

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL PLAN - 1991

FC: JIM ELLIS

1990 RE-CAP

Before delving into the plans for 1991, I want to take this opportunity to review this year's positive and negative happenings. To summarize, the New England smokers' rights movement made significant gains in each of the five states. In addition to the groups' gathering over 54,000 FET petition signatures region-wide, we saw seven major issues resolved. Our record was 4 wins and 3 losses. This gives New England a total program record of 7-3.

The wins were:

- 1) Defeating the Department of Human Services restaurant smoking ban regulation in Maine
- 2) Passing the anti-discrimination against smokers in employment bill in Rhode Island
- 3) Defeating any attempts to increase the cigarette excise tax in Massachusetts
- 4) Defeating the Yancey workplace smoking ban ordinance in the Boston City Council

The defeats were:

- 1) New Hampshire passing a bill into law which raises the cigarette excise tax and additional four cents per pack
- 2) Comprehensive workplace smoking bill in New Hampshire
- 3) Losing the budget bill battle in Rhode Island which eliminated the sales tax exemption for cigarettes, meaning an additional 6% increase in taxes

The smokers' rights groups were instrumental in defeating the DHS (Maine) restaurant smoking ban rule. The members circulated petitions, wrote letters to legislators and commission members, called the Governor's office, and attended several public hearings. There is no question the pressure exerted by our side was the determining factor in the department scrapping the regulation.

The results of organized smokers' rights group tactics is less clear in the other three victories, though significant contributions were made in each case.

Mail was dropped to the entire Rhode Island data base asking the recipients to lobby the Governor to sign the anti-discrimination in employment bill. Dennis Dyer, Regional Vice-President for TI, had asked that we generate letters to Mr. DiPrete in a forty-eight hour time frame. I was able to comply because I correctly foresaw the need to act prior to his request. Therefore, the groups had time to respond, and did.

The Massachusetts tax bills defeated in the legislature symbolized an unusual time in the state's history. The collapse of the New England economy and the electorate's lack of confidence in their political leaders forced the General Assembly to reject their normal tax and spend manner, heretofore the trademark of the Commonwealth. Therefore, it would be a misnomer to claim our efforts were the sole reason cigarette excise tax legislation went down. However, it is significant to note that after each Massachusetts smokers' rights group began communicating regularly with their legislators, urging that they oppose all new excise taxes, no increase was seriously considered in any of the deficit reduction packages.

The Boston City Council victory was not so much a result of the communications of this year (both data base mail and action alerts), but rather a fall-out of the pressure exerted last year. All we had to do in the 1990 session was remind the Council that we are still here and watching. The message translated into a 7-2 victory.

Two of our defeats were in New Hampshire. Our groups here had not developed to the point of being strong enough to mount a noteworthy challenge, but that will change next year. Though conservative in nature, New Hampshire is as tough as any state in its treatment of smokers. It could prove to be the most difficult state in my region.

The 4 cent per pack tax bill was part of the budget package and would have been difficult to defeat in any instance. The lack of viable groups was not a factor in this fight.

The workplace smoking policy bill could possibly have been dealt a different fate if I had the Manchester and Nashua groups at their present strength. Data base mailings were done and some opposition was generated. However, the last instructions given me stated the final version of SB 379 was a compromise and to back off. Though the outcome probably would not have changed, allowing the bill to pass uncontested will prove to be a poor

decision. Most of the SB 379 provisions will take effect in 1993. This gives us time to mount an assault, and I suggest we take advantage of the opportunity.

The Rhode Island revenue enhancement measure, like the New Hampshire tax, was contained in the budget package. Since the state was badly in debt (and the Governor paid the price in November), there was little any organized effort could do. I firmly believe, however, that the pressure generated against the budget package (letters, calls, petition delivery to the Governor and legislative leaders) was a major reason the politicians turned around and passed the anti-discrimination in employment bill, just a few days after the budget was agreed upon.

So, a pretty good year....but next year promises to be even better!

THE OUTREACH PROGRAM

One of the main pro-active tasks this year was my outreach program. It was intended to increase membership in each group and develop a hard core of ten to twelve activists. From a cost per unit analysis, the project was a failure. In the six regions tested, the program never produced more than six attenders. In most cases the result was two; in some it was none.

