

IOWA HOUSE REPUBLICANS

April 21, 2022

IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

FY 2023 Budget Awaits Further Action

The elements of the Fiscal Year 2023 state budget remain under consideration in the Senate Appropriations Committee this week, as the nine budget bills passed earlier this session by the House have yet to be acted upon. The remaining budget bill – Standings – has yet to start its journey.

The Standings bill is a different type of budget bill, as it only addresses adjustments to appropriations that are set in the Iowa Code. The Code does not contain that many appropriations, and the Legislature annually adjusts only a few. In last year's Standings bill, just three changes were made to codified funding levels – non-public school transportation, funding for Area Education Agencies, and state funding for the Instructional Support Program. It is expected that these three levels will be addressed in this year's Standings bill, whenever it moves through the process.

The other significant portion of the Standings bill that appears every year is the corrections division. This section makes grammatical, numbering, and other corrections to bills that the General Assembly has already passed and sent to the Governor for final action.

Action on the Standings bill will not commence until agreement has been reached on the Fiscal Year 2023 General Fund budget as a whole.

As the budget awaits further action in the Senate, a large number of Iowans' priorities have already been addressed in the budget bills passed by the House.

Ensuring the safety of Iowans is always one of the highest priorities for House Republicans. That continues in this year's Justice Systems budget bill (House File 2559), as the House built upon last year's historic increases for the Department Corrections and Department of Public Safety. Funding for the state's prison system would be increased by \$7.1 million, and funding for the Iowa State Patrol and other state law enforcement agencies would rise by \$3.1 million.

Governor Reynolds has made fortifying Iowa's biofuels industry one of her top priorities for the 2022 session. While it awaits action in the Senate, the House passed the policy bill in early February, and followed that up with a financial commitment in the budget by increasing state funding for the Renewable Fuels Infrastructure Fund. That program, providing assistance to fuel stations to have the equipment to store and sell ethanol-blended gas and biodiesel, would receive a \$4.115 million increase in the Agriculture & Natural Resources budget bill (House File 2560).

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Another major priority for Iowans of all political persuasions has been finding ways to expand access to affordable housing throughout the state. House File 2564, the Economic Development budget bill, includes a new effort to rehabilitate existing housing stock. The program, run in conjunction with Habitat for Humanity, would invest \$1.5 million of state funds in rehabbing existing homes and bringing them up to 21st century standards.

Addressing the shortage of skilled workers remains a focus for the Legislature. This year’s Education appropriations bill (House File 2575) brings forth a new approach to encouraging students at Iowa’s three state universities to enter into these professions and stay in Iowa. The bill provides \$12 million to fund \$5,000 per year grants for juniors and seniors getting degrees in high need jobs or education. The grants would be paid out by semester, with the last payment coming after the student has worked for one year in the state of Iowa.

Improving Iowa’s mental health system is an effort that has been a top priority for the Legislature for several sessions. In this year’s Health and Human Services budget bill (House File 2578), the focus is on ways to expand access to mental health care in Iowa hospitals. The bill provides funding for the establishment of new daily coverage rates for higher-end psychiatric care. The adoption of these new rates would serve as an incentive for local hospitals to maintain or establish mental health units to serve patients locally, instead of only sending them to larger facilities or the state’s two mental health institutes.

Continuing the House’s focus on addressing Iowa’s workforce needs, the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund appropriations bill (House File 2579) provides additional funding for a number of “placemaking” programs. These quality of life programs are very popular in communities of all sizes around the state. The Community Attractions and Tourism program (CAT) would have its funding doubled to \$10 million under the House bill, as would the Great Places program for smaller communities. Funding for infrastructure projects at Iowa’s state parks would be tripled to \$6 million in Fiscal Year 2023 and funding for trails would be increased by \$1 million. Water trails and low head dams would receive a \$500,000 increase. A final piece of this effort is providing \$12 million to the Sports Tourism Fund to help bring additional permanent attractions to the state.

