

July 10, 2025

IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

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Wisconsin Legislature Wins Legal Battle over Ability to appropriate Funds to Itself

A unanimous Wisconsin Supreme Court gave the Republican-controlled legislature a major victory in late June as it ruled against Democrat Governor Tony Evers' partial veto of policy directives for a state literacy program. What makes the case unique is that the funding for the program was not appropriated to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, but instead was put in the Legislature's "emergency account."

In 2023, Evers signed legislation creating an early literacy coaching program. The bill also created grants for schools that adopt approved reading curricula to pay for changing their programs and to train teachers on the new practices. The funding for the program was provided in a different bill, which directed \$50 million be appropriated for the program. But instead of the funding going to Governor Evers and his Department of Public Instruction, the money was put in the Legislature's Emergency Account, putting the Republican-led bicameral Budget Committee in control of the funding for the program.

The court battle began when Evers used his partial veto power (similar to a line-item veto in Iowa) of a bill setting out the mechanism of how the \$50 million would be spent. Evers said his actions would simplify administration of the program. It also eliminated early literacy funding under the program for schools receiving that state's school vouchers and charter schools.

The Legislature challenged the veto in court, since the bill did not make any appropriations and the use of the partial veto in Wisconsin is limited to bills that spend money. Evers countered that the courts should rule that his veto was valid under state law, and instead find that the Legislature does not have the power to appropriate money to itself. The Wisconsin Supreme Court was a national issue this spring when a hard-left judge was elected to the Court, giving liberals a 4-3 edge on the panel. But in this case, the ruling was 7-0 against Evers. The Court found his veto did violate the partial veto law, while also approving the Legislature's ability to appropriate funds to itself even when they are to be used to pay for programs within the executive branch.

Some legal experts were surprised by the verdict and its unanimity, as this court had previously upheld a different Evers partial veto which creatively redrafted a school finance bill to provide annual school funding growth for the next four hundred years.

With the new ruling, a debate still remains in Wisconsin as to how the \$50 million of early literacy funding will be distributed. But this case may serve as a guide to other legislatures as to how to ensure funding gets to where they intended when there is disagreement with the executive branch – put it into the legislature's account.

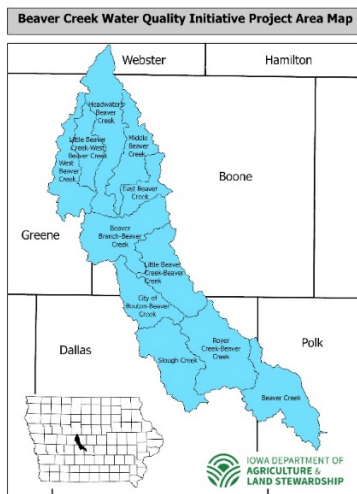
(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

IDALS Secretary Naig Announces New Water Quality Project in Central Iowa's Beaver Creek Watershed

On Tuesday July 8, 2025, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) issued a press release in which Iowa Secretary of Agriculture Mike Naig announced that IDALS is partnering with the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District and other public and private partners to launch a new Water Quality Initiative (WQI) project in the Beaver Creek Watershed. The three-year \$1.94 million project will add nitrate-reducing conservation practices in Boone, Webster, Greene, Dallas, and Polk Counties around Beaver Creek, which flows into the Des Moines River on the north side of the Des Moines metro. Beginning on July 1, 2025, and running through June 30, 2028, the project will install saturated buffers, bioreactors, and oxbow restorations to reduce the loss of nutrients into our surface water. Saturated buffers and bioreactors filter water from farm fields, capturing nutrients like nitrogen before they reach streams, while oxbow restorations revive natural wetlands that clean water and support wildlife.

The project will also promote cover crops by connecting producers with the [statewide Water Quality Initiative cost-share program](#) as well as other partner resources. Cover crops are an effective in-field conservation practice that improves soil health, reduces erosion, prevents compaction, and provides forage for livestock, among many other benefits. IDALS Secretary Naig noted--“Iowans expect progress when it comes to water quality, and that’s exactly what this project helps to deliver. This partnership project is a great example of how we can bring farmers, landowners, and public and private partners together to accelerate this important work and be part of the solution. By partnering with local farmers and landowners and by investing in proven conservation practices like bioreactors, saturated buffers, oxbows, and cover crops, we’re improving water quality in these communities as well as for those downstream, including the Des Moines metro.”