Because attendance at many of my meetings was lacking, and futures and no shows were not producing new members, the outreach approach was adopted to spur interest among people not previously invited to a smokers' rights meeting. The program consisted of increased mail and, in some cases, telephone follow-up. We targeted 1,500 new people per meeting from greenbar lists provided by Bob Hensley. We also rolled out all attenders, futures, no shows, responders (800 # callers and those returning action forms), and SMIGs in each appropriate project group. The average number of invitations to an outreach meeting was 1,800. Calls were then to be made to 500 of the greenbars, with an additional 50 to futures, no shows, etc. Here are the results:

| <u>GROUP MEETING</u> | <u>ATTENDERS(from mail)</u> | <u>CALLS MADE?</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Boston South | 0 | Yes |
| Boston North | 6 | Yes |
| Boston Downtown | 2 | Yes |
| Manchester, NH | 0 | No |

| <u>GROUP MEETING</u> | <u>ATTENDERS(from mail)</u> | <u>CALLS MADE?</u> |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Portland, ME | 2 | No |
| Augusta, ME | 2 | Yes |

As you can tell, the mail approach was not successful. The presence of follow-up phoning made little difference. I also utilized three different invitation devices. A different style of notice was sent to the first three meetings in Boston. The one producing the most, the Boston North notification, was then replicated for the remaining meetings. Hence, we can determine that the invitation approach has little to do with the turnout.

I do not want to leave you with the impression that the entire outreach concept was a failure. Due to the reorganization of some of the groups, particularly in Massachusetts, and the added emphasis on turning out futures and no shows, I did increase the size of my average turnout. Now, most of my poorer attended meetings average 6-8, rather than 2-4. If I can find twelve hard core attenders for each group, the program will be a success.

It continues to be important to find ways to increase the number of people attending the meeting. Since the cost of the increased mailing/phone program is high, and the results poor, I have formulated a new approach for 1991.

Since the California team of Schuman and Pueyo had prior success in creating new groups via phone calls, I propose the same approach for New England. I want to create a team of phone callers, utilizing the greenbar lists for the various project group areas, to determine prospective meeting attendance. This will allow us to better identify those truly interested in coming to a smokers' rights meeting, before any mass mail is sent. The telephone script should include the actual date, time and location of the meeting. Once those screened favorably are identified, mail can then be sent informing them of the agenda and other logistical information. The screening calls should be made approximately three weeks in advance. The favorable prospects will then be sent an agenda fifteen days prior, followed by a reminder post card three days before the meeting. This will still allow us the opportunity of maximizing the number of invitations, at less expense, with greater efficiency.

The phone outreach project groups are as follows:

Springfield, MA

The phone outreach project groups (con't):

Pittsfield, MA

Cape Cod, MA

Providence, RI

Montpelier, VT

Burlington, VT

GROUP RE-CAP

The following is a synopsis of each of the current groups in the New England area:

MAINE

Augusta - Leader: Eric Reed

This is my main problem group in Maine. Repeated mailing of the data base here has not generated an effective core group. Eric Reed is a dedicated leader and has proven to be a competent public spokesman, not only for the Augusta group but for the entire state as well. However, he lacks the organizational ability to lead others in a constructive manner. This is an area which needs a great deal of my attention. Once this group is brought on line, the entire state will be self-sufficient.

Bangor - Leader: Jean Emerson

In terms of attendance and participation at meetings, this is the best group of the region. Jean averages about 30 people a session and the meetings are lively. Their production, however, has been below average for a group of this size. One problem is the low education factor in the area. Many of the attenders are illiterate. Improvement continues to occur. The group now has a monthly newsletter and a speaker's committee which books a guest, usually a legislator, for each monthly meeting. They also sponsored a Halloween and Christmas party. The group is totally self-sufficient.

Caribou - Leader: Darlene Brennan

The Caribou group is off to a good start. The August 6th SRM produced a grand total of 23 attenders (combining Presque Isle and Caribou). They have a hard core of approximately 12. Due to their proximity, I will be unable to attend many of their meetings. Therefore, independence is a necessity. They are particularly interested in attacking anti-smokers in the private sector. In fact, the region-wide private sector push began with the Caribou group's idea to send the Maine FET petitions to Greyhound Bus Company, opposing their new smoking ban policy. I think this group has a solid capacity to flourish. Growth prospects are not exceedingly favorable because of the small, isolated population base of the area.

Lewiston - Leader: Buzz B. Cormier

Buzz B. has done a tremendous job in developing a 15 person core group in Lewiston. They meet monthly and their production has been tremendous. Through his network of restaurants, Buzz B.'s group was responsible for gathering at least 8,000 of the 18,000+ FET petition signatures gathered in the state. He is totally committed to the cause and can be counted upon for anything. The group is completely self-sufficient.