| BUDGET BILL STATUS | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| AS OF 12 PM, APRIL 20 | | | |
| Bill | Bill Number | Status | Last Action |
| Administration & Regulation | HF 2565 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/24/2022 |
| Agriculture & Natural Resources | HF 2560 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/23/2022 |
| Economic Development | HF 2564 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/24/2022 |
| Education | HF 2575 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/29/2022 |
| Health & Human Services | HF 2578 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 4/5/2022 |
| Judicial Branch | HF 2558 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/22/2022 |
| Justice Systems | HF 2559 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 3/22/2022 |
| Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund | HF 2579 | PASSED HOUSE; In Senate Approps | 4/5/2022 |
| Transportation | HF 2557 | PASSED HOUSE; On Senate Floor | 4/13/2022 |
| Standings | | | |

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

USDA Publicizes Wildlife Enhancement Program

On Monday, April 18, 2022, the United States Department of Agriculture Farm Services Agency (USDA-FSA) issued a press release announcing that this federal agency is welcoming new and modified proposals from conservation partners for the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) initiative, a part of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) focused on effectively managing wildlife habitat. USDA-FSA has expanded available practices under this initiative in response to feedback from partners.

Through SAFE, producers and landowners restore vital habitat in alignment with high-priority state wildlife conservation goals. Specifically, landowners establish wetlands, grasses, and trees. These practices are designed to enhance important wildlife populations by creating critical habitat and food sources. They also protect soil and water health by working as a barrier to sediment and nutrient run-off before they reach waterways.

SAFE is part of the Continuous CRP signup, and producers can begin enrolling in new or updated SAFE programs beginning October 1, 2022. Meanwhile, the Continuous and Grassland signups are currently open through May 13, 2022, and producers can learn more by contacting their local [USDA Service Center](#). To learn more about SAFE and its benefits, see the initiative's [fact sheet](#).

ISU Extension Announces Iowa Youth Crop Scouting Competition

On Wednesday, April 13, 2022, Iowa State University (ISU) Extension and Outreach issued a press release by announcing that registration is open for the [2022 Crop Scouting Competition for Iowa Youth](#), presented by the ISU Extension and Outreach Integrated Pest Management program and Iowa 4-H Youth Development. The 12th annual event will be held on July 28, 2022, at the Field Extension Education Laboratory, 1928 240th St., Boone. Middle school and high school students in Iowa completing grades 7-12 are invited to put their crop scouting skills to the test, competing against other youth teams from across the state. The goal of the event is to build awareness of integrated pest management in Iowa and to provide an opportunity for Iowa youth to learn crop scouting basics through hands-on learning and teamwork. The event includes a free lunch from Hickory Park.

During the competition, teams rotate between different crop plots at the field stations where they are evaluated on their knowledge and skills in crop scouting. Stations are run by ISU Extension and Outreach faculty and staff as well as ag industry professionals, giving students the opportunity to work next to and learn from experts. Potential topics include crop diseases, insects, disorders, weed identification, crop growth stages, cover crops, sprayer calibration and pesticide use. Youth also will complete a written exam on general principles and strategies of crop scouting and integrated pest management. The top four teams, based on points accrued from the field stations and exam, are eligible to win cash prizes. The top two teams will advance to the regional competition to compete against teams from six states. The regional competition will be held at Purdue University in September.

ISU Extension and Outreach has resources including field guides, publications and presentations to help each team prepare for the event. For more information, resources and to register, visit <https://www.ipm.iastate.edu/crop-scouting-competition-iowa-youth-2022>. [Watch a recap from last year's event](#).

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Commerce

ACA Transitional Policies Extended Indefinitely

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (“CMS”) recently announced that health insurers will be allowed to continue transitional policies for policy years beginning after October 1, 2022, and will remain in effect until CMS announces that all such coverage must come into compliance with the specified requirements.

