

# The Daily Telegram

## **EDITORIAL: Senate Dems logic against ban is smoke and mirrors**

*The Daily Telegram - 01/31/2008*

People looking forward to breathing a little easier the next time they stepped into their favorite eatery can rest assured that's not going to happen anytime soon in Wisconsin.

While the Wisconsin Restaurant Association favors the legislation, Senate Democrats snuffed out the idea when they failed to reach a compromise that would exempt taverns from the bill until 2011.

Rather than strike some sort of deal, legislators have once again dug in their heels to the detriment of the public who elected them to represent their interests.

Instead of letting a guy smoke a cigarette while he enjoys his beer in a local establishment for a little longer, legislators have essentially chosen to continue to expose children to secondhand smoke when Mom and Dad take them to a local eatery and allow restaurant workers to live with the exposure indefinitely.

And the best argument for snuffing out a bill designed to protect the public health came from a former bar owner and ex-president of the Tavern League of Wisconsin, undoubtedly because the league's scientists have irrefutable evidence that shows the ill health effects of secondhand smoke was manufactured to impoverish bar owners and big tobacco.

Sen. Roger Breske, D-Eland, called the science that has shown the risk of exposure to secondhand smoke "hogwash" because the bar where he worked was blue with smoke and "I'm still alive," Breske argued. "I'm 69."

The time has long past for legislators to set aside the partisan bickering and remember why they're in Madison — to work for the common good of the entire state, not just the special interests.