

Smoking Ban Protects Others

By ROBERTA NELSON Bismarck

I was shocked to read the editorial in the Tribune entitled, "Proposed ban on smoking goes too far." While I'm a believer in free speech, sometimes one's thoughts are best kept to oneself. I am a former smoker who quit this vulgar habit years ago when the health warnings came out. I was able to do this cold turkey. It wasn't easy nor fun, but I did it. While you seem to know all the dangers of cigarette smoking, I hardly believe that HB1213 is trying "to protect people from themselves or pass along punishment." It is trying to protect people like me from having to be in public places with those who desire to harm my health. Smokers can puff their brains out in their own homes, yards or cars, provided they aren't exposing their children to smoke. Your argument about legislation going too far states, "Alcohol has potential for danger and harm. So do cars and motorcycles, oil rigs, bicycles ..." This remark is so childish I can't believe I even typed it. Have you thought about the impact your so-called logic may have on youth? How about the health-care industry? Maybe you'd like to pay for my annual BCBS rate hike, part of which is caused by smoke-related illnesses. Smokers experience "satisfaction" and "calming" when they light up. I wonder how satisfying and calming a cancer diagnosis will be. I lost my father to COPD caused by smoking and two uncles to lung cancer caused by smoking and currently have a dear friend battling this disease.