Assembly Discusses Smoking Ban Ballot Question

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Brianna Gibbs/KMXT

In Kodiak, whether or not an indoor public place allows smoking is up to the discretion of the owner, but that might change this fall. During Thursday night’s work session the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly discussed the possibility of an ordinance that would ban smoking inside any public building.

“Looking at the health benefits along and what’s right," he said. "I was looking at it from a nuisance point of view and in research is when I started realizing how dire the effects of second hand smoke really are.”

That’s Assemblyman Aaron Griffin, who introduced the ordinance. Griffin is a fire captain on the Coast Guard base, and said that role has helped contribute to his understanding of second-hand smoke.

-- (Non Smoking 2 :22 “And it dawned on me that, I work in an industry that we monitor atmospheres as part of our job. And if I at the fire department took a sampling of smoke filled atmospheres, I by OSHA regulation would have to put on an air pack to breathe.”)

Griffin said the most alarming thing to him while researching a non-smoking ordinance was the fact that the borough has no regulation barring smoking in commercial, in-home daycare centers. He said that absolutely needs to change, but his goal would be to have an all-encompassing smoking ordinance. Basically he said he would like to see smoking banned from bars, restaurants and any other indoor public space.

-- (Non Smoking 3 :31 “So my intention with bringing this forward, and while I’m going to work on what the final ordinance would look like, is that we put it up for referendum. And while it is in our powers as an assembly to enact this, I think it’s proper to put it before the voters and let them decide if they want a smoke free commercial environment or not.”)

Assemblywoman Louise Stutes said she was pleased with Griffin’s suggestion to put the matter before the community.

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(Non Smoking 4 :20 “I’m a non-smoker, and I’m happy to be in a non-smoking environment. And I’m happy to hear you say that I think it needs to go before a vote of the people. Because I believe that the people need to make a decision like that, as opposed to seven of us here on the assembly deciding for the whole community.”)

The assembly first needs to approve the ballot measure before August 15 for it to appear on the October ballot. Griffin said he would work on the measure and present it to the assembly in the near future.

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