

A Publication of the Public Life Foundation of Owensboro

# PUBLIC LIFE *Advocate*

May 2010 – Volume 7, Issue 2  
Owensboro, Kentucky

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*"Examining the tradeoffs"*

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### Report on downtown survey

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*AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting®*

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## HILLCREST GOLF COURSE

Best use for golf, a park, or a subdivision?

MAY 20, 2010 • 5:30 P.M.

Owensboro Community & Technical College  
Advanced Technology Center Multipurpose Room

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# Health Care Reform

## Opposing views of two Kentucky Congressmen

The following points/counterpoints on health care reform from two Kentucky Congressmen (including Owensboro-Daviess County's representative) were extracted from recently published articles or statements released by them.

### IN OPPOSITION



**Representative Brett Guthrie**  
Republican from Bowling Green

We need health care reform. We need to make health care more affordable and more accessible. However, I oppose the bill the majority pushed through Congress.

It is just a massive spending bill costing \$1.2 trillion over the next 10 years.

The legislation does not address the No. 1 issue associated with health care reform – lowering costs for all Americans.

### IN SUPPORT



**Representative John Yarmuth**  
Democrat from Louisville

Since Teddy Roosevelt first called for health reform, leaders from both sides of the aisle have worked to fix a broken health care system.

It will lower the national debt by \$1.3 trillion over the next two decades.

Without health reform, by 2016 annual health care premiums for the average family of four will be \$24,000.

**IN OPPOSITION**

**Representative Brett Guthrie**  
Republican from Bowling Green

Seniors will be getting a half-trillion dollar cut in Medicare, including a \$202.3 billion cut to the Medicare Advantage program. For those who live on a fixed income, the possibility of having to pay more or see their benefits reduced is very worrisome.

Beginning in 2014, Americans will be required to buy health insurance or pay a penalty. Families will see higher taxes and insurance premiums, including the 46 percent of families who make less than \$66,150 who will be forced to pay the individual mandate penalty.

The new law includes a tax on health insurance providers that will cause costs to go up and subjects more income to the Medicare tax, taking even more money out of the pockets of middle class families.

An estimated 16,500 new IRS auditors, agents and other employees may be needed to collect the hundreds of billions of dollars in new taxes and penalties levied on the American people.

**IN SUPPORT**

**Representative John Yarmuth**  
Democrat from Louisville

Much of the savings from insurance reform will be invested into Medicare with a six percent increase. The Trust Fund will be extended from 2007 to 2026. The bill also offers free preventive and wellness care for seniors, increases coordination of care, and older citizens will retain their right to see the doctor of their choice.

Prescription drug costs will also be lower for the elderly as we permanently close the “doughnut hole” in Medicare Part D that left millions of seniors with no drug coverage. There will be a \$250 rebate this year and 50 percent discounts on name brand drugs beginning in 2011.

32 million Americans (10,560 in Owensboro-Daviess County) will receive new, private health coverage. When reform is fully implemented, the ranks of Americans with health insurance will increase to more than 95 percent. 176,000 Louisville families (23,200 Owensboro-Daviess County families) will also receive tax credits and stipends to help pay for the health care plan of their choosing.

The new law bans insurance companies from denying benefits, hitting policyholders with huge premium increases and cancelling a policy because of “pre-existing” conditions.

**IN OPPOSITION**

**Representative Brett Guthrie**  
Republican from Bowling Green

There are \$52 billion in new taxes and fines on employers who cannot afford to pay their employees' health care or provide government approved plans, imposed at a time when unemployment is 9.7 percent.

Small businesses, who are already struggling in this economy, will now have a hard time hiring new employees, continuing to provide for the ones they currently have and an even more difficult time maintaining part-time staff, leaving those most in need of jobs with fewer options.

The liberal majority in Congress was not willing to work in a bi-partisan way or listen to the will of the American people. The only bi-partisan thing about this bill was the vote against it.

The reconciliation bill only made matters worse; it increased cuts to Medicare, raised taxes even more, cut critical payments to community hospitals and included a government takeover of student loans.

I supported an alternative to this bill that focused first on reducing the cost of health care for every American. Our solution showed that it is achievable to address many of the health care issues Americans are concerned about without such terrible consequences.

Our solution, which included coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions, allowed parents to keep their children on their health plans through age 25, tackled meaningful medical malpractice reform and allowed Americans to purchase insurance across state lines, did so without raising taxes, destroying jobs, cutting Medicare, or burdening our children and grandchildren with trillions in new debt.

