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IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

Gambling Revenues Remain Strong in FY 2023

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Iowans who track the state's budget focus a lot of their attention on the monthly General Fund memo. Those reports have continued to show strong state tax collections in Fiscal Year 2023. Another monthly report of tax revenue is also showing solid returns, thanks to Iowans' interest in gambling.

The Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission's monthly revenue report for February showed that Iowa's casinos are still seeing activity close to the levels experienced during the last two years. In February, the state's gaming tax collected \$28.6 million in revenue. This level was \$150,000 less than what was collected in February 2022. Through the first eight months of the fiscal year, gaming tax receipts have totaled \$222.7 million to the state. This amount is just \$2.2 million less than what had been collected thru February 2022.

The gaming tax figures throughout Fiscal Year 2023 have been much stronger than predicted by the Revenue Estimating Conference. The panel's forecast was for gaming tax collections to fall approximately \$30 million in FY 2023. But with the much smaller decline in revenue, the REC raised their FY 2023 forecast at their last meeting. After their March 10 session, the panel now expects Iowa to collect \$335 million in gaming tax this fiscal year. The panel also raised their FY 2024 prediction for this class of revenue to \$312 million, an increase of \$26 million from their December number.

Iowans and visitors to the state were not just visiting casinos to do their wagering last month. Tax revenue from sports wagering continues to increase beyond what had been predicted when it was legalized in 2019. Collections from the tax on sports betting through February are \$9.55 million. The eight-month total for Fiscal Year 2023 is virtually equal to what the state collected for all of Fiscal Year 2022 from sports wagering.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Agriculture

House Ways & Means Panel Approves Veterinary Practice Code Changes & Updates Measure

On Thursday, March 16 the Iowa House Ways & Means Committee passed House File 670 by a unanimous vote. The bill updates the state Veterinary Practice Code chapter (169) for the first time in over 25 years. Much of the legislation codifies regulations which the Iowa Veterinary Board has adopted to deal with the evolution of the profession during the last three decades. The provisions in HF 670 represent a consensus of the parties involved. The new Code language will recognize and specify the scope of veterinary services that veterinary students, veterinary technicians and auxiliary veterinary personnel can perform and their relation to supervisory veterinarians.

Senate Passes Iowa Livestock Health Advisory Council & Research Code Update

On Tuesday, March 21, the Iowa Senate Senate File 473 by a unanimous vote. The measure has now been referred to the House Agriculture Committee for its consideration. The impetus for the bill was that the Iowa Poultry Association changed its name and that name needed to be changed in the statute. Additionally, the Iowa Turkey Federation has requested a member on the council. Iowa Livestock Health Advisory Council (ILHAC) agreed with these requested changes and decided to include some additional Code updates. The bill provides a definition of ‘livestock’ which is the same definition as specified in Iowa Code 717.1. The measure prohibits members of the Council from getting expenses or compensation and eliminates the provision requiring IDALS to furnish supplies as Iowa State University will now hold the meetings. The legislation clarifies ILHAC duties – specifically the council’s recommendations apply to the ILHAC funds and explicitly eliminates the ability for ISU to expend funds without recommendations from the Council.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096))

Commerce

Annual Insurance Performance Report Released

The Iowa Insurance Division recently released its annual [performance report](#) for FY2022.

The report provides that “Iowa is home to 214 insurance companies, some that do business around the globe. For these companies, Iowa is the primary financial and solvency regulator. Our consumer protection mission to closely supervise companies ability to keep their promises to consumers is our core responsibility. The IID has authorized 1,332 insurance companies to do business in our state. **As a percentage of state GDP, Iowa’s insurance industry is consistently in the top five states for economic impact.** Our consumer protection responsibilities are also directed to enforcement of insurance regulations in advertising and sales, producer training and licensing, underwriting and rating, policy requirements and disclosure, claims handling and complaint handling.”

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Economic Growth

March High Quality Jobs Awards

Last week, the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Board approved awards for two established companies in Cedar Rapids and Muscatine, which will assist in the creation and retention of 69 jobs and result in a \$102 million capital investment for the state.

