

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

Basham Press Release

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Basham Renews Effort for Smokefree Workplace Legislation

Basham continues to fight for Michigan workers, strives to rebuild momentum by creating Smokefree Air Caucus

LANSING, Mich.—During Senate session today, Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor) reintroduced legislation that will create smokefree workplaces in Michigan. The new bill is Senate Bill 114. During 2008, both the House and Senate passed versions of smokefree workplace legislation, but were not able to come to an agreement before the close of the 2007-2008 legislative session. Basham has been fighting for smokefree workplaces for over a decade and will continue to make this issue a priority as the new legislative year begins.

“We simply cannot ignore the health implications associated with secondhand smoke any longer,” said Basham. “With the recent studies that confirm going smokefree does not negatively affect businesses, not to mention the ongoing findings on the dangers of cigarette smoke, there is no reason to prolong action on this issue. We need to do what’s best for the people of this state and go smokefree, and we need to do it now.”

Basham recently announced that he will be creating a bicameral, bipartisan Smokefree Air Caucus and will ask all lawmakers to sign a pledge that they will work on the smokefree workplaces issue. He also plans to share information with the public about who signs the pledge, as well as who does not, in an effort to hold the legislature accountable for protecting the health of Michigan workers.

“People have the right to know who is fighting for their well-being and who isn’t,” said Basham. “By implementing a Smokefree Air Caucus, lawmakers can transcend party lines and unite to show their commitment to making Michigan the next smokefree state in the United States.”

This month marks the 45th anniversary of the Surgeon General’s report citing cigarette smoking as the principal cause of lung cancer and cancer of the larynx. Forty-five years after that initial announcement, we know even more about the dangers of smoking to our health. Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at a greater risk of developing asthma, and the New York Times recently reported that chemicals clinging to hair and fabric from cigarette smoke also pose a danger to young children, even if the air is clear. In Colorado, after the city of Pueblo instituted smokefree workplaces, hospitalizations from heart attacks dropped 41% in three years.

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