

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

It was a relief to arrive home safely last Thursday after another four-hour drive from Des Moines on a very dangerous interstate.

I also want to invite anyone with a strong opinion about the smoking ban to contact me at the number or address at the end of the column. I have received over 150 messages with a wide variety of opinions.

In a bipartisan manner we passed a bill last week that would exempt from state taxation your checks that will arrive from the federal government as part of their stimulus package. These checks will range from \$300 to \$600 dollars. I believe this is good policy, but it has a limited effect.

We did, however, miss a great opportunity to do something much more substantial for small and large businesses in this state. Last month, the federal government also passed legislation to give a bonus depreciation that would allow a business to take another 50% of depreciation on a purchase made this year. This has been a common tool used by both parties to stimulate the economy.

In the House last week, we debated a bill that would couple state tax law to this federal initiative. Bonus depreciation does not just apply to farmers but to all businesses, large and small, who use the depreciation schedule on our income tax. All of the business groups, including those representing small businesses exclusively, were supportive of coupling state and federal law.

Why do this now? If Iowa does not couple to this federal initiative, then the savings created by the federal change will result in higher Iowa income taxes. (Estimates are as high as 30 million this year.) The bill failed on a party-line vote. At one point we had bipartisan support but then at the time of the debate the majority party voted “no” as a block.

Their stated justification for not passing this was not enough revenue in the budget. My response is that revenues are at their highest in decades. If not now, then when? Unlike some tax policies that do favor large businesses, this policy would have saved Main Street business and farmers thousands of dollars, hopefully stimulating more economic activity. I shake my head to think that at a time of incredibly high revenue, why we wouldn't do something for our Iowa economic climate. I heard from many small businesses in my District and despite political rhetoric, this would have helped many marginal businesses.

Finally, I present to you the final six questions from my survey including two questions with very close results. Here are the totals of your opinions. Thank you so very much for all of this valuable feedback.

13. 52% of respondents favored voting by mail. While 48% believed there was too much opportunity for fraud.

14. Regarding the carrying of a concealed weapon, 57% believe it was a personal right after a background check.
15. 68% of you favored the ability of a **local** government to ban smoking in public places within city limits. I did **not** ask about a statewide ban which is the current issue.
16. 72% of you believe that revenue from the increased tobacco tax should be spent on health care.
17. 51% favored continued subsidies for the ethanol and biodiesel industry, while 49% did not.
18. Finally 76% were against allowing the children of undocumented immigrants to attend universities at an in-state tuition rate.

Capitol Visitors: Jerry Anderson, Carol Bradley, West Liberty; Rick Laue and Rick Crittenden and 19 North Cedar High School government students. (I enjoyed meeting this great group of young people, including four international students.)

#### **Listening Post Schedule**

<b>March 8</b>	<b>1 pm</b>	<b>Wilton Community Room</b>
<b>March 15</b>	<b>9 am</b>	<b>Mechanicsville Library</b>
	<b>1 pm</b>	<b>Clarence City Hall</b>

Please contact me with your opinions or questions.

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