This project builds on the success of previous implementation efforts in this watershed, which included the construction of 20 saturated buffers and bioreactors and 12 oxbow restorations. It continues to prioritize edge-of-field practices, which filter nitrates from runoff before it enters nearby rivers and streams. The project will use the efficient “Batch and Build” model, grouping multiple projects for streamlined construction. Jeremy Gustafson, a farmer from Boone County who serves as the Chair of the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District added--“The Boone Soil and Water Conservation District is happy to partner with the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship in launching the new Beaver Creek WQI project across the watershed. This project will showcase modern approaches to water quality improvements by applying conservation practices with the help of local landowners and communities.” IDALS is allocating more than \$244,100 to support this project.



(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Commerce

Digital Financial Kiosk Law Goes Into Effect

This session, the legislature passed and the Governor signed Senate File 449. The bill provides regulations to digital financial asset transaction kiosks (bitcoin ATMs) with daily transaction limits, maximum operator charges, required disclosures, detailed receipts, refund requirements, attorney general enforcement and fraud policy requirements. Attorney General Bird recently had a press release with the following comments on the bill:

“The legislature acted when they saw how frequently cryptocurrency ATMs were being used by scammers to steal from Iowans...Today, cryptocurrency ATM companies across our state are required to provide better disclosures, clearer warnings, and lower fees. This law strengthens protections for Iowans.”

The AG released the following FAQ to explain the new law: https://www.iowaattorneygeneral.gov/consumers/crypto-atm-law?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery.

If you or someone you know has put money into a cryptocurrency ATM because of a scam, contact the Iowa Attorney General’s office at 1-888-777-4590 or cryptoscam@ag.iowa.gov.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Economic Growth

June High Quality Jobs Awards

Last month, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Board approved awards for three companies, which will assist in the creation of 317 jobs and result in \$161.1 million in new capital investment for the state

JBS Foods—Perry

JBS Foods processes, prepares, and packages fresh, further-processed, and value-added premium protein products under a variety of brands. The company plans to establish a presence in Perry with the construction of a new 150,000-square-foot animal harvest facility to produce sausage. The project represents a capital investment of \$137 million and is expected to create 250 jobs, of which 57 are incented at \$31.10 per hour. The board awarded the project tax benefits through the High Quality Jobs (HQJ) program.

ITA Group—West Des Moines

ITA Group is a global engagement agency that helps businesses to find solutions that result in increased sales, purchases, retention, referrals, and alignment. After launching a new, larger headquarters last year, the company plans an additional expansion of just over 15,000 square feet at the same location to support continued growth. The project represents a capital investment of just over \$2 million and was awarded tax benefits through the HQJ program. It is expected to create 33 jobs, of which 25 are incented at a qualifying wage of \$36.80 per hour.

Merchants Bonding Company—West Des Moines

Headquartered in West Des Moines, Merchants Bonding Company is a property and casualty mutual insurance company providing fidelity, surety, and other liability coverage through independent agencies. The company plans to expand its location by 34,000 square feet and match its current space with both office and conference spaces. The project is expected to create 34 jobs, of which 18 are incented at a qualifying wage of \$36.80 per hour. It represents a capital investment of just over \$22 million and was awarded tax benefits through the HQJ program.

(Contact: Kristi Kiou 2-5290)

Department of Education Issues Final Report on Education Standards Comprehensive Review

House Republicans have spent years refocusing K-12 education back on the truth instead of left-wing politically motivated propaganda. Part of that is a return to true social studies. Across the country, and in Iowa, students are being taught that America is inherently bad, or that American history is inherently terrible. This needs to change. As part of several initial efforts, House Republicans approved HF 2545 directing the Iowa Department of Education to review statewide standards and instructional practices, including a “plan to regularly review and revise the core content standards focused on English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, with a focus on United States history, western civilization, and civics.” It also included “identification of opportunities to equip high school graduates with sufficient knowledge of civics and United States history, including the principles reflected in the Constitution of the United States, so that high school graduates are capable of discharging the responsibilities associated with United States citizenship.” The Department issued their final report on the whole task force linked [here](#), but this article will focus on the social studies portion.

