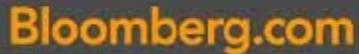


Smokefree Air Media Report – February 11, 2011

Articles that quote coalition members or mention the coalition

The logo for Bloomberg.com, featuring the word "Bloomberg.com" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font against a dark grey rectangular background.

Indiana House OKs smoking ban with bars exempted

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-01-31/indiana-house-oks-smoking-ban-with-bars-exempted.html>

By DEANNA MARTIN

Jan 31, 2011 4:50 PM

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The Indiana House on Monday approved a statewide smoking ban that includes exemptions for casinos, bars, clubs and even nursing homes.

Now the real work begins for ban supporters, who have to balance their desire to remove those loopholes with the political reality of trying to move the bill through the Republican-led Senate, where similar proposals have died before.

The Republican-led House voted 68-31 Monday to approve the bill on the same day that nearly 300 anti-smoking advocates gathered at the Statehouse to urge lawmakers to support the bill. Advocates in the House balcony applauded as the vote was taken, and clapped when House members said they wanted to tighten up the bill.

No one spoke against the bill Monday, though opponents have previously raised objections of too much government intervention and concerns of lost business.

Mara Candelaria Reardon, D-Munster, said people who work in smoke-filled environments shouldn't have to choose between their job and their health.

"The time has come," she said. "It is 100 percent about workplace safety."

Bill sponsor Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, said he hopes some of the exemptions are removed as the bill moves through the legislative process.

The exemptions for casinos and horse racing tracks were approved earlier in January after the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency said banning smoking in gambling establishments could cost the cash-strapped state about \$190 million a year.

The House later voted to exempt bars that only admit adults over age 21 after some lawmakers argued that it was unfair to exempt casinos and tracks without exempting bars. They said bars located near casinos could lose business if smokers decided to hang out at casinos instead of at bars.

Lawmakers also made exceptions for nursing homes and fraternal clubs after some said veterans and those living in nursing homes should have the right to smoke in certain areas.

While some health advocates say they would not support a bill with so many exemptions, Brown says compromise is part of the legislative process. And the exemptions — especially those for bars and casinos — will give the bill a better chance of passing the Senate, said Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne.

Long said last week that the smoking ban proposal will get a Senate committee hearing this year, which might be the bill's best chance of passing in years. The Indiana Chamber of Commerce supports a ban, and Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels says he'd sign a statewide smoking ban into law if legislators approve it.



Indiana House passes state smoking ban

<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2011/jan/31/indiana-house-passes-state-smoking-ban/>

Circulation: 52,721

By: Eric Bradner

January 31, 2011

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana House has passed a measure that would ban smoking at every restaurant in the state.

The House voted 68-31 on Monday to enact what began as a comprehensive public smoking ban but was watered down with amendments exempting bars, casinos, tobacco retailers and more. House Bill 1018 now moves to the state Senate for consideration.

Rep. Charlie Brown, the Gary Democrat who is the bill's author and who has advocated a smoking ban for years, walked to a podium in the House with a fake cigarette in his mouth Monday as he urged fellow lawmakers to endorse the ban.

He said since studies show that about 24 percent of Hoosiers smoke, the ban is in the interests of the other 76 percent.

"Basic math would tell you that those small businesses that think that they're going to lose business will stand a better chance of gaining business," he said.

Rep. Eric Turner, R-Marion, noted that smoking bans are in place in some form in more than 30 states.

"Employees have the right to work in an environment that does not harm their health. That's really the bottom line," he said.

The only detractor to speak on the House floor Monday was Rep. Phil Hinkle, R-Indianapolis.

"With this bill, nothing will change," he said.

The House has passed variations of a smoking ban several times in recent years, but those bills have all died in the Senate.

This year, though, Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne, says he will give the bill a committee hearing, as long as it still includes an exemption for casinos so that the state doesn't lose gambling tax revenue.

"We're going to hopefully rely upon the Senate to remove some of the exemptions so that we can have a true smoking ban in Indiana," said Rep. Milo Smith, R-Columbus.

Gov. Mitch Daniels has said if a smoking ban reaches his desk, he will sign it into law.