The Iowa Insurance Division (“IID”) will enact the CMS guidance and will also allow transitional policies to remain in effect indefinitely. Fortunately, federal authorities have consistently provided flexibility to states every year since 2014.

Transitional policies provide access to healthcare coverage that is likely otherwise unaffordable. Currently, 58,295 Iowans have transitional policies in the individual and group markets. Year after year, Iowans have had the opportunity to enroll in ACA plans but many choose to stay in transitional plans to avoid the very high ACA rates, especially those in the individual market.

The structural flaws within the text of federal law make ACA plans unappealing to many younger, healthier Iowans. Iowa intends to permit viable health insurance options for those who have been priced out of ACA plans and appreciates CMS listening to input from Iowa to make the continuation of transitional plans available for the foreseeable future. Iowa, once again, calls on the federal government to permit additional flexibility to make changes that would make the ACA plans more attractive to younger, healthier Iowans.

(Contact: Ben Gentz, 1-3452)

Economic Growth

Enhance Iowa Board Awards Sports Tourism Grants

This month the Enhance Iowa Board awarded \$50,500 in Sports Tourism grants to a triathlon event in Clear Lake and a National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) men's basketball summit in Council Bluffs.

The TRI Clear Lake will take place May 28, 2022, and May 27, 2023 and has a total project budget of \$49,000. The board awarded the event \$24,500 for new marketing tactics including targeted and remarketing display ads, mobile location lookback, and YouTube TrueView. This marketing will be utilized to drive awareness and registrations within 90-360 miles of Clear Lake.

The NJCAA Rising All-Stars in Council Bluffs will take place July 18-21, 2022, and July 2023 and has a total project budget of \$80,000. The board awarded the event \$26,000 for marketing channels and social media. A concerted effort to contact college coaches in all 50 states will include email and traditional mailings.

The Sports Tourism program provides financial assistance for projects that market or promote sporting events in Iowa. Eligible sporting events include professional, collegiate and amateur level sporting events that occur in Iowa. Funding for the program was appropriated during the 2021 legislative session.

The Enhance Iowa Program provides financial incentives to communities for the construction of recreational, cultural, educational or entertainment facilities that enhance the quality of life in Iowa. To date, 99 Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grants have been awarded by the board, totaling \$31,508,183. The next Enhance Iowa Board meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2022.

(Contact: Kristi Kiou, 2-5290)

Differences Between the House and Senate Curriculum Transparency Bills

There has been a lot of back and forth as to what is in or is not in each chamber's curriculum transparency bills. What penalties are there? What does it require schools to do or not do? How does it impact school libraries? The list goes on. Below is a breakdown of what is in each bill and what penalties apply.

What does the House's plan require?

- School districts and charter schools must post the syllabus or written summary of the class.
- School districts and charter schools must state how the classes meet or exceed educational standards.
- School districts and charter schools must provide all the instructional materials used in the classroom.
- Schools will satisfy the above requirements by granting parental access to the classroom management platform.
- If materials are modified during the school year, the district will update the information by the end of the school week.
- Schools shall adopt a policy that includes a process for the parent or guardian to request that the student not be provided with certain instructional materials.
- School districts and charter schools shall make a list of all school library books available.
- Schools districts will satisfy the requirement by posting their catalogues online on the district's website.
- Schools must have protocols in place for the review of instructional materials and school library books with specific timelines on this process.
- Parents may opt their children out of library books.
- School districts must post teacher professional development and trainings on their website.

What does the Senate's plan require?

