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Reps. Propose Changes to Smoking Ban

(DES MOINES)—Reps. Jeff Kaufmann (R-Wilton) and Nick Wagner (R-Marion) have recently filed legislation to change the smoking ban. House File 358 relates to exemptions under the Smokefree Air Act which was passed in 2008.

Under the current law, gaming floors in casinos are exempt from the smoking ban, however bars are subject to the ban. The Republicans' bill requires bars and gaming floors be treated the same.

“This bill is about basic fairness,” said Rep. Wagner. “When the smoking ban was created, it created an unfair situation between bars and casinos. This bill will no longer give preferential treatment to casinos.”

The representatives also cited concerns over the powerful gaming lobby as a reason for filing the legislation.

“It seems as if some legislators have stopped listening to their constituents and only have ears for the big lobbyists in Des Moines and that’s wrong,” said Rep. Kaufmann. “This bill gets back to Iowa common sense values and equality.”

The bill has been assigned to the Commerce Committee where it will be assigned to a subcommittee.