House Approves Statewide Smoking Ban

<http://www.theindychannel.com/news/26679933/detail.html>

By: Associated Press

January 31, 2011

The Indiana House approved a statewide smoking ban Monday, [6News' Norman Cox](#) reported. The Republican-led House voted 68 to 31. However, the bill's sponsor, Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, was in no mood to celebrate. Brown said it pains him that lawmakers insisted on adding so many exemptions to the bill, allowing smoking in bars, casinos, race tracks, private clubs and nursing homes.

Brown pledged to try to eliminate those exemptions when the bill goes to the GOP-controlled Senate.

"We have an obligation, with all the information, historical and whatever out there, about the damages done by smoking and then even more damage done by folk coming into contact with second-hand smoke," Brown said.

Other supporters said that even with the exemptions, the bill will still make Indiana a healthier place.

"I'm voting for Sam, my grandson, who has asked me to vote for the bill and for the children of Ms. White's first grade class at Smith Elementary School," said Republican Rep. Ralph Foley of Martinsville.

Supporters who packed the Statehouse Monday were delighted, but also wanted the Senate to take out those exemptions.

"We're thrilled about it," said one supporter. "We wish it could have been comprehensive, but we think it's a step in the right direction."

Proposed smoking bans have cleared the House several times only to stall in the Senate, but Senate President Pro Tem David Long said the bill will get a Senate committee hearing this year. "That is an economic issue. We're having all kinds of competition coming in from other states now. Casinos argue and probably correctly that it could harm their bottom line," Long said. Several House members said they don't agree with the vast exemptions in the bill and hoped the Senate would remove the loopholes.

Political analysts said the bill might have its best chance in years of passing. Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels said he'd sign a statewide smoking ban into law if legislators approve it.

CHESTERTON TRIBUNE

Indiana House passes smoking ban; Brown eager for Senate to give nod

http://www.chestertontribune.com/Indiana%20News/indiana_house_passes_smoking_ban.htm

February 1, 2011

Now that the Indiana House has passed a statewide smoking ban, State Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, said he remains optimistic that his proposal will gain greater favor in a chamber that traditionally has looked upon the idea with a jaundiced eye: the Indiana Senate.

By a 68-31 margin, representatives on Monday passed House Bill 1018, which prohibits smoking in most public places in Indiana.

The bill now moves to the state Senate, where it has stalled on numerous occasions in the past.

“By my count, this is the fifth time that my fellow representatives have followed the wishes of more than three-quarters of all Hoosiers and supported a ban on smoking in Indiana,” Brown said in a statement on Monday. “The numbers in support of this plan are staggering, and I would hope they compel my colleagues in the Indiana Senate to finally give this legislation full consideration and, above all, action.”

Senate President Pro Tempore David Long, R-Fort Wayne, already has indicated the bill will get a hearing.

That is a significant step forward in and of itself, and I am hopeful that the rising tide of support that this proposal is getting will convince our state senators to debate and vote on it, rather than simply conduct a hearing,” Brown said. “We have waited too long to join this rising tide.”

As the bill does make its way through the Senate, Brown said he was hopeful that members will continue to refine the proposal to remove some of the exemptions contained in the version of HB 1018 that passed.

“I would prefer to have a complete and total ban on smoking in all places where the public gathers, even though I can understand the reasoning behind allowing smoking in casinos, racinos and riverboats, since the Legislative Services Agency has estimated that banning smoking in those locations would cost the state more than \$190 million in taxes,” Brown said.

“I am less enamored with the additional exemptions to the smoking ban that came during debate on the House floor,” he continued. “These exemptions would include bars that only serve people who are 21 years of age or older, as well as specific areas in nursing homes and service clubs such as the VFW, the American Legion and the Elks.”

“By picking away at the edges of the ban with exemption after exemption, we are getting to the point where we might as well not even have a ban at all,” Brown said. “That runs counter to the wishes of the people of this state, and I would hope that we would pay attention to their thoughts and feelings as this debate goes along.”

The smoking ban was one of two bills authored by Brown that were approved in the House on Monday. A second measure (House Bill 1019) calls for the development of programs for teacher training designed to prevent child suicide and recognize signs that a student may be considering suicide.