- School districts need to adopt policies that ensure the following rights are reserved to the parent/guardian of a minor child without obstruction or interference from the school district:
 - The right to know what the district is teaching the minor child including textbooks, books, articles, outlines, handouts, presentations, videos, and other similar materials.
 - The right to access and review information related to who is teaching the minor child, including guest lecturers and outside presenters.
 - The right to access and review information related to persons who contract with or receive moneys from the school district.
 - The right to access the minor child while the minor child is in school that a reasonable person would deem necessary to ensure the health and safety of the minor child, unless prohibited by court order.
 - The right to access and review all school records relating to the minor child, but school may prohibit access for the following:
 - The records relate to the minor child reporting the parent/guardian's violation of the law.
 - The district determines based on actual threats that the granting access may result in serious harm to the minor child.
 - Child abuse laws prohibit the record from being released.
 - The right to access and review information related to the collection and transmission of information related to the minor child including assessment information, documents created by the child, and teacher evaluations.
 - The right to access and review information necessary to ensure the accountability and transparency of the board.
 - The right to access and review information related the minor child's safety while at school.

- The school district shall not require any student to engage in any activity, including instruction, or any test, assessment, or other means of evaluation that involves sexually explicit material without the express prior written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- The district shall make every effort to prohibit a minor child from accessing sexually explicit material in the classroom on a device or through the school's internet.
- A district with an electronic library catalogue shall grant access to the parent or guardian. If there isn't an electronic catalogue, shall give parents/guardians access to the physical catalogue.
- The parent/guardian may provide notice to the district indicating what materials the minor won't be allowed to check out and the district shall not allow them to do so.
- If the district doesn't have an electronic catalogue, shall not allow minors to check out sexually explicit materials without prior written consent.
- District must receive the prior written consent of a student's parent/guardian before the following:
 - An activity that involves the collection, disclosure or use of personal information for purposes of marketing.
 - A survey/analysis/evaluation that reveals:
 - Political affiliations or beliefs of student or student's parents.
 - Mental or psychological problems of the student or their family.
 - Sex behavior or attitudes.
 - Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior.
 - Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom the student has close familial relationships.
 - Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of attorneys, physicians, or ministers.
 - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's family.
 - Income, except when required to determine eligibility for participation in a program or financial assistance.
 - Any nonemergency, invasive physical examination or screening that is required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school and scheduled in advance, and unnecessary to protect the immediate health and safety of the student.

What happens if a school does not comply under the House plan?

- If schools don't comply, the Dept. of Ed. can withhold or place restrictions on school funding.
- School districts may also be fined between \$500 and \$5000.
- The Department of Education shall provide notice to the Board of Educational Examiners indicating the licensed individual who violated the transparency requirements.

What happens if a school does not comply under the Senate plan?

- There are no direct financial penalties in regards to school funding or fines in the Senate's plan. Licensed individuals also face no penalties for violations. Any compliance issues may be dealt with in Phase I monitoring for accreditation.

Both plans get at what parents and guardians have access to in regards to what their student is being taught at schools. The House plan has more specific timelines, processes, and consequences if those are not followed. The Senate is less prescriptive in their requirements. As this issue keeps moving forward, more conversations will be had on how schools will be more transparent for parents and guardians.

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Human Resources

House Republicans Continue to Expand Access to Mental Health Care

Over the last 5 years, the legislature has passed bipartisan mental health reform, created the state's first ever children's mental health system, created long-term sustainable funding for the Mental Health and Disability Services Regions, provided significant funds to mental health providers through Medicaid rates, and expanded access to mental health care through telehealth.

However, too often we continue to hear that there are open beds at the 27 hospitals with inpatient psychiatric units, yet nowhere to put difficult mental health patients. Iowa House Republicans are committed to always working towards additional ways to treat mental illness like any other health care condition.

That's why the House has overwhelmingly passed three pieces of legislation to address mental health workforce and additional beds for Iowa's most difficult patients.

