

Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce
Position Statement
City of Cape Girardeau
Proposed Smoking Ban Ordinance
March 1, 2011

The mission of the Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce is to serve the area and its businesses as the principal advocate in fostering economic progress, vitalizing jobs and improving the quality of life. With full understanding of this mission, **the Chamber opposes the Smoking Ban Ordinance as proposed by Breathe Easy Cape Girardeau due to its overly restrictive nature.** The Chamber Board of Directors reached this position after fully considering all of the following information as we understand it today:

1. Fundamentally, this is an issue of individual rights and government intervention. Smoking is a legal activity and voters should consider whether they believe government should dictate legal activities within private property. Employees have a choice as to where to work and patrons have a choice as to what businesses they support. In the work environment, generally, people are only subjected to second hand smoke by choice.
2. While this is an issue of quality of life dealing with the health of the public, it does not address the real issue of smoking. This ordinance does nothing to protect those who have no choice – children in homes with smokers. Second hand smoke is, unarguably, a health hazard. Actions we can take as a business community to address the real issue should be pursued diligently. The Chamber feels it is more important to work with the employment community to offer smoking cessation programs. In other words, to prevent the root cause and not just address the symptoms.

The Chamber fully understands a proposal of this nature does not come without questions. The Chamber would like to offer the following comments:

1. We understand there is evidence to suggest both negative and positive effects on businesses in areas covered by smoking bans. We feel there is no definitive evidence either way.
2. The Chamber recognizes there is legislation currently under consideration that would add the effects of second hand smoke as compensable events under Missouri Workers' Compensation laws. The Chamber urges business owners to consider the current regulatory environment as they make decisions about their establishments.

Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce
Position Statement
City of Cape Girardeau
Waste Water Treatment Facility Project
March 1, 2011

The mission of the Cape Girardeau Area Chamber of Commerce is to serve the area and its businesses as the principal advocate in fostering economic progress, vitalizing jobs and improving the quality of life. With full understanding of this mission, the Chamber **supports** the City of Cape Girardeau Waste Water Treatment Facility Project. The Chamber Board of Directors reached this position after fully considering all of the following information as we understand it today:

- 1. The project will move forward regardless of the outcome of the vote but will be more costly without both ballot issues passing.**
2. The project can be completed most effectively and efficiently with the passage of both an extension of the ¼ cent sewer system sales tax and the requested bond issue.
3. The project is necessary due to the age of the existing facility, an ever increasingly demanding regulatory environment and the unfortunate appearance of numerous sink holes rendering the existing facility useless for future expansion.
4. The project will make a major infrastructure improvement resulting in our city having increased capacity for future expansion.
5. The project will result in the City attaining compliance with Federal EPA and Missouri DNR regulations so as to avoid additional fines under current guidelines.

The Chamber fully understands a project of this size and scope does not come without questions. The Chamber would like to offer the following comments:

1. We understand there are people who are concerned about odors related to this facility and its proximity to businesses and recreational facilities. The Chamber urges the City to take all actions reasonably necessary to avoid this potentially negative situation.
2. The Chamber also strongly urges the City of Cape Girardeau to give area businesses an opportunity to earn construction contracts.
3. Any changes to the plan as presented should be communicated to the public immediately.
4. The rates should remain equitable for business and residential customers.