INDIANA'S NEWSCENTER

Advocates Rally at the Capitol

<http://www.indianasnewscenter.com/younews/115100344.html>

By: Wendy King

February 2, 2011

Hundreds of people from across the state held a rally at the state Capitol to urge lawmakers to support a statewide smoking ban. Advocates for a smoke ban met with legislators before it went to the house.

“The facts are clear. Smokefree air is good for your heart,” said Danielle Patterson, chair of the Indiana Campaign for Smokefree Air.

“ A September 2009 report published in Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association found that one year after passing smokefree laws, communities in North America and Europe had 17 percent fewer heart attacks compared to communities without smoking restrictions, and in those communities, the number of heart attacks kept decreasing with time,” said Patterson.

A recent study released by the Surgeon General stated that “cigarette smoking and involuntary exposure to cigarette smoke are major causes of coronary heart disease, stroke, aortic aneurysm, and peripheral arterial disease.”

The House ended up passing HB 1018, smoking ban in public places, bill 63-31 on third reading. It now moves to the senate for consideration.

SMALLER INDIANA

<http://www.smallerindiana.com/forum/topics/rally-for-smokefree-indiana>

By: Wendy King

February 2, 2011

Do you support a smokefree Indiana? On Jan. 31, hundreds of people from across Indiana held a rally at the state Capitol to urge lawmakers to support a statewide smoking ban. The House ended up passing HB 1018, smoking ban in public places, bill 63-31. It now moves to the senate for consideration.

The American Heart Association says the facts are clear. Smokefree air is good for your heart. A September 2009 report published in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association* found that one year after passing smokefree laws, communities in North America and Europe had 17 percent fewer heart attacks compared to communities without smoking restrictions, and in those communities, the number of heart attacks kept decreasing with time.

CU Fort Wayne

<http://cu.fortwayne.com/photos/index.php?id=1608498>

February 2, 2011

Photo Gallery

General Smokefree Air Articles and Editorials

INDIANA'S NEWS CENTER

State Smoking Ban Will Move Forward

<http://www.indianasnewscenter.com/news/political/State-Smoking-Ban-Will-Move-Forward-114800729.html>

By: Eric Clabaugh and Maureen Mespell

January 28, 2011

FORT WAYNE, Ind. (Indiana's NewsCenter) -- State Senate President Pro-Tem David Long says a statewide smoking ban will get a hearing in the Senate.

Long says he isn't making guarantees on if it will pass or fail. A smoking ban has passed the House three times but has never received a Senate hearing.

If the bill passes, casinos and bars are expected to be exempt from the law.

"Things I'll be interested in as we work through this issue is exactly how we are grandfathering in the existing smoking laws," says Pro-Tem David Long, "I've always been a local government person when it came to that. Let the local government decide what's best for them whether it's county or city. I think it will be important for us to protect those laws that are already in place."

The bill is currently awaiting a final vote next week in the house



Letter: Leave smokers and business owners alone

<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2011/jan/30/no-headline---304/>

Circulation: 52,721

By: Karl Penn

January 30, 2011

To the editor:

In Tuesday's Courier & Press, there was an article describing the new rewrite of the Indiana House smoking ban, the House exempted bars for patrons over 21, fraternal clubs, nursing homes and casinos.

Banning smoking in casinos could cost the state about \$200 million annually.

If this rewrite stands, becomes law, it would logically follow that cities and counties adapt the new law.

If the state is going to exempt casinos, bars and some restaurants should receive the same exemption.

But alas, the Courier & Press and many local intrusive politicians want a complete smoking ban in restaurants and bars.

Through fiat, regulations and erroneous reasoning, the Courier & Press and meddling politicians want to take away our God-given right to choose.

I repeat, ad nauseam: If you don't smoke it is your God-given right to avoid such establishments. There are few smoking sanctuaries left. Please leave the poor smokers and small entrepreneurs alone.

This is so simple even a 6-year-old can follow the logic.



Restaurant owners' reaction mixed to proposed smoking ban

http://www.nwitimes.com/business/local/article_730aa01b-26c7-5644-93d3-9578847410a8.html

Circulation: 83,877

By: Rob Earnshaw

January 30, 2011

Indiana restaurants aren't among the exemptions to the proposed statewide smoking ban, but many proprietors are making the decision to go smoke-free for themselves.