- **Adding Psychiatrists:** House File 2529 funds 12 psychiatry residents per year with a focus on training through Iowa's state facilities, including the mental health institutes. Iowa ranks 44th in the country in psychiatrists per capita. This bill will help increase the number of psychiatrists trained in Iowa, and provides preference to Iowans in the application process.
- **Mental Health Provider Loan Forgiveness:** House File 2549 provides \$1.5 million per year to expand loan forgiveness opportunities to recruit and retain mental health providers in Iowa. In order to receive the funds, the mental health provider must commit to providing care in Iowa for at least 5 years. The funds will be prioritized to those working in mental health shortage areas.
- **Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit:** House File 2546 is a bill to require the Department of Human Services to establish a Medicaid rate for those needing a higher level of inpatient psychiatric care. By paying hospitals based on the acuity of the patient, more hospitals will be willing to care for the most difficult mental health patients.

Additionally, the House HHS Budget (HF2578) funds these priorities and provides over \$77.3 million in state funding increases through Medicaid and the MHDS Regional system to expand access to mental health care. The Iowa Senate has thus far declined to act on any of these bills.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Judiciary

Iowans to Decide their Firearms Rights in November

When Iowans head to the poles in November, they will have the opportunity to vote on a new constitutional amendment for the state. One that ensures law abiding Iowans have the right to keep and bear arms, similar to the language found in the United States Constitution.

For years, House Republicans have worked to strengthen rights for law abiding Iowans. Iowa is one of only six states without a state constitutional amendment protecting firearms rights. The proposed Constitutional language reads as follows.

“The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. The sovereign state of Iowa affirms and recognizes this right to be a fundamental individual right. Any and all restrictions of this right shall be subject to strict scrutiny.”

This language would require a court reviewing Iowa’s firearms laws to use strict scrutiny. This is the highest standard of judicial review and requires the government to prove the law was passed to further a “compelling governmental interest” and the law is narrowly tailored to achieve that interest. This language would not invalidate Iowa’s current or future laws unless the laws don’t serve a compelling governmental interest. In other states, with a strict scrutiny standard, laws banning felons from possessing firearms and requiring permits have all been upheld as constitutional.

The language passed the House and Senate in 2018, 2019, and 2021 with wide support. It is now up to Iowans to decide if firearms rights belong in the Iowa Constitution. If this language is added it will help ensure that no matter what happens in Washington, the right of law-abiding Iowans to keep and bear arms will be protected.

(Contact: Amanda Wille, 1-5230)

Labor

Iowa’s Unemployment Rate Drops to 3.3 Percent in March, Labor Force Participation Rises to 67.2 Percent

Iowa’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate dropped to 3.3 percent in March – down from 3.5 percent in February and from 4.4 percent one year ago. The U.S. March unemployment rate decreased to 3.6 percent.

The labor force participation rate increased to 67.2 percent in March from 67 percent in February. The total number of working Iowans increased to 1,637,100 in March. This figure is 10,000 higher than February and 39,400 higher than one year ago.

“Iowa’s economic recovery has made tremendous strides over the past year, and we’re starting to see real progress as more and more Iowans rejoin the workforce,” said Beth Townsend, Director of Iowa Workforce Development. “Iowa has come a long way since the height of the pandemic, but employers continue to need workforce. IWD will continue to focus on re-employment and helping jobless Iowans quickly find their way into rewarding new careers.”

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

Despite the progress evidenced in several indicators (as measured by a survey asking Iowans about their employment status), a different seasonally adjusted survey sent to employers showed Iowa establishments paring 1,500 jobs in March, leaving total nonfarm employment at 1,563,700 jobs. This decline marked the first drop since August 2021 and was due to cutbacks in private service industries. An increase in agriculture-related employment was also seen this past month, but its growth would have not been included in the nonfarm employment. Prior to this drop, Iowa had been experiencing a strong increase in hiring with 25,900 jobs added over the last six months (February’s nonfarm employment was also revised upward by +3,000). Government also trended down slightly (-100) in March yet remains up 5,200 jobs versus last year. Annually, Iowa establishments have now added 32,500 jobs over the past twelve months.