Iowa’s social studies standards were adopted in 2017. These incorporate behavioral sciences, civics/government, economics, geography, history and Iowa history. In 2021, the Fordham Institute released [“The State of State Standards for Civics and U.S. History,”](#) which exposed Iowa’s weak standards:

- Overall: “Iowa’s current civics and U.S. History standards are inadequate. Vagueness and overbreadth lead to a dearth of specific content in both disciplines, and there is no discernible coverage of U.S. History at the K–8 level. A complete revision of the standards is recommended.”
- Civics: “Iowa’s civic standards are written so broadly that it is often impossible to say what students are meant to learn, and what elementary civics content does exist is unambitious.”
- U.S. History: “Iowa’s social studies standards essentially ignore U.S. History before grade 8, and the middle/high school outline is almost without substance. There is little effort to promote shared exposure to essential historical content across the state.”

In 2025, the social studies standards began the five-phase revision process below.

- Phase 1: Prepare
 - January-March 2025
- Phase 2: Revise Standards
 - April-July 2025
- Phase 3: Seek Public Feedback
 - August-September 2025
- Phase 4: Revise Standards Based on Feedback
 - September-November 2025
- Phase 5: Obtain State Board Approval
 - December 2025-January 2026

As of the time of this report’s writing, the Department is in Phase 2 of the five-phase standards revision process. Some feedback from committee members includes integrating more civics in the 5th grade, eliminating varying interpretations about the intent of the standards, ensure standards include balanced perspectives, teach students to look at issues from multiple perspectives and think critically as citizens, as well as ensure the standards reflect “the good, the bad, and the ugly” of America’s history. Feedback also included ensuring the upcoming standards review process incorporates all required aspects of HF 2545 by:

- Examining existing standards to understand where gaps may exist related to new legislation such as within civics, U.S. history, and western civilization.
- Including new standards that directly relate to the requirements in legislation that do not already exist in the standards such as inclusion of the Holocaust and September 11th.
- Changing any structural aspects of the standards that are needed to comply with legislation

As a reminder, HF 2545 was not the original social studies standards bill the House passed, which was much more specific in what exactly the standards needed to be. That bill directed the Department to make standards that must include at a minimum what is laid out in HF 2545 below. (Link to HF2545 [here](#).)

- The U.S. federal and republican form of government, including the branches and structure, the division of power between branches and between federal and state governments, a comparison to alternative forms of government, and the crimes against humanity that have occurred under communist regimes since 1917.
- The rights and responsibilities of citizens of the U.S. and the state of Iowa, including civic virtues displayed in the lives of exemplary Americans.
- The history of the U.S. and the state of Iowa, including all of the following:
 - Political, diplomatic, and military history of the U.S., including exemplary Americans important to such events, beginning with the discovery of the western hemisphere through the present, including but not limited to the Founding Fathers, Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, WWI, WWII, Vietnam War, Korean War, and the War on Terrorism including September 11, 2001.
 - The founding of Iowa and famous Iowans and their involvement in important events in history.
 - The secular and religious ideals and institutions of liberty, including political, religious, economic, social, and cultural liberty, in western civilization, the U.S., and Iowa.
- Exemplary figures and important events in western civilization, the U.S. and Iowa including but not limited to the history of ancient Israel, the free Greek city-states, the Roman Republic, the Roman Empire, medieval Europe, Columbus and the Age of Discovery, WWI, WWII and instruction related to the Holocaust, and the Cold War.
- Important historical and founding documents to the U.S. and Iowa, including but not limited to the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the U.S. and the amendments to the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and the Emancipation Proclamation.

Public feedback on the new social studies standards begins in August, as stated above. House Republicans are looking forward to viewing those standards and seeing the above incorporated into our new standards to make sure our Iowa students are learning real history. Please feel free to submit feedback when those standards are released.

(Info from HF2545 Comprehensive Review Report and HF 2545)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Environmental Protection

EPA Administrator Zeldin: ‘Celebrate American Independence by Advancing Energy Dominance’

On Tuesday, July 8, 2025, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a press release in which EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin reflected on America's fight for independence nearly 250 years ago and recognized the push towards energy dominance to power the next 250 years. Under President Trump's leadership, this administration is taking action to unleash domestic energy, ensuring our nation is no longer reliant on foreign adversaries to power the American way of life, strengthening our independence for generations to come just as the Founding Fathers intended. Specifically, the Administrator discusses how the previous administration abandoned reliable baseload power, driving up costs and weakening grid stability. He cites New York as a cautionary tale, where state officials have pursued

radical climate policies that waste taxpayer dollars on ineffective environmental interventions, while leaving the power grid vulnerable and driving up electricity rates. EPA Administrator Zeldin reaffirms his commitment to streamline the permitting process for critical energy projects. Through American energy dominance we will Power the Great American Comeback while ensuring the cleanest air, land and water of any nation in the world.