For many of them, their concern is it remains their decision - not the government's.

Timothy Hendrickson doesn't allow smoking at his Mellow Brew Cheesecake House in Dyer, but he prefers nobody make that decision except for him.

"We can make up our own minds if we decide to have smoking in our places or not," Hendrickson said. "I think the state is going a bit too far. I just think we're over the age of 21 and we can make up our own minds of what to do. It's getting kind of ridiculous."

George Fitusis, whose family owns Hobart's Bright Spot Restaurant, said he's behind a statewide smoking ban "150 percent."

"We are for it," Fitusis said.

Fitusis said he has relatives and friends who own restaurants in nearby communities where smoking is not allowed.

"They are very happy with the results," he said.

Fitusis said if the law doesn't pass, the family intends to make Bright Spot smoke-free themselves.

Main Street Café in Crown Point went smoke-free four years ago, before the city enacted a smoking ban in 2008. One of its owners, Maria Pappas, had mixed feelings at first but said in the long run things worked out for the better.

"It was a blessing," she said.

Pappas didn't want to offend smokers – including some of her own staff and family members – but said she had to speak for herself.

"I'm for the ban in all areas," she said. "Smoke destroys everything."

Pier 74 Bar & Grill has been open for about five years in Cedar Lake and by choice has remained smoke free.

Ryan Spencer, whose family owns the restaurant, said none of his family smokes, and they weren't interested in having a smoking place. Like Hendrickson, Spencer still doesn't believe the government should be the one to make that choice.

"I think the law is a very bad idea," he said. "Are they going to tell me what kind of food I can serve next?"

Spencer said it's probably "been a wash" in regards to gaining nonsmoking patrons and losing those who like to light up.

"I know people probably walk in the door and leave when they find out we're nonsmoking, but at the same time I know there's people that come in here because of the fresh air," he said.



Ind. House OKs smoking ban with bars exempted

<http://www.wcpo.com/dpp/news/statewide-smoking-ban-approved-in-indiana>

By: Associated Press

January 31, 2011

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) - The Indiana House has approved a statewide smoking ban that includes exemptions for casinos, bars, clubs and even nursing homes.

The Republican-led House voted 68-31 Monday to approve the bill, which now moves to the GOP-controlled Senate for consideration. Proposed smoking bans have cleared the House several times only to stall in the Senate, but Senate President Pro Tem David Long says the bill will get a Senate committee hearing this year.

Several House members said they don't agree with the vast exemptions in the bill and hoped the Senate would remove the loopholes.

The bill might have its best chance in years of passing. Republican Gov. Mitch Daniels says he'd sign a statewide smoking ban into law if legislators approve it.



Indiana House passes smoking ban bill

http://www.wndu.com/localnews/headlines/Indiana_House_passes_smoking_ban_bill_114983359.html

By: Paul Murphy

January 31, 2011

With a vote of 68-31, the bill to ban smoking in Indiana passed the House on Monday.

The current version of the bill would exempt bars, private clubs, casinos and some nursing homes.

The original authors of the bill hope that it can be strengthened as it heads to the Senate.

The measure received mixed reviews from local lawmakers in the house.

Representatives Bauer, Dvorak, Fry and Niezgodski voted in favor of the bill.

Voting no were Representatives Culver, Dermody, Wesco and Wolkins.

ONPOLITIX

Indiana House Passes Smoking Ban

<http://indiana.onpolitix.com/news/32751/indiana-house-passes-smoking-ban>

By: Jim Shella

Jan 31, 2011

The vote was 68-to-31 in the Indiana House this afternoon for a statewide smoking ban. The bill now goes to the state Senate where it has died in recent years.

One Representative, Milo Smith of Columbus, said the House will rely on the Senate to make changes in the bill to make it stronger. It currently includes exemptions for casinos, some bars, VFW's, and nursing homes.



Smoking ban bill moves to Indiana Senate

<http://www.courier-journal.com/article/20110131/NEWS02/301310059/Smoking+ban+bill+moves+to+Indiana+Senate>

Circulation: 159,275

By: Lesley Stedman Weidenbener

January 31, 2011

INDIANAPOLIS — The Indiana House passed a smoking ban on Monday that would require restaurants and most other workplaces to go smoke-free but would exempt casinos, bars and private clubs.