Leisure and hospitality shed the most jobs in March (-2,800). This loss was unexpected given the recent hiring within both accommodations and food services and art and entertainment industries. The sluggishness (in comparison to traditional seasonal growth) may be indicative of businesses holding off on early seasonal hiring, especially considering the rapid pace of hiring over the past several months. Health care and social assistance decreased by 800 jobs, offsetting the gains in January and February. All other job losses were small in nature and included management of companies and enterprises (-200), professional, scientific, and technical services (-200), and finance and insurance (-200).

Positive news elsewhere includes job gains that were highest in retail trade (+900). This now marks the sixth consecutive increase for the retail industry. Wholesale trade added 700 jobs and has increased in three of the last four months. Construction advanced by 400 jobs and has now gained jobs in each of the last five months. Even with this month's loss, leisure and hospitality remains up 13,200 jobs for the year, with the majority of hires in accommodations and food services (+11,100). Manufacturing is up 6,100 jobs compared to last March with durable goods factories slightly outpacing nondurable goods shops. Thanks to recent gains, retail trade is now up 4,800 jobs from last year's level with most hiring within general merchandise stores. Losses have been concentrated within health care and social assistance (-2,800) and finance and insurance (-1,500).

| Employment and Unemployment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data | | | | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|---------|
| | | | | Change from | |
| | March | February | March | February | March |
| | 2022 | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 |
| Civilian labor force | 1,692,500 | 1,686,600 | 1,671,500 | 5,900 | 21,000 |
| Unemployment | 55,400 | 59,500 | 73,800 | -4,100 | -18,400 |
| Unemployment rate | 3.3% | 3.5% | 4.4% | -0.2 | -1.1 |
| Employment | 1,637,100 | 1,627,100 | 1,597,700 | 10,000 | 39,400 |
| Labor Force Participation Rate | 67.2% | 67.0% | 66.8% | 0.2 | 0.4 |
| U.S. unemployment rate | 3.6% | 3.8% | 6.0% | -0.2 | -2.4 |
| Nonfarm Employment in Iowa, Seasonally Adjusted Data | | | | | |
| Total Nonfarm Employment | 1,563,700 | 1,565,200 | 1,531,200 | -1,500 | 32,500 |
| Mining | 2,400 | 2,500 | 2,300 | -100 | 100 |
| Construction | 80,200 | 79,800 | 77,400 | 400 | 2,800 |
| Manufacturing | 223,400 | 223,200 | 217,300 | 200 | 6,100 |
| Trade, transportation and utilities | 316,600 | 314,700 | 309,100 | 1,900 | 7,500 |
| Information | 19,400 | 19,400 | 18,700 | 0 | 700 |
| Financial activities | 108,300 | 108,500 | 109,400 | -200 | -1,100 |
| Professional and business services | 140,000 | 140,100 | 139,900 | -100 | 100 |
| Education and health services | 224,500 | 225,100 | 227,700 | -600 | -3,200 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 136,900 | 139,700 | 123,700 | -2,800 | 13,200 |
| Other services | 55,100 | 55,200 | 54,000 | -100 | 1,100 |
| Government | 256,900 | 257,000 | 251,700 | -100 | 5,200 |
| (above data subject to revision) | | | | | |

| Unemployment Insurance Claims for Iowa | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------|
| | | | | % Change from | |
| | March | February | March | February | March |
| | 2022 | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 |
| Initial claims | 6,923 | 6,762 | 24,052 | 2.4% | -71.2% |
| Continued claims | | | | | |
| Benefit recipients | 25,239 | 27,045 | 44,741 | -6.7% | -43.6% |
| Weeks paid | 92,630 | 94,099 | 167,349 | -1.6% | -44.6% |
| Amount paid | \$43,724,537 | \$44,254,202 | \$67,792,366 | -1.2% | -35.5% |

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Natural Resources

DNR Notes: Five Boating Tips to Keep Waters Clean All Season Long

On Tuesday, April 19, 2022, the Iowa Department of Natural resources (DNR) issued a press release noting that Iowa boat owners can help to protect the environment by following five simple tips all summer long.