Administrator Zeldin [stated](#) in the Washington Examiner: *“The Trump Environmental Protection Agency is now paving the way for a Golden Age of Energy Dominance.”*

“The previous administration irresponsibly abandoned American baseload power and any support to produce and deliver it for the good of all Americans. President Donald Trump is course-correcting. What’s happening in my home state of New York is sadly coming to a state near you if we don’t work together to secure more baseload American energy and infrastructure. Misguided state policies to phase out baseload power sources such as coal, natural gas, and nuclear are driving up electricity prices while making the grid vulnerable.

“A New York grid operator has said it does not have sufficient backup power generation needed to deploy reliable, affordable electricity during heat waves or extremely cold winters when people demand more electricity for heating and air conditioning. So, the grid goes down. It’s that simple.”

“For grid stability, renewables should not be jammed through as attempted replacements for fossil fuels. Common sense dictates that they should be viewed as no more than possible supplements.

“California, which rivals New York on electricity prices and matches the state on climate goals, has seen its electricity rates rise to 30 cents/kilowatt hour, a 58% increase.”

“Meanwhile, New York and California are among several states suing the EPA to stop policies that would ensure all Americans have reliable, affordable 24/7 electricity to power and heat their homes and maintain their modern way of life. Maryland is another one of those states. Residents already pay a high 15 cents/kilowatt hour, and now the state is setting up a \$19 billion energy relief fund to help residents afford rising electricity prices instead of simply allowing U.S. energy production and delivery to thrive in the state, which would naturally bring prices down. Maryland is among 12 states with rates that are double or, in some cases, triple the rate most people pay for electricity because climate activists have mounted campaigns to thwart American energy production and delivery, and the state has acted upon it. That has left states such as Maryland, New York, California, and others without adequate power generation and distribution infrastructure needed to light and power homes, appliances, schools, and hospitals. The states have also erected hurdles to transport energy resources to power plants.”

“Last month, the EPA proposed to repeal targeted emissions standards under the Clean Air Act and eliminate unlawful power sector regulations devised under the Biden-Harris Clean Power Plan 2.0. This will save people money on their electricity bills and ensure the lights stay on when families need power most. EPA is also working to streamline the permitting process for critical energy projects.”

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Health and Human Services

Democrats Cry Wolf on Medicaid and SNAP “Cuts” – What is Actually in the One Big Beautiful Bill

You can’t turn on the TV without seeing a Democrat commercial attacking Republicans for voting “for the biggest Medicaid cut in history for tax breaks for billionaires.” It’s not just federal Democrats pushing these lies, it’s Iowa House Democrats as well:



Iowa House Democrats @iowahousedems · 1h



Republican Medicaid cuts are pushing 20 rural Iowa hospitals closer to closure. These hospitals rely on Medicaid funding to stay open, and without it, entire communities are left without care.

Absolutely nothing in the One Big Beautiful Bill jeopardizes health care or food security for Iowans, and the Democrats crying wolf once again about tax breaks for billionaires that really is a tax break for the working class. Eventually these falsehoods will catch up with them.

What is in the [One Big Beautiful Bill \(OBBB\)](#) regarding SNAP and Medicaid?

SNAP

Not the “largest cut to SNAP in the history of the program” as claimed by left-wing activists. Instead, the OBBB simply revises exemptions for able-bodied adults work requirements (Sec. 10102) and ensures that states are not needlessly letting ineligible individuals on their SNAP lists without any consequences (Sec. 10105).

Previously, work requirements in SNAP for able-bodied adults only went to age 55. This bill increases the age exemption to 65. Previously, this able-bodied adult exemption also exempted anyone with a dependent. OBBB simply limits that until the dependent is 14 years old. Slight eligibility changes do not equate to a cut but ensure that able-bodied individuals seek work in order to receive taxpayer assistance.

Beginning in 2028, the federal government will have an expectation that states do not allow ineligible individuals to qualify for SNAP in their state. If your state error rate is above 6%, then the state will be required to contribute to pay for the SNAP benefits of their citizens. This is not a cut, but a transfer of costs to the states that do not check eligibility prior to providing taxpayer funded assistance.