**IN SUPPORT**

**Representative John Yarmuth**  
Democrat from Louisville

The majority of small businesses saw their premiums more than double this decade. More than 28 million uninsured Americans now own or work for small businesses (approximately 9,240 in Owensboro-Daviess County). The new law will remove this enormous burden from business by making insurance affordable for their employees and immediately providing tax credits to employers who choose to provide coverage.

The new law includes many Republican ideas: the removal of the public option, allowing insurance companies to compete across state lines, tort reform and abortion restrictions.

The reconciliation process removed special deals for individual states and reflected a hard fought compromise that addresses the most pressing needs of the American people.

Health reform is based on American free market principles, will guarantee adequate and affordable health care to every citizen, rein in costs, expand consumer choice and lift the burden from small businesses.

**Sources:**

Guthrie, Brett "Health care reform package overspends, doesn't deliver," *Messenger-Inquirer*, April 18, 2010 and "Health care law does more harm than good," *Bowling Green Daily News*, April 3, 2010.

Yarmuth, John "Congressman Yarmuth's Statement on Health Care Reform," April 19, 2010 (<http://yarmuth.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=111&itemid=603>)





## Results of online survey: Your ideal downtown

To a great extent, the successful transformation of downtown Owensboro will have everything to do with our ability to attract a concentration of appealing businesses, services and attractions into existing buildings or new construction projects in the downtown area.

A total of 306 of our 1,178 readers (26 percent) responded to the survey. Who or what would they like to see occupy space or build new in our downtown?

Respondents indicated their preferences from 95 different ideas in six categories listed on the survey. They were also allowed to add their own ideas – and they did emphatically, suggesting 120 additional ideas.

Major public facilities (e.g., convention center, amphitheater, tennis complex, minor league baseball/multi-purpose stadium, water park, carousel, parks, etc.) were not the focus of the survey.

### What were the most popular ideas overall?

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Bookstore               | 14. Art gallery        |
| 2. Wine and cheese         | 15. Cinemas            |
| 3. Bakery                  | 16. Deli               |
| 4. Old Spaghetti Factory   | 17. Italian restaurant |
| 5. IMAX theater            | 18. Jazz club          |
| 6. Joe's Crab Shack        | 19. Panera Bread       |
| 7. Ice cream/soda fountain | 20. Starbucks          |
| 8. Seafood restaurant      | 21. Bars               |
| 9. Coffeeshop              | 22. Gift shop          |
| 10. Local/Kentucky crafts  | 23. Steakhouse         |
| 11. Newsstand              | 24. Antiques           |
| 12. Comedy club            | 25. Pangea             |
| 13. Great Harvest          |                        |

### What were the most popular ideas not listed – ideas that respondents added to the list on their own?

- |                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Indian restaurant    | 14. Chili's restaurant        |
| 2. Old Chicago Pizza    | 15. Chipotle                  |
| 3. Micro brewery & pub  | 16. Dave & Busters            |
| 4. P.J. Chang           | 17. Demos                     |
| 5. Barnes & Noble       | 18. Dollar theater            |
| 6. Baseball stadium     | 19. Dunkin' Donuts            |
| 7. Cheesecake Factory   | 20. Greek restaurant          |
| 8. Longhorn Steakhouse  | 21. Independent film arthouse |
| 9. Old Navy             | 22. Joseph Beth Booksellers   |
| 10. Outback restaurant  | 23. Texas Roadhouse           |
| 11. Skate park          | 24. U of L gifts              |
| 12. Turoni's restaurant |                               |
| 13. Bonefish restaurant |                               |

*97 additional ideas were suggested*

### What were the most popular ideas by category?

#### FOOD & DRINK

1. Bakery
2. Ice cream/soda fountain
3. Seafood restaurant
4. Coffeeshop
5. Deli
6. Italian restaurant
7. Steakhouse
8. Bar-b-q restaurant
9. Bagels
10. Food court
11. Pizza
12. Diner
13. Thai restaurant
14. Candy
15. Food vendors
16. Mexican restaurant
17. Burger
18. Donuts
19. Japanese restaurant
20. Cakes and pies
21. Chinese restaurant
22. Pancakes
23. Cafeteria

#### RETAIL

1. Bookstore
2. Wine and cheese
3. Local/Kentucky crafts
4. Newsstand
5. Art gallery
6. Gift shop
7. Antiques
8. Women's apparel
9. Street vendors
10. Greeting cards and gifts

