

Pennsylvania could expand smoking ban to get rid of exemptions

State Rep. Mario Scavello proposes expansion of Clean Indoor Air Act

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HARRISBURG, Pa. —Smoking is currently banned in 95 percent of public establishments in Pennsylvania. State Rep. Mario Scavello wants to make it 100 percent.

The Monroe County Republican proposes expanding the Clean Indoor Air Act to include all restaurants, casinos, tobacco shops, clubs and bars. The expanded ban would also impact dining al fresco on the deck or sidewalk of a restaurant.

"We shouldn't be requiring employees in casinos, bars and other industries to face health risks associated with second-hand smoke any longer," said Scavello.

The current state law that was passed in 2008 allows exemptions for alcohol-serving establishments that make less than 20 percent of their revenue from food sales, as well as casino floors and private clubs and bars. Nearly 3,000 establishments across Pennsylvania are exempt from the no-smoking law under those guidelines. **(To see a full list – link to <http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=514&objID=557678&mode=2>)**

Scavello wants a complete ban with no exceptions. Some smokers say they're feeling targeted by the idea of an expanded smoking ban.

"I say no. I'm not for that. I mean, outside is outside. If you got them, smoke them," said Ken Thornton.

"I do feel like an outcast when someone gives me a weird look smoking a cigarette in public walking down the street," said Aaron Robenseifner.

Scavello says he'd like to begin discussions on the bill in the fall and hopes to pass it early next year. It will likely be opposed by casinos, taverns and the tobacco industry.

<http://www.wtae.com/news/local/pennsylvania-could-expand-smoking-ban-to-get-rid-of-exemptions/-/9681086/20454952/-/pogumj/-/index.html>