

[Back to regular view](#) • [Print this page](#)

Blue Chip wants pass on local smoking ban

(<http://www.post-trib.com/news/1081331,mcsmoking.article>)

July 30, 2008

BY STAN MADDUX Post-Tribunecorrespondent

No matter how extravagant the ventilation system, casino workers are still like filters, absorbing cigarette smoke and the potentially deadly toxins.

That's according to Jennifer Guillermain, 43, a non-smoking Atlantic City casino worker diagnosed with a precancerous condition in her lungs.

"I live every day wondering if I have a death sentence hanging over my head," Guillermain said.

Officials at Blue Chip Casino, hurt deeply over the last 11 months by Indian gambling in Michigan 10 miles away, don't mind if there's a smoking ban in public places as long as it's not imposed on them.

"It would put us at a huge competitive disadvantage," Ryan Soultz, a spokesman for Las Vegas-based Boyd Gaming, the owners of the Michigan City casino, said.

The comments were given Tuesday at a meeting of a committee exploring the possibility of a ban on smoking in Michigan City.

City Council member Angela Nelson said an ordinance could be presented for possible action within the next 60 to 90 days.

Guillermain speaks on behalf of casino workers in communities with legalized gambling contemplating a ban on smoking.

After 24 years of working the casino floor, Guillermain in November had a CAT scan done as part of a routine screening.

Three weeks later, she was shocked to learn there were nodules on her lungs. They were too small to biopsy. But, she plans to go back to her doctor in the fall to find out if the nodules are large enough to test for cancer.

"There are no safe levels of secondhand smoke" she said.

While gambling revenues in Indiana have remained steady despite a struggling economy, Soultz said casinos in Illinois now under a smoking ban experienced an 18 percent decline in business the first half of this year.

He said such an ordinance if adopted would cover Michigan City. But, the market Blue Chip tries to draw customers from covers a much wider area with competition as far south as Anderson due to horse tracks now having slot machines.

Soultz also reminded committee members of the confidence Blue Chip has placed in Michigan City and the \$300 million spent on expansions in 2006 and one currently ongoing that features a 22-story hotel and conference center.

Affiliates: [YourSeason.com](#) | [RogerEbert.com](#) | [SearchChicago - Autos](#) | [SearchChicago - Homes](#) | [SearchChicago - Jobs](#) | [NeighborhoodCircle.com](#) | [Centerstage](#)

© Copyright 2008 Digital Chicago, Inc. | [Terms of Use](#) • [Privacy Policy](#) • [Submission Guidelines](#)