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### Area Health Professionals Announce Support for Smoke-free EBR Movement

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We, the undersigned health care professionals, are writing to express our firm support of the Smoke-Free East Baton Rouge campaign. It is time for EBR to go smoke-free.

Secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard. Exposure to secondhand smoke causes an estimated 41,000 deaths from lung cancer and heart disease among adults each year in the United States. Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke face many of the same dangers as those who smoke.

Separating smokers from nonsmokers within the same air space, cleaning the air, opening windows, and ventilating buildings does not eliminate secondhand smoke exposure. The U.S. Surgeon General aptly notes that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke; in fact, even brief exposure can cause immediate harm. The only way to protect people from the dangers of tobacco smoke is to eliminate it.

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This movement is not new. It began decades ago when airline workers refused to be trapped for hours in smoke-filled cabins. It has expanded to the point that even New Orleans, Louisiana, the home of letting the good times roll, recently voted to eliminate smoking in its bars and casino. That proud city has joined more than 1,000 other municipalities that have eliminated smoking from all indoor facilities.

The healthcare community in East Baton Rouge Parish is united in this effort. We see the devastating effects of second hand smoke on our citizens every day. We share in the heartache, the suffering and the expense of treating the illnesses directly related to smoking. Today, more than ever, we cannot afford the high costs of smoking to Louisiana families and businesses. We therefore proudly join the campaign to add East Baton Rouge Parish to the growing list of communities where EVERY employee can breathe clean air. Capital cities in Mississippi and Texas have already passed similar ordinances, leading their states in the smoke-free movement. East Baton Rouge Parish workers deserve the same.

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Chief Executive Officer  
Our Lady of the Lake

Teri G. Fontenot  
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Eric McMillen  
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Randy Olson  
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