Medicaid

The OBBB contains many common-sense provisions to ensure accurate eligibility of individuals on Medicaid (begins at Sec. 71103):

- Stops Medicaid and Medicare resources going to illegal aliens (saves \$224 billion)
- Stops individuals from having Medicaid coverage in multiple states
- Disenroll deceased Medicaid patients and providers
- Every 6-month eligibility checks (instead of every 12 months) for the Medicaid expansion population
- No federal Medicaid funds for abortion providers

Democrats call these cuts. Republicans call these common-sense. Iowans support program integrity efforts to focus taxpayer resources on those truly in need and the original focus of the program, like the disabled.

The OBBB also contains many provisions to ensure personal accountability in the Medicaid expansion population. Medicaid expansion has only existed in Iowa for 10 years. This program is a safety net for low-income Iowans but is not intended to be a forever government dependent program. Similar to what the Iowa Legislature did this year in SF615, the OBBB requires work requirements for able-bodied adults (sec. 71119). Simply requiring 80 hours a month of work, volunteering, education or work program with many logical exemptions.

The OBBB also requires those on Medicaid expansion to have some small cost-sharing requirements if above 100% of the poverty line. This additionally prepares individuals receiving short-term assistance to prepare for private insurance which often has copays.

Lastly, the OBBB does make slight changes to different funding schemes that Iowa does participate. In some way that could result in 10% decreases beginning in 2029. However, these changes are all offset by **increases** to Iowa providers in 2026. The OBBB appropriates \$10 billion per year to rural health care, and Iowa can assume to receive at least \$100

million of those funds this January. Additionally, rural providers have complained far more often about Medicare rates and the OBBB prevents a Biden era 2.8% Medicare cut. Plus [CMS recently announced](#) a 5.06% rate increase for 2026. In summary, Democrats will continue to fearmonger and the “media” will continue to not fact check a single claim, but working Iowans and taxpayers will benefit from the OBBB right away.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Labor

Iowans’ Unemployment Benefits to Increase Starting July 6

Iowa Workforce Development, as part of its required annual review of unemployment insurance (UI) wages, announced that the maximum weekly benefit for unemployed Iowans will increase effective the benefit week of July 6, 2025.

Per Iowa law, IWD uses a formula each year to determine the maximum and minimum benefit amounts, taking into account the number of Iowans covered by unemployment insurance and their gross wages.

This year’s review has determined that the maximum weekly benefit for unemployed Iowans will increase **to \$763 in Fiscal Year 2026, up from \$739 in FY 2025**. The full table of benefit rates for FY 2026 is linked [here](#).

Important note: The increases highlighted above raising the maximum possible benefits for unemployment recipients will take effect with the benefit week of July 6, 2025. Other changes because of recent legislation that lowered the taxes paid by Iowa employers – changes that will have *no impact* on benefits for claimants – will take effect at the beginning of 2026.

On June 5, 2025, Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds [signed Senate File 607 into law](#), simplifying the state’s unemployment insurance tax tables and decreasing the maximum tax rate for employers from 9 percent to 5.4 percent. Iowa employers pay unemployment insurance taxes for each employee based on a rate assigned to the employer (per that employer’s history in the unemployment system) multiplied by the “taxable wage base,” which is defined in state law as a fraction of the average annual wage in Iowa during the previous year. SF 607 lowered that fraction from two-thirds to one-third of the average annual wage.

Iowa’s average annual wage is recalculated by Iowa Workforce Development every year at this time as part of the same previously described process to determine the maximum and minimum unemployment benefit. The average annual wage in 2024 was \$61,098.90.

Factoring in the new law, the taxable wage base for Calendar Year 2026 will decrease to \$20,400 from \$39,500 in CY 2025.

(Info from Iowa Workforce Development)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Local Government

New Law to Promote and Expand Affordable Housing and Assisted Living Choices

A new law designed to make housing more affordable and accessible for all Iowans has now gone into effect. The new law will benefit families, seniors, and individuals seeking flexible living arrangements. Now cities and counties are

required to allow at least one accessory dwelling unit (ADU)—sometimes known as backyard cottages, in-law suites, or granny flats—on the same lot as a single-family home. This means families can add a small apartment or home on their property, creating new rental units or support for relatives.