- Take time to prepare your boat’s shrink wrap for recycling by removing vents, strapping or zippers. Only the plastic film can be recycled. Many shrink wrap recycling programs today are offered at the local level, so if your marina does not recycle, ask your county government. Some boaters have found that by carefully removing the wrap it can be reused for a second season.
- If you trailer your boat to different waterways each summer, leave the uninvited aquatic hitchhikers at home by following shrink wrap “Clean, Drain, Dry,” ensuring your boat, trailer and motor are cleaned thoroughly (including any tackle or watersports gear) and allowed to dry completely before splashing in a different body of water.
- The earth may be 71 percent water, but it’s no place for trash. Always have a trash receptacle aboard, and when underway ensure nothing goes overboard. (A waste can with a closable lid helps.) A second receptacle for recyclables also helps and makes cleanup easier at the end of the boating day.
- Prevent a spill by refueling your boat with care. Always have an absorbent pad, fuel nozzle absorbent “donut,” or “bib” (to soak up back splashes) when you pump. Actively listen to fuel being dispensed into the fuel nozzle receptacle. Slow down the dispensing pump as fuel reaches the top of the tank – usually when you start to hear bubbling or gurgling noises rising from the fuel filler tube. Refuel portable tanks ashore.
 - Help keep discarded fishing line and soft baits out of the water by building a fishing line recycling bin and placing it in your community. To learn how, go to BoatUS.org/Monofilament.

Discounted Trees Available at DNR Distribution Events this Spring

On Tuesday, April 19, 2022, the Iowa Department of Natural resources (DNR) issued a press release announcing that DNR, through a partnership with Alliant Energy and the USDA Forest Service, is offering a mixture of hardwoods, low-growing ornamental and evergreen tree species for \$25 each. Alliant Energy customers can purchase up to two trees to be picked up at the following locations:

- April 30, 8:30-10:30 a.m., Pioneer Ridge Nature Center (1339 US Hwy 63, Bloomfield)

- May 5, 4:30-6:30 p.m., Awaysis Park (1490 E Lakeshore Dr., Storm Lake)

All Iowa residents can purchase up to two trees to be picked up at Harrah's Casino, (1 Harrah's Blvd., Council Bluffs) on May 21 from 8:30-10:30 a.m. Submit an order form, available online at www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Urban-Forestry/Residential-Tree-Programs, to reserve your trees.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

State Government

Prepare for June 7 Primary Election

2022 is a general election year in Iowa and Iowans will vote for U.S. Senator, their Member of Congress, Governor, statewide officials, their Iowa legislators and county officials in November. Before the general election in November, there will be primary elections to decide which candidates will represent their parties on the ballot in November. Voters who are already registered as a member of a political party or wish to register with a political party are eligible to vote in their respective primary elections. Voters have the option to vote in person on election day (June 7) or by absentee (May 18 - June 6).

It is important to remember that the 2022 election cycle is the first cycle with the newly adopted legislative districts. You can view the interactive district map [here](#) to see which district you now reside in. Additionally, if you are unsure where your polling location is you can look up your address on the Secretary of State's [Precinct/Polling Place Finder](#).

Voters wishing to vote absentee need to remember their **voter identification number** in order to request an absentee ballot. This number is your Iowa driver's or non-operator ID number or the four-digit Voter PIN located on your Iowa Voter ID Card. Additionally, requests for an absentee ballot to be mailed to you must be received by 5:00 pm on Monday, May 23. Voter can either submit their completed absentee ballot request form (<https://sos.iowa.gov/elections/pdf/absenteeballotapp.pdf>) or vote in person at the county auditors office. You can find even more information and answers to frequently asked questions at the [Secretary of State's Voter Ready website](#).

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

Budget for Iowa Department of Transportation Moves Through the Process

Recently, the Transportation Appropriations Bill (House File 2557) overwhelmingly passed the Iowa House with bipartisan support and has passed the Senate Appropriations Committee. This bill now awaits Senate floor action.

