



## No booth allowed for budget-discussion group

August 15, 2007

I read with interest the Aug. 13 article about all the vendors at the Varied Industries Building during the Iowa State Fair ("Variety of Vendors Pitch Products at Fair").

It was probably with more than the average interest, because for two straight years our nonprofit organization has been denied a booth in the building.

Fair officials claim that new organizations are considered every year, and some new people do get in, but it's not at all clear what the criteria for the selection are. One person makes the decision.

There is no committee, and from what we were told, no oversight. When we asked how many nonprofit groups have applied two years in a row and were denied a spot, we never got an answer. We were never told why we were turned down or how other groups get in. Not very transparent for a publicly funded organization.

Apparently it's more important to the State Fair to have vendors selling mops, hot tubs, T-shirts, and pots and pans than giving away unique novelties that promote discussion about our national budget priorities.

- Peggy Huppert,  
state director,  
Iowans for Sensible Priorities,  
Des Moines.