House Bill 1018 passed 68-31 and now moves to the Indiana Senate for consideration.

“Employees have the right to work in an environment that does not harm their health. That’s really the bottom line,” said Rep. Eric Turner, R-Marion, a co-author of the bill. “We’re not breaking new ground here. Thirty-seven states have some kind of smoking ban.”

The House has passed smoking ban legislation four times in the past few years but the proposals have died in the Senate.

Rep. Milo Smith, R-Columbus, said he dislikes many of the exemptions the House put into the bill and had hoped to vote for comprehensive legislation this year. Thirty of the 37 state bans are considered comprehensive because they prohibit smoking in bars, restaurants, casinos and nearly all other workplaces.

“We’ll rely on the Senate to remove some of those exemptions,” Smith said to applause from advocates in the Statehouse balcony. “So I’m going to vote for this bill to send it over to the Senate.”

Last week, Senate President Pro Tem David Long, R-Fort Wayne, committed to giving the bill a hearing but said he could not promise passage.

A co-sponsor of the bill, Sen. Beverly Gard, R-Greenfield, has said some of the exemptions will be necessary if the bill is to pass the Senate.

Although 31 members of the House voted against the bill — including Reps. Terry Goodin, D-Crothersville; Rhonda Rhoads, R-Corydon; Steve Davisson, R-Salem; and Dave Cheatham, D-North Vernon — none of them spoke against the bill.

Goodin has said that he believes the legislation constitutes too much government intrusion.

Reps. Steve Stemler, D-Jeffersonville, and Ed Clere, R-New Albany, voted for the bill.

Supporters filled Monday’s debate with arguments about protecting workers who spend their days in smoke-filled environments.

“The time has come. We must pass this important legislation,” said Rep. Mara Candelaria Reardon, D-Munster. “It is 100 percent about public safety. This is not only an economic argument but is the right thing to do.”

SouthBendTribune.com
Discover what's in it for you

Editorial: Smoke-Free

<http://www.southbendtribune.com/article/20110130/Opinion/110139988/-1/googleNews>

Circulation: 62,482 Online Views: 1 Million per day

By: Jessica Signorino

January 31, 2011

Ohio. Illinois. Minnesota. Wisconsin. Michigan. All smoke-free.
So, why can’t Indiana go smoke-free?

We can thank the special interests of Big Tobacco.

If special interest lobbyists have their way, Indiana will be the last state in the nation to adopt a smoke-

free air law that prohibits smoking in workplaces, restaurants and bars.

Our Indiana legislature needs to act to protect workers from secondhand smoke by passing a comprehensive smoke-free air law. It's time legislators stop listening to special interests and start listening to the Indiana public that is demanding action.

It's time to go smoke-free. We've waited long enough.



Editorial: Smoking Ban

<http://www.courierpress.com/news/2011/feb/02/smoking-ban-the-issue-bill-advances-but-with-our/>

Circulation: 52,721

February 2, 2011

What is becoming increasingly clear is that if the Indiana Legislature does adopt a public smoking ban during the current session, it will not be pretty or perfect. But that is likely the way such change will take place where smoking, at least once, was a highly popular choice. More recently, studies show that only 24 percent of Hoosiers still smoke.

It is a coincidence — we presume — that that percentage was reflected somewhat in the smoking ban vote Monday in the House. By a 68-31 count, the House banned smoking in many public places, including restaurants, but allowed exemptions in bars, casinos, and private clubs, among others.

The bill now goes to the Senate, which in the past has scuttled smoking bans, but this year leaders have promised a hearing, as long as a casino exemption is included.

While we strongly support a smoking ban that is as inclusive as possible, we came to realize last year that at least initially it will not be perfect because of the strong support for allowing smoking to continue in casinos. The state and local communities are dependent on casinos for income and jobs, and are unlikely to endanger their economic role in the state by supporting a casino smoking ban.

For now, this may be the best that Indiana can do in attempting to protect employees from secondhand smoke.