Portland - Leader: Fran Harriman

This group is just now beginning to come into their own. They have yet to meet independently, but that will come very soon. Fran is the nominal leader of the group, but Mr. and Mrs. Owen Luke, Bob Davis and Wayne Rumery all share a great deal of the responsibility. The group performed very well in the petition program, the Commission on Smoking OR Health fight, and the restaurant ban battle. They were effective at turning people out to speak at the public hearings.

New Cities to Organize: Biddeford (Saco, Old Orchard Beach)
Sanford (Wells, Kennebunk)

MASSACHUSETTS

As you know, the outreach plan primarily came into being to attempt to increase group attendance in this state. Originally, we had a dozen groups in Massachusetts, but many of them had

poorly attended meetings. Part of the outreach process was to condense the state into seven larger groups. They are:

Boston Downtown - Leader: Grace Ann Robinson

This may be the most difficult group in the region. After repeated tries to generate a core group, we continue to come up empty. One unsolvable problem is finding a convenient and safe place to meet. Many places, including our usual meeting site, have reputations for a great deal of criminal activity, thus discouraging people from coming at night. Even meeting on a Saturday morning did not generate many attenders. Though I have been unable to develop on-going meetings, mail response has been good. We do have interested people in the Boston area, but not for attending meetings. There is no prospect this group will become independent.

Boston North -- Leader: Frank Parker

This group is formed by combining the Everett, Melrose and Medford areas. Attendance is better, but the clientele is very elderly. Not a lot of activity will be generated here. Still, the mail response to my action pleas has been relatively strong. The outlook here is better than for Boston Downtown, but we are a long way from an independent group situation.

Boston South - Leader: Bob Packer

Of the Boston area groups, this one has the greatest potential. They have a core leadership of nine people, made up of members living in Needham, Dedham, Norwood and Natick. They performed adequately in the petition program. Packer, one of the best leaders in the region, recently appeared on Boston's WEEI radio on behalf of smokers' rights. The station was doing a story on the great American smoke-out. Independence is a strong possibility in the near future.

Brockton - Leader: John Mirrione

This is easily the best group in the state. They are independent, have a core of 14-17 people, and were the cornerstone of the Massachusetts petition program. They gathered almost 9,000 of the 21,000 signatures accumulated. John Mirrione, with the help of David Sims, leads the group in a firm, constructive manner. The anti-discrimination bill in employment is their top priority.

Cape Cod - Leader: Deborah Andersen

This is an area comprised of New Bedford, Dartmouth, Fall River and the communities on Cape Cod. I have not been here for quite awhile, as the original New Bedford group's independence did not materialize. Like most areas in the Bay State, this group will require a great deal of my time.

Pittsfield - Leader: Charlotte Clapper

This group had good potential, but the last meeting drew only one person, leader Charlotte Clapper. Western Massachusetts is an area that will require a major time commitment in 1991. My main efforts will be to motivate the dozen or so original follow-up attenders to come back and participate on a regular basis. If that occurs, we have the makings of a decent group.

Springfield - Leader: Sandra Smith

After repeated attempts, I can draw no more than four regular people. This is an important city in Massachusetts and it is critical that we have a presence here. As in Pittsfield, this area will require a great deal of work. Positively, Sandra Smith is a SMIG who shows great enthusiasm and promise. The outreach phone approach is a must.

New Cities to Organize: Haverhill

Lowell/Lawrence

Worcester

Concord/Framingham

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Claremont - Leader: Norman Boivin

This group was formed through the initiative of Norman Boivin, who was particularly helpful on the petition drive. Claremont is a small community in western New Hampshire, on the Vermont border. Newport and Sunapee are more sizable nearby towns. Norm is interested in developing a group, but has not

demonstrated the leadership ability to organize the logistics. We do have five or seven people here, but again, more of my time is needed to jump start the program. Realistically, the small population base makes this problem area less of a priority than those in Massachusetts.

Manchester - Leader: Chuck Converse

I am reasonably pleased at the development here. We have a hard core of about ten, and they were very productive in the FET fight. Member Mary Vivieros had a personal meeting with Sen. Gordon Humphrey and Laura Jennings met with then-Rep. Chuck Douglas. The response to our petition mailings was very high. Converse is motivated and intelligent, and I think he has the capability of taking the group independent. Media presence is a top priority of the Manchester group.

