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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the Editor

Ontario Health Minister, George Smitherman, in his speech on the proposed new smoking laws describes it as "a fair and balanced piece of legislation". I wonder how he comes to that conclusion.

Designated smoking rooms are fair and balanced. They give business owners a choice, employees the choice of whether to work in a smoking or non-smoking environment, protect non-smokers from second hand smoke and provide comfortable accommodation for smokers. Everyone is well served. Mr. Smitherman's legislation disallows designated smoking rooms. That means that three out of four groups will lose the privilege of choice. It seems more like biased and discriminatory than fair and balanced.

Mr. Smitherman states "Ontarians will be healthier". How so? The elimination of smoke from the air will have about the same effect on pollution that an eyedropper full of water removed from the Pacific Ocean would have on the ocean's water volume. If the Health Minister wants to be 'fair and balanced', he should tell us how many illnesses and deaths are caused by vehicle emissions, industrial waste and other toxic pollutants instead of fixating solely on smoking.

Also in his speech, Mr. Smitherman declares, "Tobacco ruins lives. It rips families apart, clogs hospitals and destroys the economy". Actually it is not tobacco that destroys lives and rips families apart; it is the vilification of tobacco users. Hospitals in the past operated quite efficiently, even when smoking was allowed in patient rooms. If hospitals are now 'clogged', it is more probably due to political meddling and bungling. If tobacco 'destroys the economy', we ought to be asking what Government is doing with tobacco tax revenue, and how do they plan to replace it if smoking is eliminated?

Mr. Smitherman's speech will no doubt impress the fanatical anti-smoking zealots. To the logical and fair minded, it sounds like pure bunk.

What plan do you suppose the Health Minister and his colleagues have in mind to save face when their fair and balanced legislation fails to improve the Ontarians' health, unclog hospitals and improve the economy? One can only hop that they will be long gone from power before the failure and the negative effects of their new laws become blatantly obvious.

Mrs. Eileen Hutcheson, Acton

Dear Mr. Baker,

I wanted to take the opportunity to publicly thank the Campbellville Business Association and its members for their support of young families in our area in 2004. Marilyn Goodale, C.A.B.A. and a number of businesses in Campbellville quietly supported a food and toy drive for the Salvation Army in conjunction with HarvestFest. Over \$350.00 in Discovery Toys books and games were donated to the Salvation Army Toy Drive this holiday season. With Marilyn's support, C.A.B.A. also sponsored a Hallowe'en Party in October allowing many local families to use the Lion's Hall for fun and games and providing treats for all children in attendance. Finally, C.A.B.A. gave children the opportunity to have a warm treat and a chat with Santa Claus following the parade. What a wonderful conclusion to a busy fall!

Thank you to Marilyn, C.A.B.A. and all of its supporters for their hard work and efforts in 2004. What a truly special place to raise a family!

Sincerely,
Lisa Boehmer

**THE HALTON
COMPASS**
welcomes letters
to the Editor

However, we do not necessarily support or endorse the comments or opinions expressed by the writer(s). We reserve the right to edit, revise and reject letters. Letters must be signed and the address and telephone number of the writer should be included. Letters may be sent into 35 Crawford Crescent Box 129, Campbellville, ON L0P 1B0, emailed to editor@haltoncompass.com or faxed to 905-854-4761.

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