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February 20, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NJ Assembly Tourism & Gaming Committee to Vote on A1080

The Assembly Tourism & Gaming Committee plans to discuss and vote on A1080, which will make all state, county and local parks, recreational areas and beaches 100% smokefree, under the 2006 Smokefree Air Act.

New Jersey's ready for a 100% smokefree parks and recreational areas policy statewide. "More than one-third of our state's municipal or county jurisdictions having laws that restrict smoking in parks and recreational areas, passing at a rate averaging one ordinance per week," states Karen Blumenfeld, Esq., Executive Director of Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy (GASP). "Even beach towns like Seaside Park, Long Branch and Sunset Beach in Cape May County, have made their beaches 100% smokefree."

"New Jersey Assembly Members Valerie Vainieri-Huttle, Angelica M. Jimenez and Wayne P. DeAngelo are to be commended for sponsoring A1080, which expands expands local and county smokefree parks progress to statewide coverage," says Blumenfeld. "Plus, there's a proven track record for self-enforcement due to free metal signage posted by New Jersey communities with 100% smokefree parks policies."

100% smokefree parks and recreational areas also generate health, environmental and economic benefits. "It normalize smokefree outdoor environments where children engage in recreational activities, reducing the likelihood they'll start smoking." says Blumenfeld.

There is no safe level of secondhand smoke even outdoors, especially for children and seniors. Studies show outdoor smoke levels can be as high as indoor smoking-permitted locations. Communities with 100% smokefree parks policies also enhance their green sustainability plans, and reduce preventable fires and tobacco litter, decreasing maintenance costs.

The New Jersey Smokefree Air Act already bans outdoor smoking on any property where a school-sponsored activity occurs. Making all state, county and local parks 100% smokefree is a healthy, unified approach to protecting our residents, visitors and the environment.

About Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy: Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy is a 40-year old non-profit that tracks laws and policies on tobacco-free living and smokefree environments, and provides technical assistance on emerging trends in tobacco control and policy. Learn more at www.njgasp.org.