Note to Indiana

<http://www.thenewsenterprise.com/content/feb-3-2011-our-readers-write>

By: Calvin Black

February 3, 2011

My wife and I really enjoy visiting Indiana's small cities and towns up and down the Ohio River. They are very enjoyable.

However, it appears that Indiana's governor and state legislature are contemplating a statewide smoking ban. If indeed it enacts such a law, we will shift our entertainment dollars elsewhere.

Our state, Kentucky, has for the most part locked us out of any entertainment and recreation venues in our largest cities.

Cities such as Lexington, Louisville and Elizabethtown have enacted these anti-business regulations. As a result, we no longer spend any discretionary spending in those communities. We shifted our extra money to Indiana, to the tune of \$2,000 to \$3,000 per year. We stay at Indiana's casino resorts and its hotels. If indeed its governor and legislature follow a path of wiping out personal liberties, my wife and I will shift our money elsewhere.

We are almost as close to Tennessee as we are to Indiana. An extra \$20 in gas makes no difference to us.



State's smoking ban in public places may catch fire

<http://www.indystar.com/article/20110203/LOCAL27/102030321/?odysey=mod|newswell|t ext|IndyStar.com|p>

<http://photos.indystar.com/galleries/11813-indiana-house-passes-ban-on-smoking-in-most-public-places>

Circulation: 182,933

Kevin Morgan

February 3, 2011

A ban on smoking in public places? The battle lines on this issue are being drawn in the 2011 Indiana General Assembly.

But the same debate has been under way for years in the cities and towns of Central Indiana.

A bill that passed the Indiana House earlier this week would ban smoking in many of the state's public places, including restaurants.

Some of the bill's stronger provisions -- extending the ban to casinos and taverns, for example -- already have been removed.

But it's starting to look as if this might be the year that a state law could finally go on the books. A hearing in the Indiana Senate appears more likely, and Gov. Mitch Daniels has said he would sign the bill if it is passed.

In communities such as Franklin, Plainfield and Zionsville, strict no-smoking laws already are on the books.

On the other hand, one of the area's largest communities -- Fishers -- has no smoking law of any kind.

Most communities in our area have moderate limits -- allowing smoking in bowling alleys, 21-and-over bars and private clubs, for example.

Indianapolis is among these communities, and efforts for a stronger ban have led to particularly spirited debate and political maneuvering in recent years -- debate and maneuvering that could very possibly resume in this election year.

In the two years that I've been moderating weekly online chats about community issues, I've encountered few issues that have inspired the participation and emotion of readers as this one.

I'll resume the discussion on Friday, starting at 1 p.m. at IndyStar.com/livechat. If you can't join us then, send me a note or leave a telephone message.



Editorial: Our government at work

<http://newsandtribune.com/opinion/x1293239892/NASH-The-imagine-nation>

By: Matt Nash

February 4, 2011

FLOYD COUNTY — It seems like every week I see another list of things that the Indiana State Legislature is doing for us. I think The Tribune has done a good job of keeping us informed of what has been going on at the statehouse, but somehow something is missing. Whether they are touting a smoking ban, that doesn't ban smoking or creating a new taxing district that won't raise taxes, our representatives have been very busy. Especially if you consider patting themselves on the back as keeping busy.

The smoking ban that has been working its way through the halls of the Capitol Building has more holes in it than the filter of a Marlboro Light. They tout their bill that will eliminate smoking in all public buildings except casinos (the state will lose too much tax revenue), bars (the bars near casinos would lose too much business), and nursing homes (pretty sure you can't smoke there already). If our state legislature was serious about banning smoking, they should write a bill that actually bans smoking.

Before the anti-smoking zealots get on here and bash me for being pro smoking let me say this. I am not a smoker. I have never smoked. I wish that some people that I loved could quit smoking. I also do not base where I go on whether they allow smoking or not. Ironically, the only places that I go that it bothers me because of all the smoke are bars and casinos.

The main point of the anti smoking bill was consideration of those who work in places that smoking was allowed. I guess that the health of those who work in bars and casinos (and nursing homes?) is less important than the rest of the state. Anything less than a comprehensive ban is a waste of time and of tax payer money.

