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Hawaii Pacific, Inc.

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of Hawaii

American Lung Association
of Hawaii

Cancer Research Center
of Hawaii

Hawaii State Department
of Education

Hawaii State Department
of Health

Hawaii Medical Association

Hawaii Medical Services
Association

Wai'anae Coast Comprehensive
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Ko'olaupoko Tobacco Free
Coalition

East Hawaii Tobacco Free
Coalition

Kauai Tobacco Free Community
Coalition

Maui Tobacco Free Partnership

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Tips for Writing Letters

You can influence elected officials directly by writing letters to them.

You can indirectly let them know what you think, and influence your community, by writing letters to the editor of your local paper. Elected officials read letters to the editor to determine what their voters think.

Keep the following points in mind when you write your letter.

- **Keep it short** (no more than 1 page)
- Stick to one point
- Support your position with facts
- Write about your personal experience--tell why you care about the issue
- Be polite

The points below will help you write a letter to an elected official, or to the editor of your local paper. Remember, make your letter personal. *These are just ideas to help you get started.*

Explain why you are writing:

Example: "I am writing to encourage the city council to take action to eliminate secondhand smoke in public places and workplaces."

Explain what the problem is (this is the place to cite facts):

Example: "Secondhand smoke is a serious problem. Every year, 53,000 nonsmokers die from diseases caused by secondhand smoke. The Surgeon General, Cal-EPA, and National Toxicology Program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have identified secondhand smoke as a cause of cancer, heart disease and other diseases in nonsmokers."

Share how you have been personally affected by the problem:

Example: "I have tried for several years to get my workplace to adopt a smoke-free policy, with no success. I am afraid that I may risk losing my job if I push this issue any harder with my employer. Only a law requiring all workplaces to be smoke-free will end my exposure to secondhand smoke at work."

Explain specifically what you are asking for:

Example: "I hope that the city council will pass an ordinance requiring that all public places and workplaces be smoke-free."