

Dear Sirs: I am a thoracic surgical oncologist who works with the international civil society organization - Human Rights and Tobacco Control Network. As a surgeon, I have treated far too many people for lung cancer. As you may know, the 5-year survival for lung cancer is around 15%. Thus, being diagnosed with lung cancer most likely means that the patient will die within the year. About 85-90% of all lung cancers are caused by cigarette smoking. And, people who are exposed to secondhand smoke have a significantly increased risk of also getting lung cancer. In addition, there are the deaths from cardiovascular disease, stroke and emphysema - diseases also predominantly caused by cigarette smoking.

I've dedicated my professional life to helping decrease the number of deaths from tobacco. I know that most of these deaths are preventable deaths. 50% of people who smoke who die of a tobacco related disease - die in middle age. Of course, this is unacceptable - when we know how to stop this epidemic. IF Austria enacts strong tobacco control laws, such as proposed by the World Health Organization, Austria will see a decrease in the number of people who smoke - and, consequently, the number who die from a tobacco related disease.

We also know that the tobacco industry is extremely active in working to prevent strong tobacco control legislation.

Please - enact AND implement AND enforce strong tobacco control laws. As a guidance, if the tobacco industry recommends one path - take the opposite path IF you want to improve the health of Austrians. Implement and enforce strong comprehensive secondhand smoke laws; significantly increase the price of cigarettes; prohibit all advertising of tobacco products; raise the age for legal sale of tobacco products. Even these baseline, introductory tobacco control laws can be significantly effective in helping people to quit and youth not to start. Please recognize, that if the tobacco industry, and the organizations that they fund (such as hospitality and chamber of commerce) oppose your actions, you are doing the right thing for your country's citizens.

I hope when I am in Vienna in December 2016 for the world conference on lung cancer, that you have comprehensive smokefree laws that are enforced - inclusive of hotels. It is what I am used to, because I care about my health.

Best Wishes,

Carolyn Dresler, MD, MPA  
[carolyn\\_dresler@ksg03.harvard.edu](mailto:carolyn_dresler@ksg03.harvard.edu)