

Crusade to outlaw smoking in casinos

By Liz Benston, Las Vegas Sun

Paul McIntyre is smiling at the Global Gaming Expo, belying the fact that he is embedded deep behind enemy lines.

From his 10-foot-square booth sandwiched between displays of gambling tables and slot machines, McIntyre – representing the nonprofit groups Kids Involuntarily Inhaling Secondhand Smoke and Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights – is pressuring casinos nationwide to ban smoking. He is sitting at a long table covered with stacks of fact sheets about smoking and colorful brochures showing smiling casino and restaurant workers. Bookending the table are two giant posters, including a photo of a young female casino dealer.

This is the final frontier for anti-smoking advocates – the casino industry's premier trade show, which wrapped up in Las Vegas last month – and not an entirely welcome place to be.

Few stop at the booth. Those who do usually have something to say.

“People expect to smoke and gamble when they come to Vegas,” said Joe Marth, a young man whose Arkansas company makes casino surveillance cameras. A stone's throw away, he has been eyeing the booth all day and comes over for a closer look.

“It's not going to happen,” he says when asked about the prospect of banning smoking in casinos.

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