Additionally, ADU applications meeting state criteria are approved quickly—within 30 days—or they’re automatically granted. Local governments must provide clear reasons if they deny a permit and guidance for fixing any issues. ADUs are ideal for providing affordable independent housing for seniors, caregivers, or adult children. Importantly, the bill prohibits unnecessary regulations based on age, income, or relationship, giving Iowa families true flexibility. Cities and counties cannot impose extra design requirements, hefty impact fees, or excessive parking mandates for ADUs. The goal is straightforward: encourage the creation of simple, affordable homes without driving up costs.

For older Iowans and people with disabilities, ADUs offer the chance to live independently yet close to loved ones, supporting aging in place and community-based care—all at a fraction of the cost of institutional options.

Thanks to this common-sense bill, Iowans will have more choice in where and how they live, whether it’s bringing aging parents home, providing a starter home for a young adult, or offering a more supportive, home-based option for a family member with disabilities. For many, this could mean affordable, personalized living arrangements that keep loved ones together.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Natural Resources

DNR’s Annual Goose Banding is Underway

On Tuesday, July 1, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release that it is in the middle of its annual Canada goose banding effort across the state. Geese that nested and had young are currently flightless, allowing staff and volunteers to capture the waterfowl, collect some demographic information, and place a metal band on their leg before being released. To learn more about the Canada goose banding project, go to the [DNR's YouTube channel](#).

DNR--Iowans Encouraged to Report Wild Turkey Sightings in July and August

On Tuesday, July 1, 2025, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release stating that this state agency is looking for help with the annual wild turkey production survey. During the months of July and August wild turkey sightings are recorded to estimate this year’s nesting rates and nest success. Participation is easy – just note the date and county in which the turkey was seen, if it was an adult female or adult male – males have beards on their breast – and if and how many poults (baby turkeys) were present. The survey is available online at www.iowadnr.gov/turkey, then click on Wild Turkey Survey. There is also an identification guide on documenting wild turkey broods on the survey webpage, which provides tips on how to determine males from females, and different flock scenarios with poults of different ages. Annual population surveys conducted by the DNR are an important component of managing the wild turkey. Turkey populations can fluctuate annually across all regions of the state. All participation is appreciated.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

Public Safety

House Republicans Tour Newton Correctional Facility

On Wednesday, a group of House Republicans had the opportunity to tour the Newton Correctional Facility to learn more about security at the prison, treatment opportunities for offenders, and corrections staff needs.

The original Newton Correctional Facility (NCF) was built in 1965, then in 1998 a larger facility was built. The older building now houses the Correctional Release Center (CRC), for individuals nearing completion of their sentence, while the newer buildings house those with longer time left on their sentence.

NCF houses the majority of individuals convicted of sex offenses in Iowa. Of the approximately 950 individuals in the medium security facility, around 800 of them are participating in the Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP). This program focuses on accountability, looking at individual actions, goal setting, and other essential skills needed as inmates work towards release.

Those finishing their sentence in the CRC have a chance to work in and outside the facility. Jobs include cleaning, landscaping, trade work and agricultural jobs. Today there are 300 individuals housed in the CRC and over 100 leave the building for jobs each day.

Newton is also fortunate to have a partnership with Homes 4 Iowa. This program is a public private partnership and teaches inmates how to build homes from the ground up. Each house costs \$99,000 and takes six months to build. This year Homes 4 Iowa hopes to complete 40 homes at NCF. These homes have been sent all over the state and provide quality, affordable housing.

House Republicans are grateful for the hardworking men and women who help keep the DOC facilities safe and running.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

State Government

Open Meeting Enforcement Enhancement Law in Effect

As of July 1, a new law has gone into effect that will increase public officials' training of open meeting and public information and increase enforcement of violations. HF 706 was signed into law by the Governor and now requires newly elected or appointed officials to complete an Iowa Public Information Board (IPIB) provided or approved course of training on their responsibilities of open meeting and public information laws. Too often when cases come before IPIB the defense given is that the official or government body wasn't aware of their legal requirements. The new law will proactively provide that information to elected officials at the beginning of their tenure.

In addition to the training, the new law increases fines for violations of these laws. The current fines in Iowa Code have not seen an increase since 2005. By increasing the fines, the law will have more teeth to enforce Iowa's open meetings and public records laws. IPIB exists as an alternative means to secure compliance with open meeting and open records laws and their complaint process will remain the same which allows the board an initial determination of the merit of a complaint, which includes dismissal for "harmless error", and informal assistance process to work with the parties to reach an informal and quick resolution.

