

The Record

Proposed NJ ban on smoking in parks and on beaches advances

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2014

BY MICHAEL PHILLIS, STATE HOUSE BUREAU

Smoking is one step closer to being harder to do in public after a bill prohibiting the practice in public parks and beaches was approved by an Assembly Committee Thursday.

New Jersey already prohibits smoking in indoor public places or work sites. This law would extend that ban.

“Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the state and the nation, and tobacco smoke constitutes a substantial health hazard to the nonsmoking majority of the public,” said Valerie Vainieri Huttle, D-Englewood, in a statement.

New York City passed a similar law in 2011. Such health initiatives under former mayor Michael Bloomberg were highly publicized and are part of a larger push to limit smoking nationwide.

Huttle’s statement claimed that 180 municipalities had enacted similar laws including 14 here in the Garden State.

“The prohibition of smoking at public parks and beaches would better preserve the natural assets of this state by reducing litter and increasing fire safety in those areas, while lessening exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke among the public,” Huttle said.

Under the bill fines currently levied against smoking in public indoor areas would also be placed against those who smoke in parks. A first offense, for example, would cost the violator \$250 and a third offense \$1000.

http://www.northjersey.com/news/state/NJ_discussing_smoking_ban_at_beaches_and_parks.html