Collins Aerospace—Cedar Rapids

Collins Aerospace delivers advanced technology products and services to the aviation and defense industries. The company plans to remodel their manufacturing facility in Cedar Rapids to accommodate expanded microelectronics fabrication processes. The project represents a capital investment of \$22 million and is expected to create and retain 41 jobs at a qualifying wage of \$30.24 per hour. The board awarded the company tax benefits through the High Quality Jobs (HQJ) program.

Kent Pet Group—Muscatine

A subsidiary of the family-owned Kent Corporation, Kent Pet Group produces natural and sustainable cat litter under brands World's Best Cat Litter, BreederSelect and Back-2-Nature. The company plans to construct a new 113,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Muscatine. The project represents an \$80 million capital investment and was awarded a \$150,000 forgivable loan and tax benefits through the HQJ program. It is expected to create 28 jobs, of which 27 are incented at a qualifying wage of \$22.08 per hour.

(Contact: Kristi Kiious, 2-5290)

Education

House Passes Teacher Empowerment Bill

On Wednesday, the House passed HF 604 the teacher empowerment bill in a bipartisan manner. Early in session House Republicans met with teachers from around the state who asked for help in managing behavior in their classrooms. Teachers spoke about the issues of violence in the classroom, disruptive behaviors, lack of support from the administration, numerous trainings they felt were useless, redundant or unnecessary. HF 604 is a direct response to that meeting.

Multiple teachers have relayed stories of their classrooms being destroyed by out of control behavior along getting physically punched or hit in some manner. According to the Department of Education, there were 63,667 instances of students being removed from classrooms in the 2021-2022 school year. Of those, approximately 36,970, or 58.1%, involved violence or a potential violation of Iowa law. Those are just the numbers that were actually reported!

According to the teachers who met with Republicans, they are being told to sweep things under the rug, or to keep things to themselves. Which means these numbers may be low. If violent incidents are not accurately reported, teachers, students and parents are the ones who suffer the consequences.

The bill gives teachers a place to make a complaint if their administration is failing them. Teachers can file a complaint with the Ombudsman's Office and the ombudsman will forward their findings on to the Board of Educational Examiners or the Department of Education. The bill also gives whistle-blower protection for teachers who do make these complaints. Administrators cannot penalize them for sticking up for themselves or reporting what is going on. The bill lets teachers know they do have rights when they are being attacked or someone else is being attacked. It will be clear to teachers that they don't just have to sit there and take it.

The teacher has to report incidents of violence or property damage to the principal within 24 hours and the principal has to report it to the parent or guardian 24 hours after that report was made to them. If the teacher feels like the administrator is not following up, the teacher may contact the parent or guardian themselves.

An important piece of this bill is laying out an escalated discipline policy. First, at all times, a teacher may remove a disruptive student from the classroom under the supervision of a School Resource Officer or administrator. For the first offense when a teacher removes a disruptive student, the district shall facilitate a counseling session between the student and the school counselor and place the student in one day of in-school suspension after the counseling session. For the second offense, facilitate a counseling session and place the student in five days of in-school suspension. For the third time, the school district may permanently remove the student from the classroom but they must consider an alternative learning environment for that student.

Teachers have reached out thanking legislators for this bill. House Republicans and House Democrats worked together, along with the Iowa State Education Association, and other education groups to come up with a bill that supports Iowa's teachers.

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Mental Health Legislation Moves Forward

The Iowa Legislature continues to prioritize expanding access to mental health care in every corner of the state by passing bills to recruit and retain mental health providers to every corner of Iowa. Below is a list of bills that help access to mental health care and where they are at in the process:

