

Thursday, July-02-15

Councillor Cesar Palacio (Chair)
Councillor Glenn De Baeremaeker
Councillor Frank Di Giorgio
Councillor Jim Karygiannis
Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti
Councillor Josh Matlow
Members of the Licencing and Standards Committee
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Phone: 416-392-7011
Fax: 416-392-0212

Re: LS5.1 (Prohibiting Hookah (Waterpipe) Use in Licensed Establishments.)

Dear Chair, Councillors and Members of the Licencing and Standards Committee.

The Ontario Lung Association is one of Canada's oldest charities, with a mandate to improve lung health through education, support, advocacy and research. One of our programs, the Youth Advocacy Training Institute, focuses specifically on youth and youth-serving organizations in Ontario and equips them with the knowledge and skills necessary to prevent and reduce tobacco use, promote health and advocate for positive change in their communities.

On June 25th our youth volunteers planned to address you on item LS5.1 (Prohibiting Hookah (Waterpipe) Use in Licensed Establishments.)

With significant evidence and research indicating that hookah use is a threat to a person's lung health, it was a surprise to us that you voted to defer the matter until October.

That being said we can appreciate that not everyone may know about the harmful effects of hookah use has on a person's ability to breathe. It was unfortunate that our volunteers were not granted time to speak, as they had planned to update you on efforts being undertaken in jurisdictions from around the world who are banning the use of hookah in public spaces and in private establishments, including countries and jurisdictions where hookah has cultural and historical roots.

Perhaps then this is a fitting time to share with you a copy of their deputations.

As you will no doubt see it is clear that hookah use is a growing concern.

The smoke from shisha-the smoke causing ingredient in hookah- contains many of the same toxins as cigarettes: including nicotine, carbon monoxide, and a number of known carcinogens.

Many of your constituents in fact do not know that a shisha session lasting one hour can expose the users to 100-200 times more smoke than one cigarette. One hour spent in a shisha/hookah café can result in the same carbon monoxide intake as 5 cigarettes.

Like cigarettes, shisha can lead to a number of health conditions including impaired lung functioning, respiratory illness, mouth disease, and lung cancer.

Councillors, we hope you will take this time to review our material and perhaps spare a moment for us to come and see you in person to educate you further on why voting to prohibit hookah use in licensed establishments is critical. I will be in touch with your office to arrange a convenient time for us to come and meet with you.

Until then enjoy their deputations.

Sincerely,

Chris Yaccato
Provincial Manager, Government Relations & Public Affairs
Ontario Lung Association
cyaccato@on.lung.ca
416-303-4589

cc.
His Worship Mayor John Tory
Dr. David McKeown, Chief Medical Officer of Health

Attached: OLA deputations