Nashua - Leader: Bob and Leah Jacobs

This group is just beginning. Their original SRM was October 10, with the first follow-up on November 14. I am not yet sure how the seven hard core people will finally organize, but I think it will be a good group. Jacobs is a capable leader and will be a good public spokesman should the occasion arise.

New Cities to Organize: Portsmouth

Concord

RHODE ISLAND

Newport - Leader: Patricia Brady

One of the best small groups in the region. Just recently they reached the mark of having fifteen regular attenders. They have met independently, and will do so more often in 1991. The group was successful in the petition program with Pat Brady visiting several federal and state legislative offices. We had a very favorable petition mail response here. Brady also did a successful newspaper interview on the smokers' rights program. My biggest problem will be when she moves to Pennsylvania. Her husband was transferred to Philadelphia and she will join him as soon as their house sells. Fortunately for me, that has been a long time in coming.

Providence - Leader: Harold Paine

This group has never gotten off the ground. Only eight people attended the original SRM, and the first follow-up didn't produce anything concrete. Providence is the largest and most important city in Rhode Island, so our presence there is a must. Combining the areas of Warwick, Pawtucket, Providence and Cranston should net us a group of ten regular attenders. Unfortunately, all of those areas have been worked previously, with little or no results. So, the task ahead is formidable. The phone outreach approach will be tried here early next year.

Woonsocket - Leader: Gerry Gagnon

Gerry Gagnon has done everything right. He has developed a hard core of 20+ people who performed very well in the petition program, he promoted his smokers' rights group at the annual Oktoberfest celebration, he advertises the meetings on the local cable TV ad channel, and his meetings run totally independently. This is one of the best groups in the region.

New Cities to Organize: None

VERMONT

Burlington - Leader: Dave Kirsch

As you no doubt know, the political climate in Vermont is very unique. This November, voters sent the first avowed socialist to Congress since the '30s, while simultaneously electing a Republican Governor. Both houses of the legislature have an even partisan split. Therefore, anything can happen. Vermont's environmental image makes smokers' rights a difficult sell. This explains why the relatively new Burlington group is off to a slow start. We have a hard core of about seven, but further recruitment is required. Potential exists, but they are a very long way from independence.

Montpelier - Leader: Jim Coons

This is the group that wants the company to begin class action law suits against the antis as a way to protect our constitutional rights. Discussions at the meetings have become intellectually abstract which, unfortunately, have turned off

many of the members. At one time, the group numbered 18 regular attenders. Developing a strong group here will require not only time, but the ability to change the focus of their goals. Member C.P. Kerin, while very intelligent, is not a positive force. He is willing to participate, but I am not sure to what value his contributions may have. Jim Coons is solid, but also gets off the track when the subject of class action suits is brought to the forefront. The group's top priority is to survey the new legislature and identify the members' views on issues of concern to smokers.

New Cities to Organize: Brattleboro
Rutland

1991 GOALS

The following are projects I hope to accomplish in each of my five New England states in 1991:

- 1) Legislative Identification - Designated groups in all states will be conducting a program to identify the predisposition of legislators on smoking related issues. During the last week of December, issue questionnaires will be sent to all 1991-'92 state legislators. The surveys will ask each member to complete and return. We can then mail the responses to my state data bases, thereby identifying to the partisans which legislators support smokers' rights. Since there is no imminent election, no legal conflict exists if we were to mail each politician's answers to our attenders, futures, no shows and SMIGs. This project will serve a great function in helping us to target swing members on key votes, as well as assisting in determining the areas in need of further group organizing.
- 2) New Member Outreach - See analysis entitled "The Outreach Program" on pages 3-5 of this report.
- 3) Private Sector Involvement/ID - As I have mentioned repeatedly in my individual and weekly reports, smokers' rights activity must grow beyond initiatives in government. The private sector, particularly involving restaurants, the work-place and the transportation industry, are

3) Private Sector Involvement/ID (con't) - areas where communication is necessary. Programs such as sending petitions to large companies protesting their smoking policy, and publicizing the favorable and unfavorable establishments in newsletters are two ways smokers can make their presence felt. It is critical that businessmen see that favorably treating smokers has very positive benefits. And, just as importantly, businesses must pay a financial penalty for abusing smokers.