Another bill that has gotten some publicity is the creation of a new taxing district for the New Albany-Floyd County Parks Department. First let me say that there is no bigger fan of our parks than me. I lived near Sam Peden Community Park for many years and used the walking path a few times a week. It is one of the few places that my children love to go that doesn't cost money. I spent many hours of my youth at Camille Wright Swimming Pool and I am on record as supporting a new Aquatics Center in our county.

The problem with our City/County parks department is neither group thinks the other is paying its fair share. There is no cooperation between the two different government bodies. Even when a single party controlled both groups it was always us versus them.

I have no problem with paying for the parks we have. I am willing to pay a little more for additional

facilities to benefit the citizens of our county. Do not create a new taxing district and then insist that it doesn't mean our taxes will go up.

I believe that the Parks Department Board should develop a multi-year plan and the city and the county get on board and each pay 50 percent. Any capital projects should be financed through a cumulative fund based on the plan. Any emergency or new plans should be brought before the councils and paid for by Riverboat or excess EDIT funds. There is no reason to create another level of government to pay for our parks.

Another new taxing district that is being planned is a new "Regional Airport Authority" being proposed by Clark County's own Ron Grooms, who reportedly represents Floyd County also. The idea is to help fund improvements to Clark County's airport that they could spread out the cost over four or five counties. They are looking right now for around \$200,000, which means Floyd County would be on the hook for about \$50,000 in tax dollars at a time when we cannot afford it.

Until someone can tell me what the benefit is to us I cannot support this expense. Show me what they need the money for and a plan for its use, otherwise don't ask me for money. Taxing the citizens of Floyd County so that the citizens of Clark County don't have to pay as much seems unfair to most of the citizens that Mr. Grooms is suppose to represent.

Of course who can forget the response from Mr. Grooms and the governor of Indiana when another transportation issue was looking for a funding method. MYMANMITCH is on record as saying "... And you know, Those who use the facility paying for it is a pretty fair and time-tested policy." Of course he was talking about the Ohio River Bridges Project at the time, but wouldn't the same philosophy apply.

So the "fiscally conservative" representatives that we sent to Indianapolis last November, aren't actually raising taxes, they are just finding new ways to tax us. They say the are all about smaller government but have found several new ways to make our government bigger. Republicans control the entire Statehouse and have vowed to change the way government is run. If these "changes" so far are indicative of what we can expect we are all in a heap of trouble.



Science backs total smoke ban

<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20110206/EDIT05/302069971/1147/EDIT07>

Circulation: 60,122

By: John Crawford

February 6, 2011

As of January, only 11 states have not passed general statewide bans on smoking in public places.

The Indiana State Legislature is considering this again now.

Unfortunately, while beginning with a good bill, the Legislature has again added numerous exemptions that make the bill an illogical hodgepodge. HB 1018 as amended now allows smoking in casinos (including restaurants in casinos), horse racing facilities, bars and taverns, clubs, fraternal clubs and even health facilities including the Indiana Veterans Home.

The debate about secondhand smoke is over. The scientific data prove it is dangerous to other people. As little as 30 minutes' exposure can increase clotting of the blood and increase chances for a heart attack.

The surgeon general of the United States has stated unequivocally that only total exclusion of smoking from all public places is the correct stance at this time. (See www.surgeongeneral.gov for the 2010 report with the latest evidence.)

These laws are intended to protect not only visitors to public places but also those workers employed in them. How can it make any sense to protect employees of most restaurants but not employees of restaurants in casinos, bars, clubs, health facilities, etc? It is not fair to say those employees can choose to work elsewhere because in this economy they might not be able to get another job. An employee shouldn't have to choose between a paycheck and their health.

Logically, you can say you don't believe secondhand smoke is dangerous and Indiana needs no law at all. Logically, you can say secondhand smoke is dangerous and Indiana should ban secondhand smoke exposure in all public places.

But you can't have it both ways, make myriad exemptions, and be coherent.

I am very familiar with the intense emotional political opposition that develops when a smoking ban is passed – change is always difficult. To address only a portion of the secondhand smoke problem may be easier in the short term and may do some good. But a half-measure law can be harmful in the long term because it will be an excuse not to take further action anytime soon.

