



SENATOR
JAMES LEWIS
116TH INDIANA GENERAL ASSEMBLY ★ SENATE DISTRICT 45

NEWS RELEASE

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Lewis announces 2010 legislative survey results

INDIANAPOLIS –State Senator James Lewis (D-Charleston) recently announced the results of his 2010 Legislative Survey. Questionnaires were mailed to households throughout Senate District 45 and made available on his website in December 2009. Lewis sought input from his constituents on a variety of issues that were anticipated to come before the 2010 General Assembly.

Texting while driving is one of the major legislative issues being discussed in the 2010 session. Indiana law currently prohibits drivers under the age of 18 from using any type of mobile communications device while driving except to make 911 emergency calls. This issue will now come before the Senate under House Bill 1279, which was approved by the Indiana House of Representatives. The bill would make texting while driving for all Indiana drivers a Class C infraction, with exceptions for hands-free or voice-operated devices. Eighty-two percent of respondents said they support the measure to expand the law to prohibit text messaging by all drivers, while 18 percent said they oppose it.

Legislative redistricting is another major issue in this year's session. Respondents were asked whether they support or oppose establishing an independent commission to advise the General Assembly on legislative redistricting in 2011 and in the future. Fifty-five percent of those that responded said they support the measure, while 45 percent said they oppose. At issue in the ongoing debate is whether further study is needed before implementing an independent commission. Lewis and other members of the Senate Democrats have proposed the immediate creation of a nonpartisan commission for legislative redistricting.

Respondents were asked whether they support or oppose the retail sale of alcohol on Sundays. Sixty-three percent of respondents indicated that they oppose the measure and 37 percent indicated they support it. When asked if they support or oppose expanding the retail sale of cold beer to convenience and grocery stores, 62 percent responded in opposition, while 38 percent responded in support. The retail sale of alcohol on Sundays and cold beer sales do not appear to have enough support to move through the legislature this year.

Respondents were also asked whether they support or oppose moving all municipal elections to an even-year cycle. Seventy-three percent of those that responded said they support the measure and 27 percent said they want to keep the current elections cycle. This provision is not actively moving through the General Assembly, but several election-related bills are, including one that would move all school board elections to the general election cycle beginning in 2010.

For the complete survey results and more information on Senator Lewis please visit www.senatedemocrats.IN.gov.

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