①

A positive idea, which I am planning to pursue, is to equip all group members with 3x5" cards which thank business owners for favorable treatment. This is particularly useful in restaurants. When a smoker is pleased with an establishment, he merely leaves the card on the table with the tip. The owner will see this and, if it happens often enough, will understand how the smoking community directly effects his profit margin.

②

③ Additionally, I would like to run a phone bank operation to various businesses, particularly restaurants, in each state. The phone script will ask each respondent to explain their smoking policy. Armed with the information, groups can then list in a newsletter the names of those restaurants who are favorable and unfavorable to smokers. This should cause a great deal of uproar, but will also prove a very effective tool in making the business community understand the economic clout of smokers.

4) Positive Legislation - It is extremely important that the smokers' rights groups begin to back legislation designed to improve the climate for smokers, instead of always being on the defensive. Such an example of positive legislation is the anti-discrimination in employment measure passed in Rhode Island this year. Groups in the other states are very favorable to introducing and backing such a companion bill. It is just the approach we need to balance each group's activity. There will be a great deal of bad legislation to oppose in 1991, particularly

① Groups do project

② PR value news releases in each market

③ what cost?

④ other aspects?

Negative Results

Maybe Groups work with local restaurant associations.

- 4) Positive Legislation (con't) -
on the excise tax front, so it becomes even more important to mount a positive attack.
- 5) Public/Media Relations - I will seek to train my leaders via personal contacts and through Leadership Training Seminars on getting positive publicity for smokers' rights activities.
- 6) Data Base Cleaning - Another housekeeping task I am planning is a data base cleansing mailer. The package will consist of a questionnaire asking people their level of interest in smokers' rights. Such a survey will better refine our groups, identify new people who would like to join, pinpoint those who will participate but not attend meetings, and finally eliminate those who have no interest. This process will make the data base more efficient and prevent us from wasting postage money communicating with people who no longer desire to be involved.
- 7) Tightening Up Communications - I am setting a personal goal of tightening up my administrative system as it applies to answering 800 number calls, action form respondents and promotional material orders. Though each of those areas are currently being serviced, my processing program could stand improvement. Developing a more time sensitive reply system is a top priority.

SMIGs, REMOTE START-UPS AND LEADERSHIP TRAINING

SMIGs - It is clear I need to spend more time developing SMIGs. I have 333 in the data base, 191 5 Zip and 142 3 Zip. Many have been invited to meetings without any reply. Previously, I detailed a program to clean the data base and isolate those people who have a legitimate interest in smokers' rights (1991 Goals, #5 Data Base Cleaning, page 13). Due to the poor response of SMIGs to my meeting invitations, all 333 will be included in the interest questionnaire mailings. Once the responses are known, I will then be able to more efficiently implement the SMIG assimilation program. In the meantime, I will be sending the 5 Zip names to the appropriate leader for local follow-up.

REMOTE START-UPS - I have taken the new RSU video to several of my groups for their reaction. The feedback has been very positive. While cleaning the data base, a question on certain interest mailer surveys will ask if any desire the RSU video. It

will be explained that the purpose of the production is to build groups in areas that will not have SRMs. The key targets will be 3 Zip SMIGs, and those people in the hinterlands (usually those who have called on the toll free number and asked to join a group in the area). The approximate total number of recipients will be 500.

LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINARS - After discussing this topic with Mark Smith, we decided it would be prudent to hold the New England leadership training sessions after the winter season. Two meetings will be held next year, one in Boston and the other in Augusta, ME. All group attenders will be invited. The Boston meeting, to be scheduled in May, will include groups in all states but Maine. The Augusta meeting, planned for September, will be exclusively for Maine. Such a schedule conforms best to the region's geography and the advanced nature of the Maine groups.

LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

Maine

Maine's legislature remains heavily in Democrat hands. Their 97-54 House majority is the same as last year, and the 22-13 margin in the Senate represents a gain of two. Anti-smoking activist Governor Jock McKernan won a narrow re-election. Some believe he will moderate his stance against smokers' rights, but I disagree. I think he will come at us harder than ever. His Governor's Commission on Smoking OR Health, chaired by Gordon Smith, will be back and out for avengence. We surprised them last year, but they will be ready for us now. The going will be tougher. We can expect them to move forward with their public smoking ban legislation that was put on hold during the election year of 1990.

Tax legislation will likely be on the table, once again. The final incremental cigarette excise tax increase will take effect in July, after going up two cents on January 1. Attempts will be made not only to speed up the July increase, but to raise the tax even higher. As with most of the New England states, Maine has a budget deficit, approximately \$400 million, so the politicians will be looking for further revenue sources.