- **Medical Malpractice** – House File 161 limits the total amount of noneconomic damages for a medical malpractice claim at \$2 million for causes of action involving a hospital, and at \$1 million for all other causes of action. This bill was signed by the Governor on February 17.
- **Rural Emergency Hospitals** – Senate File 75 establishes licensure in Iowa for Rural Emergency Hospitals. Federal law created this designation in 2020, and has allowed this new hospital designation to begin January 1, 2023. This bill also requires ambulatory surgical centers to be licensed in Iowa. This bill has passed both chambers.
- **Mental Health Non-Competes** – House File 93 prohibits noncompete agreements with mental health providers, allowing the provider to stay with their patient. This bill awaits consideration in the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.
- **Psychologist Prescribing** – House File 183 removes the requirement that a psychologist complete certain requirements within 5 years of being issued a conditional prescription certificate. This bill also changes that the physician supervising does not need to be board-certified in specific specialties. This bill awaits consideration on the Senate floor.
- **Psychiatrist Public Fellowship** – House File 274 revises the state-funded psychiatry residency program that was established last session, to include two fellowship positions. The program will annually graduate 9 psychiatry residents and 2 psychiatry fellows. This bill awaits consideration on the Senate floor.
- **Physician Assistants** – House File 424 repeals requirements that physician assistants practice under the supervision of a physician, and instead requires collaboration. This bill awaits consideration on the Senate floor.
- **Commitment Hearings** – House File 466 allows health care providers who have examined a patient involved in a substance abuse or mental health commitment to testify by video. Current law only allows for telephone testimony. This bill awaits consideration in the Senate HHS Committee.
- **Mental Health and Disability Services** – House File 471 comes from the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services to specialize the Independence Mental Health Institute to behaviorally complex youth and the Cherokee MHI to acute and forensic adults, makes changes to the Regional MHDS Governing Board makeup, and adds competency-based restoration to the core service domains of the MHDS Regions. This bill awaits consideration on the Senate floor.
- **Substance Abuse** – House File 621 requires DHHS establish a rate structure for Medicaid reimbursement for substance use disorder residential and intensive outpatient treatment services. This bill awaits a subcommittee being scheduled in the Senate.
- **Mental Health Loan Forgiveness** – House File 151 expands the current program to include prescribing mental health providers. This bill is being considered in the House Appropriations Committee.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Judiciary

Evidence Preservation

On Tuesday, the House passed legislation to ensure evidence and documents used in criminal trials are preserved, even if the defendant has been found guilty. House file 657 originated out of the Judiciary Committee with consultation from the Innocence Project and other groups working to support those who may have been wrongfully convicted.

Division 1 of the bill sets standards for how biological evidence should be preserved after a criminal investigation. If a person is convicted of a class “A” or “B” felony the evidence shall be kept for 20 years after the conviction or until the defendant is released from custody, whichever is longer. This ensures a defendant can have the evidence retested as new technology becomes available and the evidence is available for review should there ever be questions about the guilt of the defendant. Division 1 also prescribes how evidence can be destroyed with appropriate cause and notice.

Division 2 of the bill addresses incarcerated witness testimony, sometimes called jailhouse informants. If prosecutors are using a witness who is incarcerated, they must provide advanced notice to the defendant and provide the following information about the witness;

- Criminal history
- Witness cooperation agreement and any benefit requested or provided to the witness.
- Contents of any statement given by the defendant to the incarcerated witness, including time and place.
- Any information regarding the incarcerated witness recanting testimony.
- Other criminal cases the incarcerated witness has testified in.

This information allows the defendant and their legal counsel the opportunity to fully investigate the witness and helps deter an incarcerated witness from lying to get plea deals.

Division 3 ensures a person who has been convicted of a crime will have access to the files and documents related to their case when requested. The bill requires prosecutors to preserve information in a specific manner but does not require them to turn over attorney work product to the defendant.

House File 657 passed with unanimous support in the House. This bill helps ensure that if an innocent person is convicted of a crime, they have access to the evidence and documents to challenge their conviction.

(Contact: Amanda Wille, 1-5230)

Labor

IWD Reorganizes to Emphasize New Office of Veterans Workforce Services

Iowa Workforce Development expects to streamline and improve coordination of job services for veterans after the creation of a new office that is bringing most veteran-related programs under the same leadership.

IWD’s new Office of Veteran Workforce Services will be led by Jamie Norton, who previously oversaw veteran-related programs at IowaWORKS job centers.

Norton said the new structure for the first time will have 16 Veteran Career Planners at IowaWORKS reporting to the same person instead of individual job center managers. They also will be working more closely with the five Career Planners who had been doing similar work through the Home Base Iowa program. At the same time, the HBI team will

be shifting some of its focus to include more outreach duties, such as attending more out-of-state career fairs and spending more time with Iowa communities to educate them about HBI.

“We’ll be able to streamline the communications and work better overall,” Norton said. “I think it’s going to make it a lot more consistent across the state with what we’re doing across the board.”

IWD also maintains a team of Local Veterans Employment Representatives who work with employers to help them hire veterans. But that team will continue to report to IWD’s new Business Engagement Division.

