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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Atlantic City Mayor Evans to sign ordinance for 100% smoke-free casino gaming floors where employees work**

The Mayor of Atlantic City, Scott K. Evans, is expected to sign into law, Ordinance #27, which requires all eleven Atlantic City casinos to maintain 100% smoke-free gaming floors, where employees work, effective October 15, 2008. The Atlantic City Council voted unanimously, 9-0, to approve Ordinance #27 at their April 23 meeting.

"We applaud Mayor Evans and City Council for prioritizing the health and well-being of the casino workers and patrons," commends Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Director of the Policy & Legal Resource Center, NJ GASP. "It's a testament to collaborative efforts amongst government, industry, workers and health advocates. The United Auto Workers' recent efforts were instrumental in achieving this goal, along with the commitment of the Atlantic City Smoke-free Coalition and statewide partners."

Air testing on the casino gaming floors showed high levels of fine particle air pollution. "When this new smoke-free workplace ordinance takes effect, we expect to see very good air quality measurements on the gaming floors in Atlantic City," says Mark Travers, a research affiliate with Roswell Park Cancer Institute.

Atlantic City casinos were given a reprieve to allow smoking only on the gaming floors, since April 15, 2006, when the New Jersey Smoke-Free Air Act went into effect. This carve-out resulted in casino workers and patrons continuing to be exposed to secondhand smoke on the gaming floors.

A year later, the City Council attempted to resolve the problem by permitting casinos to allocate up to 25% of their gaming floors as smoking-permitted. However, secondhand smoke continues to permeate the nonsmoking gaming areas. An outcry from casino workers and patrons led the City Council, on April 9, 2008, to amend last year's ordinance, and mandate 100% smoke-free gaming floors where casino employees work. Casinos will be permitted to construct separately enclosed and ventilated non-staffed smoking lounges.

Atlantic City joins New Jersey's three racetrack facilities, and Favorite's simulcast in Vineland and Woodbridge, all smoke-free by state law. More than a dozen U.S. state and local jurisdictions require smoke-free gaming, and fourteen more states have smoke-free bingo.

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