

BRIEFS
STATE

INDIANAPOLIS
Proposal: Ax sales tax on college textbooks

College students and their parents would not have to pay sales tax on textbooks under a proposal that the House Education Committee approved unanimously Wednesday.

Some college students said they could use a break, no matter how small, on costly books for classes.

"It benefits students all over the state of Indiana," said Jimmy Cox, a Purdue student from Sellersburg and member of the Purdue Student Government.

The bill covers only textbooks required for undergraduate courses at accredited colleges, and only students and their parents could get the break on sales tax.

Rep. Joe Micon, D-West Lafayette, said college textbooks can cost up to \$1,200 a year. Eliminating the state's 6 percent sales tax on \$1,000 worth of books would save a student \$60.

Eliminating the sales tax on textbooks would cost the state about \$5.5 million in lost revenue in the next fiscal year, according to the Legislative Services Agency.

The proposal has a fiscal impact, so it likely will have to clear the House Ways and Means Committee before moving forward.

INDIANAPOLIS
House panel approves fireworks measure

Counties, cities and towns in Indiana could restrict or outright ban the use of fireworks except during three days of the year under legislation endorsed by a state Senate committee Wednesday.

The bill approved 9-1 by the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee and sent to the full Senate would be a major change to a law enacted last year that many legislators hoped would end years of debate about the sale and use of fireworks in Indiana.

That law permits the use of fireworks every day from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m., with an extension to midnight on holidays such as the Fourth of July and New Year's. It requires they be shot off on the user's property or another's with the owner's permission and imposes a fee on fireworks purchases that is used for firefighter training.

The law was meant to end a previous system that allowed people to buy fireworks by signing a form promising to set them off out of state or in areas designated for their use. Critics said it was a sham because it was largely ignored, rarely enforced and essentially made criminals out of ordinary residents.

But residents and officials from several cities have complained about the new law, saying it has led to an increase in fireworks use and people are shooting them off early in the morning.

INDIANAPOLIS
Estate tax changes added to minimum wage bill

A bill that would raise the state's minimum wage now includes a provision to lessen the impact of the inheritance tax.

Democrats have been pushing for a bill to increase Indiana's minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$7.50 an hour by 2008, but Republicans voted against the proposal in its first committee hearing last week.

On Wednesday, during the bill's hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, lawmakers added the inheritance tax measure, which many Republicans support.

But the addition of that proposal did not bring the minimum wage bill any GOP votes. The committee approved the bill 14-10, with Democrats voting for it and all Republicans voting against it. The bill's original author, Rep. John Day, D-Indianapolis, did not vote.

The amended proposal would change how much inheritance children or other descendants could receive tax free. Currently, the first \$100,000 is exempt, but the amended bill would bump that threshold to \$200,000.

INDIANAPOLIS
Religious leaders back \$1 cigarette tax hike

A group of religious leaders sent a letter to lawmakers Wednesday calling on them to increase the state cigarette tax by \$1 per pack and use the money for anti-smoking and other health programs.

The letter signed by three Indianapolis rabbis and regional leaders for Roman Catholics, United Methodists, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), American Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists and Episcopalians, among others, was sent to members of the General Assembly.

The letter urged legislators to provide the federally recommended level of funding of \$35 million per year to Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation and to dedicate remaining revenue from the tax hike to expanding access to health care for those who lack insurance.

Bill would require buckling up in trucks

Measure to remove seat-belt exemption for pickups and SUVs endorsed by House committee

By MIKE SMITH
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

INDIANAPOLIS

Drivers and passengers in pickup trucks, SUVs and other vehicles with Indiana truck plates no longer would be exempt from the state's seat-belt law under a bill endorsed by a House committee Wednesday.

After hearing emotional testimony from family members of those killed in crashes, the House

Transportation Committee endorsed the bill 9-1. It next goes to the House Ways and Means Committee for consideration of possible amendments that would change how money from truck-plate registrations is distributed for road construction and repairs.

Current law requires that front-seat occupants in cars be buckled up. Back-seat passengers who are age 16 and younger are required to wear seat belts or be in child-restraint devices. But the law

exempts occupants 16 and older in pickups and other truck-plated vehicles, including SUVs and minivans, from having to buckle up.

The bill sponsored by Rep. Peggy Welch, D-Bloomington, would require virtually everyone in cars and truck-plated vehicles to be buckled up. There would still be some exceptions, including occupants in trucks being used on a farm, or newspaper- and mail-delivery vehicles.

