

## **Your Capitol Voice** **Representative Jeff Kaufmann**

Last Monday was the most dangerous trip to Des Moines I have ever experienced. After nearly 6 hours of white-out, drifts, and ice, I arrived at the Capitol wondering why I did what I just did. There were over 150 cars and trucks in the ditch.

After delaying a vote on a statewide smoking ban, the debate came suddenly last Tuesday and the bill passed 56-44. As I stated in several interviews last week, this was one of the most hypocritical votes in my four years in Des Moines. Casinos (who employ about 10,000 workers in Iowa) were exempted from the law. I believe that this reflects the state's dependence on gambling money and the amount of campaign dollars contributed by casinos to targeted candidates.

I strongly supported an amendment to remove the casinos exemption and it failed on a close vote. After this, I was a "no" and will continue to be a "no." This sets up an unfair advantage for the casinos. (The restaurants and hotels owned by the casinos are also exempt.) If the outcry I am hearing is being heard by other legislators, expect the Senate to change the bill significantly. Favoring the gambling industry so blatantly and so obviously for money is why so many people are disillusioned with politics.

The bill also regulates farmers in their own tractors on their own land. This is an overreach of the intent of the bill in my opinion. The irony is that some of the very legislators favoring this part of the bill will end up not supporting impending legislation to make it more difficult for government to condemn a person's farm, home, or small business.

I am supportive of legislation that restricts smoking in public places, but I believe this bill is ill-advised, hypocritical, and intrusive on property rights. I would like to hear from all of you because I will likely see an amended form again.

This week I will bring you my survey results for six more questions. Last week I received about 50 more surveys so that brings my total to almost 400! Thank you. I personally read every survey.

6. The sixth question dealt with concerns facing Iowa families. Every person was asked to choose two. Here are the results:

Affordable health insurance	34%
High taxes	25%
Lack of good-paying jobs	19%
Saving for college tuition	8%
Declining quality of public education	8%
Cost/availability of daycare	4%
Unsafe neighborhoods	3%

8. 74% of you believe state government is doing too many things that should be left to the private sector, while 26% believe state government should do more.
9. Regarding property tax relief, 40% want the state general fund to pay for more education costs in order to lower property taxes, 33% want to limit the growth of property taxes to inflation, and 27% want the public to vote on every tax increase.
10. 87% want some form of performance-based pay for teachers (as opposed to seniority).
11. 73% of you do not like the idea of mandating Iowans to purchase health insurance.
12. Regarding our law prohibiting sex offenders from living 2000 feet from a school or childcare facility, 56% want the law left alone. 29% said to change the law due to enforcement problems, and 15% want it repealed.

Next week I will present the results from the final six questions.

Capitol Visitors: Keith Stanley, Carol Wade, Mark Anderson, Lori Brown, Wilton;  
Tim Drewelow, Lowden.

#### **Listening Post Schedule**

<b>March 1</b>	<b>9 am</b>	<b>Student Center, Muscatine Community College</b>
	<b>1 pm</b>	<b>Bennett American Legion</b>
<b>March 8</b>	<b>1 pm</b>	<b>Community Room, Wilton</b>

Please contact me with questions or opinions.

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