“None of this should matter to the veterans,” Norton said. “They should just know that wherever they go, there’s going to be a dedicated person to help them.”

For more information on veteran workforce services, visit homebaseiowa.gov or the [veterans service page](#) at IowaWORKS.

(Info from Iowa Workforce Development)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Natural Resources

House Passes Time of Transfer Inspection Fraud & Penalties Measure

On Tuesday March 21, the Iowa House passed House File 634 which makes several changes to the ‘Time-of-Transfer’ inspections certification and administrative process specifications and imposes a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 and an inspector’s certification license suspension of 1-year for fraudulent filing of a time-of-transfer report. The bill clarifies that only certified inspectors may conduct a time-of-transfer inspections. The measure further specifies that an inspector’s certification is considered current if the inspector meets certain Code specified requirements. The measure requires DNR to maintain a publicly available list of currently certified inspectors on the DNR internet site with the list displaying when an inspector first was certified and when their certification is set to expire. HF 634 provides that a certified inspector who fraudulently files a time-of-transfer report with DNR is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$5,000 and suspension of inspector’s certification for one year and that the sellers of property subject to time-of-transfer inspection are responsible for a complete report as part of a real estate transaction.

Spring Turkey Hunting Seasons Only a Few Weeks Away

On Tuesday March 21, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) issued a press release concerning the approach of the state’s spring turkey hunting season. Iowa’s spring turkey hunting begins April 7th with a youth only season, followed by four shorter individual gun/bow seasons and one long archery-only season beginning April 10.

2023 Iowa Spring Turkey Seasons (Gun/Bow)

- Youth: April 7-9
- Season 1: April 10-13
- Season 2: April 14-18
- Season 3: April 19-25
- Season 4: April 26-May 14
- Resident archery-only season: April 10-May 14

Licenses and Fees needed (not including landowners/tenants)

Hunting license (age 16 and older), habitat fee, and a wild turkey license.

Pattern your turkey gun before hitting the woods this spring

The Olofson Shooting Range is offering three turkey patterning nights at the range:

- April 6, 5-7 p.m.
- April 13, 5-7 p.m.
- April 20, 5-7 p.m.

Stations will be set up with sleds for use, a covered shooting area, ear and eye protection, two splatter turkey targets, and assistance from certified range safety officers. Cost is \$5 per person.

(Contact: Lew Olson 1-3096)

State Government

Cutting Bureaucracy and Restyling Licensing in the Hair Industry

Last week the House passed long overdue legislation to streamline the state government to consolidate redundant and similar services into their appropriate agencies to provide improved and more efficient service for Iowans. House Republicans again this week passed legislation to find efficiencies and eliminate bureaucracies that create unnecessary hurdles for Iowans seeking professional licensing.

[HF 652](#) combines the Board of Cosmetology Arts and Sciences and the Board of Barbering to create the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology Arts and Sciences. Additionally, the legislation combines the chapters of Iowa Code governing these two industries and eliminates barriers between the two.

Currently schools of cosmetology and barbering are segregated and prohibited from being in the same space. This prohibition has led to a lack of barbering schools in Iowa. By merging the two boards and allowing cosmetologists or barbers to be taught and practice in the same place, individuals no longer must commit the extra time and tuition for the additional training and certificates for practices that make someone a cosmetologist. In addition to being separate schools, current code does not allow cosmetology schools to be used for any purposes outside of the training and education of cosmetology. HF 652 allows these schools to be used for other purposes outside of schedule instruction and experience time. Allowing the schools to use their spaces to generate revenue will provide an opportunity to keep tuition costs lower.

The legislation makes several changes to provide more freedom to work in the hair and beauty industry. One way the bill advances professional freedom is by amending code to grant the ability for a licensed professional to practice outside an established salon. Several years ago, the Iowa Legislature enacted into law the ability for barbers to use mobile establishments. This bill completes that initial intent and allows licensed cosmetologists/barbers in good standing to practice outside of salons. This legislation also eliminates several practices that currently require a cosmetology license including manicuring, pedicuring, and hairstyling. Eliminating hairstyling from cosmetology allows for blow out hairstyling without needing a cosmetology license. Individuals can practice and perform blow dry styling professionally without needing to go through the cosmetology school and licensing. For individuals who want to be licensed barbers/cosmetologists the number of hours required is being reduced from 2100 to 1550 hours. These changes will require individuals to get trained and licensed more efficiently.