The smokers' rights groups are interested in supporting positive legislation in the areas of anti-discrimination against smokers in employment and possibly housing, and a bill to

re-claim some of the lost ground relating to hospital smoking policy. I think that both bills are likely to be introduced. Prospects are unclear.

Massachusetts

Republicans made major gains in the Bay State, which should make politics more exciting. I believe the climate for smokers will improve.

GOP Governor-Elect Bill Weld is a liberal, but should have a more favorable outlook toward the business community. Like most Republican Governors, however, he will not hesitate to raise taxes. His Chief of Staff, John Moffitt, who happens to be my late wife's brother-in-law, is an avid pipe smoker. In fact, on my congratulatory call to him, he said 'to tell the folks at RJR that the Governor's top man is a smoker.' So, I thought that was positive. I believe Weld will succumb to the pressure that is strongest. However, the presence of Moffitt will at least give our side a chance to be fairly heard.

Republicans, for the first time in recent memory, have one-third of the Senate, 14 of 40, a gain of five seats. Democrats still enjoy a 121-38-1 majority in the House, even though they lost eight seats.

Expect excise tax legislation to be introduced immediately, since no increase occurred last session. We have an excellent chance of getting the anti-discrimination in employment bill introduced. The antis will undoubtedly push for a comprehensive public and workplace bill designed to ban smoking.

So, it promises to be an active and difficult session for smokers in Massachusetts. I will have the groups concentrate on the tax, ban, and employment bills in that order. All smokers' rights group activity, at the state level, should be confined to those three topics.

New Hampshire

The New Hampshire political climate remains basically the same, though Democrats made gains. Gov. Judd Gregg won a big re-election and now has a second two year term. He has not been extremely favorable to smokers, though he does not initiate anti-smoking bills as does McKernan.

The leadership selection process in the state Senate will be interesting. Before the election, it was virtually assured

that GOP Floor Leader Edward DuPont, a moderate-conservative, would be the next Senate President, replacing the retiring William Bartlett. Now the picture is clouded. Democrats gained three seats, making the Republican majority 13-11. Two potential challenges are mounting to DuPont. The Democrats, led by Manchester Senator Jim St. Jean, are trying to form a coalition with renegade Republicans. If successful, St. Jean would become the new President. Secondly, two liberal Republicans are holding out, weighing the option of selling their votes to St. Jean, or looking for a third alternative. If a stalemate occurs, a consensus dark horse candidate could emerge. Though the situation is convoluted, look for DuPont to prevail. The caucuses will cast their votes the first week in December.

The Democrats gained 11 seats in the House, making the new ratio 263 Rs, 135 Ds and two independents. Though the House is decisively in the Republican column, it is clearly anti-smoking. There is also a battle for Speaker of the House, as Doug Scamman ran unsuccessfully for Congress. Republicans will retain this office.

The legislature has raised taxes eight cents in the last two sessions, four cents per year. There will likely be a budget shortfall, so penalizing smokers again is not out of the realm of possibility.

The Manchester smokers' rights group, in particular, wants to move forward to introduce the anti-discrimination in employment bill. I think we will be successful in convincing someone to introduce it, but chances for passage are poor.

The tax and anti-discrimination subjects will dominate the state agenda for our three NH groups.

Rhode Island

The mid-term elections saw the Democrats regain total power in Rhode Island. Democrat Gubernatorial nominee Bruce Sundland, loser to incumbent Edward DiPrete twice before, won a landslide victory of unprecedented proportions. Additionally, the 74-26% margin at the top of the ticket helped defeat seven GOP legislators, three in the Senate and four in the House. The Democrat margins in the upper and lower legislative chambers are 44-6 and 87-12, respectively. Therefore, Republicans are not even a respectable minority and will have virtually no say in how the state is run.

The economy is bad in Rhode Island, as evidenced in the Governor's stunning margin of defeat. Will this mean increased

cigarette taxes? Possibly not. After raising the state excise tax to \$0.37 per pack, the climate may not be right to attempt another run at us. However, further revenue will be needed which means some legislators will see cigarettes as a target. It is likely that some type of tax increase legislation will be introduced.