Bills to remove the exemptions for pickups and SUVs have passed the Republican-controlled Senate at least three times in recent years but have never gotten out of the House. Among other things, opponents have said the bill is an example of government intruding too far into citizens' freedom of choice.

Donald McNamara, a regional administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, said Indiana and

Georgia were the only two states with primary seat-belt laws that did not require seat-belt use in pickups. If Indiana did, it would be eligible for an additional \$15.7 million in federal money for highway safety programs or road improvements made for safety reasons.

McNamara said that in 2005 711 occupants of passenger cars or light trucks (pickups, SUVs or vans) were killed in crashes, with 46.8 percent of them unrestrained.

50% off

SEASONAL HEAT



Let's Build Something Together™

OFFER INCLUDES ALL: GAS AND ELECTRIC FIREPLACES • GAS LOGS • STOVES • FIREPLACE ACCESSORIES AND MAINTENANCE • VENT-FREE SPACE HEATERS • INDOOR KEROSENE HEATERS AND ACCESSORIES • PORTABLE ELECTRIC HEATERS • CONSTRUCTION HEATERS

While supplies last. Prices as marked. In-stock products only. Selections vary by store. See store for details.

20% off

SPECIAL ORDER CARPET

Discount applies to carpet only. Discount excludes in-stock carpet, all carpet pad and install services. Cannot be combined with any other offers or applied to prior purchases. Offer valid now through 2/3/07. Discount taken at register. See stores for details.

20% off

ALL CORDLESS POWER TOOL COMBO KITS AND COMPRESSOR KITS

Discount taken at register. Offer applies to in-stock items only. Special Order tools are not included. Offer valid 1/25/07-1/28/07. See store for details.



SPECIAL VALUE!

now **\$219** was \$289

PLUS 20% off!

Discount taken at register.

18-Volt Firestorm 8-Piece Cordless Combo Kit • Kit includes drill, jig, reciprocating, circular, sander, vac, radio charger and light • Free silver battery included #2501

20% off

ALL GAS & ELECTRIC SNOWBLOWERS AND SNOWBLOWER ACCESSORIES

Prices as marked. Selections vary by store. Limited quantities. While supplies last. See store for details.

zero

payments and interest for 12 months

if paid in full within 12 months* on ANY MAJOR APPLIANCE

purchases of \$299 or more made on your Lowe's Consumer Credit Card 1/18/07 through 2/1/07. See store or bottom of page for details.



Also get limited-time values 1/25/07 - 1/28/07



SPECIAL VALUE!
now **\$38⁸⁸**
was \$47⁹⁷
4-9' Custom Closet White Organizer
• Fits any closet 4-9' wide #108401



58¢ each
12" x 12" Beige Ceramic Tile
• Selection may vary by market #49050, 65338, 188333



SPECIAL VALUE!
now **\$4⁹⁹**
7/16" x 4' x 8' OSB
• Use for roof and wall construction #12212



Trusted by pros 4-to-1



SPECIAL VALUE!
now **\$42** was \$49⁹⁷
Werner 3-Step Project Ladder with Platform and Project Tray
• 250 lb. load capacity #225491



SPECIAL VALUE!
now **\$24** was \$34⁹⁶
2.0 HP (Peak) 4-Gallon Wet/Dry Vac
#246084



SKIL
now **SPECIAL VALUE!**
\$59⁹⁷ was \$79⁹⁷
10.8-Volt Lithium Ion Cordless Drill/Driver Kit
#11994

For the Lowe's nearest you, call 1-800-993-4416 or visit us online at Lowe's.com

Prices may vary after January 28, 2007 if there are market variations. *Was" prices in this advertisement were in effect on January 18, 2007, and may vary based on Lowe's Every Day Low Price policy. See store for details regarding product warranties. We reserve the right to limit quantities. *Applies to single-receipt, in-store Major Appliance purchases of \$299 or more made 1/18/07 through 2/1/07 on a Lowe's Consumer Credit Card account. No monthly payments will be required and no finance charges will be assessed on this promotional purchase if you pay the following in full within 12 months: (1) the promotional purchase amount, and (2) any related optional credit insurance/debt cancellation charges. If you do not, finance charges will be assessed on the promotional purchase amount from the date of the purchase and monthly payments will be required. Standard account terms apply to non-promotional purchases. APR is 21% (15.48% for purchases of \$2,000 or more). Min. finance charge is \$1.00. Offer is subject to credit approval. Excludes Business Credit Accounts and Lowe's Project Card Accounts. ©2007 by Lowe's. All rights reserved. Lowe's and the gable design are registered trademarks of LF, LLC. 070192 00170192/046.064.127