11. Music
12. Grocery
13. Flowers
14. Men's apparel
15. Liquor
16. Children's apparel
17. Outlet mall
18. Shoes
19. Jewelry
20. Toys
21. Framing
22. Cigar store
23. Video/DVD
24. Furniture
25. UK gifts
26. Electronics
27. Pets

#### ENTERTAINMENT

1. IMAX theater
2. Comedy club
3. Cinemas
4. Jazz club
5. Bars
6. Bluegrass club
7. Bowling

#### SERVICES

1. Pharmacy
2. Barber shop
3. Hair salon
4. Fitness club
5. Dry cleaners
6. Photography
7. Shoe repair
8. Computers

### Specific local/area businesses/attractions you would like to see expand or relocate to downtown

1. Great Harvest
2. Panera Bread
3. Starbucks Coffee
4. Pangea
5. City Subs and Salads
6. Reid's
7. Old Hickory
8. Baker's Rack
9. Trunnel's
10. Moonlite Bar-b-q
11. Excursion's
12. The Earle
13. McDonald's
14. Allshops Hardware
15. Eight Ball

### Specific out of town businesses/attractions you would like to see expand to downtown Owensboro

1. Old Spaghetti Factory
2. Joe's Crab Shack
3. Rafferty's
4. Maker's Mark bar
5. Ruth Chris Steak House
6. Einstein Bagel
7. Carmichael Books
8. Jos. A. Bank
9. Matt's General Store
10. Bristol
11. Ear-X-Tacy
12. Men's Wearhouse

## What the survey may tell us

The survey indicates a strong interest in downtown: a 26 percent response on any survey is unusual and suggests high hopes for the future of downtown Owensboro.

Responses suggest activities that would enhance downtown vitality day and night, a gathering place and community focal point with a special interest in restaurants that could complement the expanded Smother's Park, River-

Park Center, museums, future convention center and more.

Respondents placed a high value on both local and chain businesses. Specialty retail seems to have an important place in this vision, without suggesting that downtown can compete with malls, major strip centers and big box stores.

There was also a sense that downtown, as a neighborhood, needs a convenient cluster of services, from hair salons to fitness centers, grocery store to pharmacies and dry cleaners.

If a market can be substantiated for even a portion of the food and drink, entertainment, retail and services endorsed for downtown through the survey, a fundamental challenge will be to find appealing space to attract and accommodate these uses. Moreover, the mixing and clustering of these uses, the proximity to other appealing and comple-

mentary tenants, and the predictability connected with nearby properties will be essential elements to a downtown business development and tenant mix plan.

This may underscore the importance of infill development, relocation of street front parking, and the transition of first floor space to retail, restaurant and services to attract and serve the general public. An effective downtown association will also be important in order to coordinate hours, promotions and more.

### Total Online Survey Vote Tally

Bookstore	199	Greeting cards and gifts	98	Shoes	57
Wine and cheese	175	Reid's	98	Jewelry	54
Bakery	161	Street vendors	98	Shoe repair	52
Old Spaghetti Factory	161	Bagels	97	Moonlite	51
IMAX theater	158	Maker's Mark bar	97	Donuts	50
Joe's Crab Shack	155	Music	97	Japanese	50
Ice cream/soda fountain	149	Grocery	96	Cakes and pies	49
Seafood	148	Hair salon	96	Excursions	49
Coffeeshop	145	Flowers	95	The Earle	48
Local/Kentucky crafts	145	Old Hickory	93	Chinese	47
Newsstand	145	Baker's Rack	91	Computers	45
Comedy club	139	Bluegrass club	91	McDonald's	45
Great Harvest	139	Food court	90	Pancakes	44
Art gallery	134	Pizza	87	Toys	43
Cinemas	133	Fitness club	84	Cigar store	42
Deli	133	Men's apparel	84	Framing	42
Italian	132	Liquor	83	Bowling	40
Jazz club	131	Ruth Chris Steak House	81	Bristol	40
Panera Bread	129	Diner	80	Jos. A. Bank	40
Starbucks Coffee	126	Children's apparel	73	Matt's General Store	40
Bars	124	Thai	73	Ear X Tacy	38
Gift shop	121	Dry cleaners	71	Cafeteria	37
Steakhouse	119	Outlet mall	71	Furniture	35
Antiques	115	Photography	71	Video/DVD	35
Pangea	115	Einstein Bagel	70	Electronics	33
Rafferty's	111	Carmichael Books	69	UK gifts	33
City Subs and Salads	110	Trunnel's	69	Men's Wearhouse	32
Women's apparel	104	Candy	67	Allshop's Hardware	31
Pharmacy	99	Food vendors	65	Pets	29
Barber Shop	98	Burger	57	Sporting goods	28
Bar-b-q	98	Mexican	57	Eight Ball	27