Indiana should adopt a complete ban on secondhand smoke exposure in all public places with no exceptions. It is the only consistent scientifically correct position.

Contact your state legislators and ask them to pass a law protecting all citizens from secondhand smoke.

Let's be the next state to pass a true comprehensive statewide law that fixes the entire problem.

Only the private sector can create wealth

http://heraldargus.com/articles/2011/02/11/news/opinion/voice_of_the_people/doc4d5308becb1df273454809.txt

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By: Thomas Drake

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The state of Indiana should not emulate in any way Illinois, which is an economic basket case and Midwest version of California. Thanks to its state governments total domination by Chicago urban Democrat politicians. Yet that is exactly what Gary politician and Indiana state legislator Rep. Charlie Brown is attempting to do with his Illinois style smoking ban. Of course he has help from other Indiana urban Democrats and Republicans like Rep. Ed Soliday from Valparaiso in northwest Indiana. (Porter County has a bizarre situation where Republican officials tend to be significantly more liberal than their Democrat counterparts.)

As a non-smoker, non-drinker and non-gambler, I oppose any government imposed ban on private restaurants, bars, taverns, veteran's clubs and casinos. Let the market decide! That would produce true diversity!

The Indiana House recently voted by 56 to 33 to ban smoking exemptions for bars, taverns, veteran's clubs and casinos. Rep. Brown said the exemptions were "unacceptable." A view the Indiana Senate should reject.

Only the private sector can create wealth, which ultimately provides jobs. Government can only eat or destroy wealth through taxation and regulations. Gary and Illinois are economic basket cases because urban Democrats like Charlie Brown are contemptuous of those fundamental economic facts of life. Rep. Brown's Illinois inspired smoking ban should be rejected.



Bad compromise on state smoking ban. Unfair exemptions in House proposal.

<http://tribstar.com/opinion/x353715916/TRIBUNE-STAR-EDITORIAL-Bad-compromise-on-state-smoking-ban>

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TERRE HAUTE — The job of lawmaking requires compromise. Members of opposing political parties typically disagree. Special interests — from business groups to citizen advocates — lobby legislators, telling them to change bills to suit their concerns.

And, ideally, the opinions of average citizens reach the politicians' ears, too.

Compromise allows all of those voices a place in the legislative process. That's a good thing, to a degree. Indiana House Bill 1018 should be the poster child for compromise gone wild.

That proposal, sponsored by Rep. Charlie Brown, D-Gary, started as a comprehensive ban on smoking in indoor public places. Brown has tried to get similar measures enacted by the General Assembly several times before, but each attempt died in the state Senate. Once again this year, his bill passed the House (68 to 31), and is now in the hands of, once again, the Senate. However, what began as a full-scale smokefree indoor workplace proposal, now contains myriad exemptions. It would prohibit smoking in many public places and most restaurants, but grants exceptions to restaurants in casinos, casinos in general, bars, private clubs and nursing homes.

At this point, Indiana's senators should ask themselves, "Why would we ban smoking anywhere?"

There is a logical, scientific-based answer to that question. Numerous public health agencies and organizations, including the U.S. surgeon general, have roundly concluded that secondhand smoke is a known cancer-causing agent, and exposure to it is a health risk for people. The situation is as problematic in Indiana as anywhere in the U.S. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one-quarter of the Hoosier adult population smokes, the largest percentage in the nation. The state estimates medical bills related to smoking total \$2 billion annually. That bill includes \$487 million in Medicaid claims, funded by taxpayers.

So, the reasons behind a ban on smoking in indoor public places are, primarily, to protect the lives of people exposed to secondhand smoke (including employees of these entities), and to lessen its burden on the state.

Thus, it is hypocritical for the Legislature to advance a bill based on those realities, while

simultaneously gutting it to deny those same health protections for workers in casinos, bars, private clubs and nursing homes. It's either the right thing to do, or it's not. Clearly, the lobbyists successfully swayed House members to pull their groups out of House Bill 1018, using the debatable fears of lost revenue and the unwinnable duel between the rights of smokers and businesses vs. the rights of nonsmokers and employees. As a result, the law — in its present form — looks ridiculously unfair.

The Senate should either put strength back into the bill by removing loopholes, or reject it.