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**CELEBRATING MISSOURI'S SMOKEFREE CITIES**

On September 17, Tobacco Free Missouri in partnership with the American Lung Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the American Heart Association will host a reception to celebrate Missouri's smokefree cities. The event will be held in conjunction with the 2013 Missouri Municipal League Conference held in Branson, Missouri. There are currently 25 Missouri communities that have comprehensive smokefree laws protecting employees and patrons from secondhand smoke. Representatives from those 25 communities have been invited to attend; those interested in pursuing a smokefree law in their town are also encouraged to participate.

Traci Kennedy, Director of Tobacco Free Missouri explained the purpose of the event, "We want to commend the leadership of city council members and mayors who have worked with city officials to take this important step in improving the health of their communities" stated Kennedy. "In addition, we want to encourage collaboration between those that have completed the process successfully and those interested in taking this work back to their city."

Studies conducted both in Missouri and nationwide, show that these comprehensive smokefree laws do not cause economic harm for business. RTI International, supported by the Centers for Disease Control Foundation, conducted the largest study to date showing that a statewide smokefree law would not cause economic harm to restaurant and bar business in the nine states reviewed, including Missouri. To access the report, see [http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2013/12\\_0327.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2013/12_0327.htm).

Strides are being made at the local level to protect employees from secondhand smoke. With the city of Sedalia implementing a smokefree policy this September, 23 percent of Missourians are now breathing easier in bars, restaurants and workplaces. Tobacco Free Missouri and partnering organizations offer resources to assist with the process. For more information and photos from the event, visit the Tobacco Free Missouri website at [www.tobaccofreemo.org](http://www.tobaccofreemo.org).

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**ABOUT TOBACCO FREE MISSOURI:** Tobacco Free Missouri is the statewide tobacco control coalition of concerned citizens and organizations. Since 2007, Tobacco Free Missouri has

worked with its partners to reduce tobacco use and eliminate secondhand smoke exposure for all Missourians through education and policy change. For more information, please visit [www.tobaccofreemo.org](http://www.tobaccofreemo.org).