This new law will continue to provide the tools necessary to hold government officials to provide transparency and accountability to Iowans. It is vitally important that Iowans can trust in their governmental processes and having public meetings and open records available ensures that Iowans are aware of how their governments are functioning.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

State Agencies Produce One-Page Guide to Iowa's ATV, UTV Laws

During the 2025 session, one of the most discussed topics in the House Transportation Committee was questions related to ATVs and UTVs. Whether it was where they can be used, who can drive them, or what type of regulatory structure should govern them, legislators and Iowans in general had a lot of questions and opinions. This has spurred the three state agencies with oversight of these vehicles to help move the conversation along.

This summer, the Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, and the Department of Public Safety have put out a one-page guide to Iowa's laws governing ATV's and UTV's. The document can be found at: <https://iowadot.gov/media/11830/download?inline>

The agencies have provided basic answers to many of the questions Iowans have been raising, like does this vehicle have to have a slow moving vehicle sign (answer - Yes), how fast can they go (35 mph), and how old must you be drive one on a public road (18 years old or older). In addition to answering the questions, the document also provide the legal justification for their answers with cites to the relevant Iowa Code provisions.

While this document will be helpful to all interested Iowans, it will invaluable to legislators involved in the interim study of ATV & UTV laws.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Veterans Affairs

Veterans Day at the Iowa State Fair

The following was provided by the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs:

IDVA has posted entry applications for the August 11th Veterans Day at the Iowa State Fair Parade on the departmental website at dva.iowa.gov. All veterans and supporters are invited to participate with an application.

This year's theme is the 50th Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam War, and Vietnam veterans will be at the heart of the parade. Those who choose can ride at the front of the parade, but all will be recognized as group 'Grand Marshals' instead of the usual one or two select individuals normally assigned that honor.

A link to the application is in an 'alert' at the top of the [department web page](#), and will appear on every page of the site. The **deadline for entry applications is Aug. 1st**. Interested groups can access the application from the web site, or download it directly with the button below.

- **Who:** All Iowa Veterans & Supporters, especially Vietnam Veterans.
- **What:** Annual Veterans Day at the Iowa State Fair Parade Entry Applications are available at <https://dva.iowa.gov> or the button below.

- **When:** Application deadline is August 1st for the August 11th parade
- **Where:** Applications can be downloaded from dva.iowa.gov or the button below. The parade will be on the traditional route (main concourse south of the Grandstand) at the Iowa State Fair Grounds.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Ways & Means

Senate File 657—Economic Development Tax Credit Modernization

This article will focus on Division IX of Senate File 657—covering the new Iowa Film Production Incentive Program and Fund.

Division IX—Iowa Film Production Incentive Program and Fund

This division creates a new program to promote and incentivize film production in Iowa. Qualified productions with qualifying expenses can be rebated by the state for up to 30 percent of those expenses.

What kinds of movies will qualify?

The bill defines “qualified production” to mean a feature film, television series, documentary, or unscripted series that is rated G, PG, PG-13, or R by the motion picture film rating system or by the TV parental guidelines monitoring board. The production must have a fully funded budget of at least \$1.0 million.

Where do the movies have to be filmed?

This section defines “qualified production facility” (facility) to mean a dedicated studio located in Iowa that can produce qualified productions, a studio located in this state at which all preproduction and film production take place for a qualified production filmed on location in this state, or a company that has, in the three consecutive years immediately preceding an application, had the principal place of business in Iowa and produced a qualified production.

What expenses qualify for rebate?

The eligibility criteria for *qualified expenditures* must include expenses for industry standard activities for cast members, equipment, studio production facilities, hospitality services, certified public accountant services, per diem payments, payments to businesses located in this state, accommodations, and any other expenses allowed by IEDA.

Qualified expenditures do not include expenses for entertainment, studio executive airfare, royalties, and publicity for the qualified production. The eligibility criteria for qualified expenditures must include a written acknowledgment by the facility that no qualified expenses were incurred prior to approval of the application by the authority.

What rebate is available?

The rebate amount shall equal 30 percent of gross qualified expenditures incurred to produce a qualified production excluding any sales, use, and hotel and motel taxes paid. The cumulative value of rebates claimed pursuant to the bill shall not exceed \$4 million. The program applies to qualified expenditures incurred between July 1, 2024, and before July 1, 2026.

For the next newsletter this article will be on the repeals of the Employer Child Care Tax Credit and Assistive Device Tax Credit.

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