The key problem for us, according to RJR governmental affairs, is a sweeping set of anti-smoking proposals sponsored by the state Department of Public Health. Included in the recommendations are curbs on smoking in public and at the workplace. Legislative introduction is inevitable. Defeating this dangerous package will be at the top of the agenda of the Rhode Island smokers' rights groups. I do not believe a positive bill will be introduced in the upcoming session.

Vermont

The only thing crazier than certain Vermont SR group members may be this year's legislative session. For maybe the first time in national history, a partisan tie exists in both houses of a legislature. 15-15 is the Senate makeup and 75-75 are the numbers in the House. The Democrat Lt. Governor gives the Democrats the majority in the Senate. The House leadership structure is unclear. Early analysis suggests that both ties are a plus for smokers' rights.

The Republicans carried the day in the Governor's race as the former chief executive, Richard Snelling, returns to the Governor's mansion. He replaces three term Democrat incumbent, Madeline Kunin. Snelling is also a liberal, so any improvement for the smoking community will be minimal at best.

As with most of the New England states, excise tax increase legislation will be introduced. Vermont's taxes are now the lowest in the region, in light of New Hampshire's two successive raises. The groups definitely want to see the anti-discrimination in employment bill introduced. I think the chances of introduction are good, but passage will be difficult. We will likely see a public building smoking ban bill, along with a proposal to make the workplace environment even more hostile to smokers.

Conclusion

As you have seen, the legislative forecasts in all five states are similar. We will be on the defensive in the two

critical areas, taxes and restrictions, which makes it even more important to launch a comprehensive positive attack on the anti-discrimination in employment front.

In the 1991 Goals section of this report, I mentioned the need to clean the data base (Data Base Cleaning, page 13, #5). The questionnaire mail package mentioned in that section will also feature an action request. Recipients will be asked to communicate with their legislators the first week in January, imploring them not to raise taxes, and to either support or oppose other legislation that will directly effect smokers. The text of the message will be state specific. It is critical that we go on the offensive immediately upon the opening of each legislative session. The officeholders must see evidence of the smokers' rights organizations early, so as to establish the credibility as a force with which to be reckoned.

ANTI-ACTIVITY

Currently group members monitor newspaper and electronic media to gain information on anti-smoker activity. Their actions are also noted when our people attend public hearings. These operations will continue, along with attempting to have key activists find their way onto anti-smoker organization mailing lists, i.e. GASP in Massachusetts.

It is critical that we establish better intelligence, not only in the regions, but nationally as well. Changing the frame work of the debate is key. Independent national research groups have already identified anti organizations as spending disproportionate sums of money on overhead, salaries and office administration and very little of their budget on actual research. Therefore, poor financial management could be their achilles heal. We must publicize their questionable monetary dealings and call their credibility into question.

One of the central points of the anti attacks on the tobacco industry is that the companies are only concerned with profits, and not the health of the smoking public. We can begin to turn that argument around. The antis have as much of a personal financial interest in the smoking issue as the tobacco growers and cigarette companies. They make large salaries for spreading propaganda against cigarettes and it is time their statements and "health discoveries" are called into question. Their studies only come to conclusions that promote the anti position, thereby extending the financial life of their organization. Objectivity takes a back seat to protecting their "pot of gold."

One of the ways of evening the score is to develop "independent sources" just as the antis have effectively done. There is a certain 501(c)4 organization in San Diego that

ENVIRONMENTAL TOBACCO SMOKE

At this point, based upon previous instruction, I have not broached the subject of ETS with my groups. It is an important matter, especially with another unfavorable EPA report likely to be released next year.

I look forward to the ETS presentation at our staff meeting in Florida. After I have the proper information, I can amend this portion of the plan to indicate how it will be disseminated.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

One of the key factors in getting group members involved in the political process is identifying the favorable politicians versus the unfavorable. The legislative identification project, as outlined in the 1991 Goals section of this plan (#1, page 11), is the first step. If the records of politicians on smoking related issues are made known, our group members will have the information they need to make intelligent choices regarding their personal political activity.

Voter registration will be a focal point of group action next year. Though no elections are scheduled, it is important to always focus on bringing unregistered smokers into the political process. The plan will change per state because each entity has diverse election laws. I will be conducting early research to determine how I can best bring the registration system to our active attenders. Then, we will together find the most efficient way to include futures, no shows and acquaintances.

Obviously, our program cannot promote the election or defeat of any particular candidate. The purpose of the political activity goal is to involve people in the process, armed with accurate information. The decision as to who to support will always be left within the individual group, void of outside direction or interference.