Annually, this budget bill moves funds from the Road Use Tax Fund and the Primary Road Fund to the Department of Transportation for a total of \$416.1 million.

The Road Use Tax Fund is a fund made of dedicated highway user revenue, collected through a state excise tax on fuels. No state general fund revenue is used for highway projects in Iowa. Established in 1949 by the 53rd Iowa General Assembly, the Road Use Tax Fund (RUTF) provides the funding for the state's primary, secondary and municipal roadway systems. After some off-the-top diversions, receipts into the RUTF are distributed according to a formula of 47.5 percent for the Primary Road System (State), 24.5 percent for secondary county roads, 8 percent for farm-to-market county roads, and 20 percent for city streets. Legislation that went into effect in 2003, which involved the transfer of jurisdiction of some roadways from the state to either a city or county government, requires a share (1.75 percent) of the Primary Road System funds be paid to local governments.

The Treasurer of State is required to allocate the RUTF moneys by formula to the Primary Road Fund, the Secondary Road Fund, the Farm-to-Market Road Fund, and the Street Construction Fund of the Cities. Moneys in the Primary Road Fund may be used to construct and maintain the primary road system and for expenses related to the primary road system, including the maintenance of DOT facilities and merit pay increases for DOT employees for which appropriations are not otherwise made.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Veterans Affairs

Iowa Provides Aid to Ukraine

Recently, Governor Reynolds announced the following press release providing aid to the people of Ukraine:

The state is providing 146 protective helmets and 714 ballistic vests to Ukraine through donations from the Department of Public Safety and 18 other law enforcement agencies. The retired equipment is past the manufacturers' recommended service life but still in usable condition. The state of Nebraska contributed additional helmets and vests to send with Iowa's donation.

"Ukrainian men and women have taken up arms alongside their military to protect their homeland from Putin's unprovoked attack," said Gov. Reynolds. "Iowa has a special connection to Ukraine through our sister state relationship with Cherkasy. Today's donation fulfills an urgent need in Cherkasy and represents an incredible team effort from the entire state. I'm proud that Iowa is doing what we can to help."

"Ukrainians have bravely withstood Russia's unprovoked invasion for more than a month," said Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts. "As they've come under attack, the Ukrainian people have shown spirited resistance that has won the respect of the free world. As they defend their homeland, Ukrainians have an immense need for protective gear. Agencies large and small from across Nebraska have stepped up to help meet this need. I'm grateful for Nebraskans' generosity in donating these critical supplies."

The Governor's office worked with the Ukrainian Consulate in Chicago to identify an opportunity with all appropriate federal licensing for delivery to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine.

Gov. Reynolds also announced that the state, along with Iowa Sister States, will work with Meals from the Heartland in West Des Moines to help address the immediate and ongoing food supply needs of Cherkasy. Planning is underway to send an initial shipment of meals as soon as possible, and then assess how longer-term needs may be met. Meal packaging opportunities for the public are not available at this time but will likely be scheduled in the coming weeks. However, Iowans can help with this effort now by

donating to help cover the cost of shipping the meals into Ukraine. Visit IowaSisterStates.org for more information and to make a donation.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Ways & Means

Hoover Presidential Library Tax Credits Available

The Iowa Department of Revenue recently submitted rules implementing House File 588 from last session. That bill creates a tax credit for donations made to the Hoover Presidential Foundation for the Hoover Presidential Library and Museum Renovation Project Fund. The credit is available for donations during tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2021, but before January 1, 2024. The new rules describe requirements for claiming the tax credit, including tax credit certificate issuances, carryforward, and other claim restrictions and requirements. The rules are effective May 11, 2022.

The Economic Development Authority authorizes and controls the distribution of tax credits. The aggregate amount of tax credits that the Economic Development Authority may authorize is \$5 million. More information can be found at <https://timelessvaluescampaign.org/>

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