This legislation has been in the works for several years. Eliminating unnecessary barriers to professional licensure and professional protectionism through licensing is a priority for House Republicans. Streamlining licensure and reducing bureaucratic regulations will provide Iowans with more options for careers and get them into the workforce quicker.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

As Driving Season Approaches, DOT reminds Iowans to “Move Over for Me”

With the onset of spring, more Iowans are celebrating the end to winter by taking to the roads. The Department of Transportation is working with AAA to remind Iowans to take steps to avoid potential crashes with vehicles and people on the side of the road.

Iowa law requires motorists to move over or slow down when approaching any vehicle stopped on the side of the road with its flashing lights activated, including passenger cars with hazard lights. To make sure Iowans are aware of this duty, the Department and AAA have begun an education campaign called “Move Over for Me”.

The campaign will feature familiar scenarios that can happen out on the road like having a flat tire, running out of gas, or having a mechanical breakdown of their vehicle. The campaign is focused on educating people to the steps they need to take when they experience one of these events or when driving by another motorist facing these issues. The Department has issued the following tips to help avoid any issues when encountering these situations.

For Drivers:

- Remain alert. Avoid distractions and focus on driving.
- Keep an eye out for emergency vehicles – including tow trucks – that have their lights on and cars with flashers on. Move over one lane when you see them, and if you can’t move over, slow down to safely pass them.
- Be a good passenger. Help identify roadway issues and remind the driver to slow down and move over.
- Watch for people on the roadside. If you see flashing lights, move over or slow down. People may be in or near a disabled vehicle. Just because you don’t immediately see them doesn’t mean they aren’t there.

For Stranded Motorists:

- Pull as far over on the shoulder as safely possible to create more distance between your vehicle and passing traffic.
- Turn your hazard lights on so other drivers are aware you are there.
- Travel to the next exit or stopping point, if you are able to safely do so.
- Call for assistance via phone, website or the AAA Mobile app.
- Remain with your vehicle as long as it’s safe to do so.
- If getting out of your vehicle, watch the oncoming traffic for a good time to exit, and remain alert and close to your vehicle. Avoid turning your back to traffic whenever possible.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Veterans Affairs

Governor Selects New Deputy Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard

The Governor’s Office put out the following press release:

Gov. Kim Reynolds has selected Brig. Gen. William F. McClintock as the Deputy Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard.

“General McClintock’s extensive experience and proven leadership, alongside General Osborn, will ensure that the Iowa National Guard is ‘Always Ready,’” said Governor Kim Reynolds. “With his nearly four decades of service, including his roles as Assistant Adjutant General and Army Chief of Staff, I know General McClintock can help Iowa navigate this increasingly unpredictable world, no matter what comes our way.”

McClintock previously served as Assistant Adjutant General and as the full-time Army Chief of Staff. McClintock graduated and received commission from the Officer Candidate School Program, Iowa Military Academy, at Camp Dodge.

His military assignments include: Platoon Leader, Executive Officer, Company Commander, Battalion Operations Officer, Battalion Commander and Troop Commander. He was the Director of Human Resources for Iowa of both the Army and Air National Guard. He is a Joint Qualified Officer who served three years in an Operational Assignment at U.S. Northern Command in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

McClintock holds both a bachelor’s degree in public administration and a master’s degree in business administration from Upper Iowa University. He also holds a second master’s degree in national security and strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

The adjutant general is the second highest-ranking position in the Iowa National Guard. McClintock will assist in managing more than 7,000 part-time Soldiers.

McClintock will replace Brig. Gen. Stephen E. Osborn, who is the newly appointed Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Ways & Means

House Ways and Means Creates a Buzz with Honey Bee Tax Exemption

This week the House Ways and Means Committee unanimously supported House File 676. The bill relates to the taxation on the sale of honeybees.

House File 676 creates a new subsection in Iowa Code 423.3 that exempts the sales price of honey bees from the state sales and use tax. The subcommittee heard testimony from the honey bee industry that described how honey bee hives are inspected by the state in a similar way to livestock. This regulated industry considers itself to be part of Iowa’s rich agricultural economy and desired similar tax treatment.

The bill now moves to the House floor for further consideration.

(Contact: Kristi Kiious, 2-5290)