### Total Online Survey Vote Tally (continued)

Hardware	26	Candles, soaps	1	Nashville Music Scene	1
Cosmetics	24	Carrabbas Italian Grill	1	Neighborhood grocery	1
Office supply	24	Cell phone store	1	New Age Store	1
Indian	10	Cheeseburger in Paradise	1	Niko's	1
Old Chicago Pizza	7	Chick-fil-a	1	No smoking venues	1
Micro brewery & pub	5	Chico's	1	Noah's bagels	1
P J Chang	4	Cold Stone Creamery	1	Organic food store	1
Barnes & Noble	3	Collectibles (i.e. old maps, postcards, prints)	1	Organic Foods Market	1
Baseball stadium	3	Copy shop	1	Outdoors store (fishing, hiking)	1
Cheesecake Factory	3	Country music/variety show venue	1	Pancake Pantry	1
Longhorn Steakhouse	3	Country store	1	Plenty of free parking lots or garages	1
Old Navy	3	Dave & Buster's activity	1	Pool Hall	1
Outback	3	Day spa	1	Post Office	1
Skate park	3	Daymar College Group corporate offices	1	Pretty club room for meetings of 40 people	1
Turoni's	3	DDI	1	Public Works Theatre	1
Bonefish	2	Dillards	1	Rainforest Café	1
Chili's	2	Drive-In theater	1	Red Robin	1
Chipotle	2	DSW Shoes	1	Red Star Tavern	1
Dave & Busters	2	Fazoli's	1	Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory	1
Demos	2	Film festival	1	Ruby Tuesday	1
Dollar theatre	2	Fresh air garden dining	1	Sambuca's	1
Dunkin' Donuts	2	Gambling Spot	1	Sandwich shop	1
Greek	2	Gameworks	1	Shahi Dawat Royal Indian Cuisine	1
Independent film arthouse	2	Gap	1	Shaker's Pizza	1
Joseph Beth Booksellers	2	H&M Clothing	1	Skatepark	1
Texas Road House	2	Home cooked meals	1	Small book store	1
U of L gifts	2	Huge upgrade to children's museum	1	Small business	1
2nd Texas Roadhouse	1	I like existing restaurants	1	Smoke-free bar	1
50s & 60s music- not in a bar	1	Importswith clothing	1	Specialty boutiques	1
Acropolis	1	Indie Books	1	Specialty retail: yarn and crochet	1
Amphitheater (concerts)	1	Irish Rover	1	Sprouts Food Store	1
Aquarium	1	Jillian's	1	Subway	1
Arcade/Kid Zone	1	Krispy Kreme	1	Tea room	1
AT&T	1	Large farmers market with local produce	1	Techno-80s Club	1
Beyond the Brim	1	Lic's	1	The Crème	1
Biaggi's	1	Live music in restaurants (rock, 70s, easy listening)	1	Tim Horton's	1
Big River Grill	1	Live music venues	1	Trader Joe's	1
Bike Sales and Rentals	1	Logan's Roadhouse	1	Upscale boutiques	1
Blue Grass Store	1	Macaroni Grill	1	Vera Bradley	1
Book and Music Exchange	1	Mediterranean	1	Whole foods	1
Borders	1			Wyndall's Wonder Whip	1
Buca di Beppo	1				



# “We the People” 2010

## What topics would you like to see discussed?

Due to the positive response and encouragement from participants in the 2007 “We the People” AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting®, plans are underway for a follow-up mega event in October of this year.

Broad community support and participation is vital to a successful meeting. Project Manager Shelly Nichols has been recruiting volunteers to help with the overall planning, content and program development, outreach, technology, marketing, logistics and more.

Our 2007 event focused on five topics: education; community and economic development; environment; health and social services; and government.

Several focus group exercises have been held to identify the topic(s) that will be examined during this year’s event. Additional focus group meetings are scheduled, to be followed by meetings with community leaders, surveys, email blasts, Facebook promotions and other steps to ensure that broad public participation characterizes the topic selection process.

### **There are many ways you can be involved:**

Contact Shelly Nichols at 685-2652 or [shelly.nichols@plfo.org](mailto:shelly.nichols@plfo.org).

In the meantime, save the date:

### **October 23, 2010**

Owensboro Sportscenter ● 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

“We the People” 2010 ● AmericaSpeaks 21st Century Town Meeting®