

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

Basham Press Release

P.O. Box 30036 • Lansing • Michigan • 48909-7536 • 517-373-7800 • Fax: 517-373-9310
E-mail: senrbasham@senate.michigan.gov • www.senate.mi.gov/basham



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Dec. 10, 2008

Contact: Sen. Ray Basham
Phone: (517) 373-7800

Basham Named to Conference Committee to Finalize Smokefree Workplace Legislation

Basham, Colleagues Charged with Finding a Solution by Year's End

LANSING, Mich.—Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor) was named to the Conference Committee on House Bill 4163, the House version of Senator Basham's smokefree workplace legislation, today by Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop (R-Rochester). He will be joined on the committee by Senators Alan Cropsey (R-DeWitt) and Alan Sanborn (R-Richmond) and Representatives Brenda Clack (D-Flint), Andy Meisner (D-Ferndale) and Dave Hildenbrand (R-Lowell).

"The public support for this commonsense issue continues to grow, and I urge everyone to let these legislators know how important passing this bill into law is," said Basham. "I'm looking forward to working with my colleagues to hammer out a law that will protect the health and well-being of all Michigan citizens."

Senator Basham has been working in the Michigan Legislature to make Michigan workplaces, including bars and restaurants, smokefree since 2000. The current law won't change unless both chambers agree on the same version of legislation. If the bill is not passed by the end of the year, it will go back to square one and have to be reintroduced next year. It is up to the members of the Conference Committee to reach a compromise between competing versions of the legislation. The first meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 15, 2008, at 10:00 a.m.

"A healthy future for all of Michigan is in our hands, but we only have a few days left to act and make Michigan workplaces smokefree," Basham said. "I hope my colleagues will realize the importance of protecting all Michigan workers, and act swiftly to do so."

Every day, thousands of Michigan residents who work in bars, restaurants, offices and factories are involuntarily subjected to secondhand smoke. According to the American Cancer Society, secondhand smoke is the third leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing 38,000 to 65,000 nonsmokers every year. A study conducted at the University of California, Berkeley found that food service workers are approximately 50% more likely to develop lung cancer than the general public, because many are exposed to secondhand smoke at work. Thirty-four states have already passed similar legislation to protect their workers from deadly exposure to secondhand smoke, including Ohio, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota.

###