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Editorial: Michigan lawmakers should do their duty and decide on smoking ban proposal

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State Sen. Tupac Hunter, D-Detroit, has proposed a well-worn solution to the legislative logjam on a workplace smoking ban in Michigan: Let voters decide the issue for themselves. But the reason we send representatives to Lansing is to make these sorts of decisions, not to kick the can back to the people.

Republicans say nothing less than a full ban would be fair, while Democrats seek exceptions for bingo halls, smoke shops and the Detroit casinos. If Hunter's legislative referendum is passed by both the House and Senate and signed by Gov. Jennifer Granholm, a full ban on workplace smoking will be presented to voters on the November 2010 statewide ballot. If passed, it will become part of the Michigan Constitution.

But our lawmakers could make this decision among themselves without fiddling with our constitution.

Michiganians elect politicians to make the choices that we're too busy working, raising families and paying taxes to make. If our legislators can't fill that basic role, perhaps it is their futures, and not the future of workplace smoking, that should be on the line on the 2010 ballot.



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