicize risk continuum
- * Lower tax on smokeless
- * Eliminate insurance differential for smokeless tobacco users
- * Research harm reduction

Legislative perspective

- * Free market approach to public health
- * A few studies = evidence base
- * Distrust of federal regulations
- * Cautious of public health agencies as advocates