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## Lawmakers say smoking ban should move quickly to governor's desk

*By DJ Slater  
Wausau Daily Herald*

State Senate Majority Leader Russ Decker, D-Weston, and State Rep. Donna Seidel, D-Wausau, are confident the state's proposed smoking ban will pass through all legislative bodies without much friction.

"There will be some people opposed to it, but I think they'll pass it," Decker said. "When legislators (both Democrat and Republican) say they are on board, that basically sets the path for passing."

State lawmakers reached a compromise Wednesday with smoking advocates regarding a statewide ban that would prohibit smoking at nearly all Wisconsin workplaces starting on July 5, 2010.

The bill first will go through a Senate committee and Assembly committee, which both are expected to cast separate votes at 10 a.m. today to move it forward. If successful, the bill will go to both legislative houses on Wednesday. Gov. Jim Doyle's signature would make it law.

Even with bipartisan support, Seidel said anything can happen on the Senate and Assembly floors.

"It's never over until it's over," Seidel said. "We know we have to be cautious as we move through the next few days.

"We may see amendments offered on the floor, but I think most of the people who've looked at this are satisfied with it," she said.

Seidel thinks that by Wednesday, the bill will remain as-is and be ready for Doyle's approval. If it gets there, Seidel is certain Doyle will sign it into law, especially when he issued a statement Wednesday expressing his satisfaction with the bill.

"I am pleased that an agreement has been reached in response to my call for a statewide smoking ban," Doyle said. "I wish the ban would be implemented sooner, but today we are one step closer to a statewide smoking ban that is fair and equitable."

State Reps. Jerry Petrowski, R-Stettin, Scott Suder, R-Abbotsford, and Don Friske, R-Merrill, did not return calls Thursday.

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