

IOWA HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

Revenue Estimating Panel Meets March 12

The state's Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) will hold its next meeting on Thursday, March 12, at 10:00 AM. This meeting will revise the fiscal estimates for the current budget (FY 2026) and for the next year, Fiscal Year 2027. The meeting will also revise the estimates for funding going into the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund.

At December's meeting, the three-member committee estimated that General Fund revenue for Fiscal Year 2026 would be \$8.1575 billion. The panel also made the official revenue forecast for the upcoming FY 2027 budget, projecting that the state would collect \$8.4985 billion in the upcoming budget year. Any changes that lower the expected revenue in the upcoming fiscal year will have to be accounted for in the budget process.

In December, the REC forecast that gaming tax would collect \$303 million in the current year and then rise to \$308 million in Fiscal Year 2027. Actual gaming tax revenue has been stronger than what the panel was projecting and the phaseout of the tax on promotional play is coming to completion, so it will be interesting to see if any revisions are made by the Committee that would increase revenue following into the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Agriculture

Iowans Gain Right to Repair Under House Republican Legislation

Iowa House Republicans have been focused on supporting and strengthening Iowa's farm economy. A major expenditure within a farm's finances is the repair of agricultural equipment. Farmers consistently report to legislators that the costs of repair have skyrocketed over the past few years. As natural and dedicated do-it-yourselfers, fixing equipment is a part of farming. It is only natural then that farmers have asked their government to provide more freedom in the ability to repair their own equipment. As farm equipment (similar to cars and trucks) has become more technologically advanced, some companies have retained information essential to repairing farm equipment.

Two bills were passed by the House Agriculture Committee this week, HSB 751 (Right to Repair) and HF 2529 (Right to Repair for Diesel Exhaust Fluid DEF). The bills generally provide that original farm equipment manufacturers must make the diagnostic and repair information, including technical updates and software updates, in the same manner that the manufacturer makes that information available to authorized repair providers. Thus providing farmers with the "Right to Repair" their own equipment. The bills show House Republicans' continuing commitment to the farmers of Iowa.

(Contact: Mindy Larsen 1-3096)

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Commerce

House Commerce Passes Energy Siting Guidelines, Local Control Completely Maintained

This week, the House Commerce Committee passed House File 2580 to set siting guidelines for renewable electric power generation in Iowa.

This bill in no way prevents local governments from imposing additional siting requirements beyond the bill or even maintain a moratorium on wind, solar, or battery storage in their community. The bill simply states that if a local government would like to have different standards or a moratorium in place, by 2028, the local authority must do the following two things:

1. Hold a public hearing explaining the local authority's reasons for the moratorium or standards different than the statewide guidelines and explain how they are necessary to prevent an adverse impact on the health or safety of their residents or public facilities.
2. Notify property taxpayers of lost revenue to the county based on the local moratorium/standards.

This bill also clearly states that eminent domain is not allowed for solar, wind, or battery storage projects in Iowa.

This bill strikes an important balance with local control and providing guidance to county supervisors, as well as ensuring Iowa is an all-of-the-above energy state and that landowners can determine best what to do with their land.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Economic Growth

House Economic Growth and Technology First Funnel Survivors

This week was the first funnel of the session. That means that all bills needed to be voted out of the House Economic Growth and Technology committee to remain alive. The following bills made the cut as of Wednesday (look to next week for more):

House File 2528—This bill requires the workforce development board to establish a comprehensive initiative to address the state's cyber and artificial intelligence workforce needs. The bill also requires the state board of education to oversee, (with the regents and community colleges) the implementation of curriculum from kindergarten through higher education and the department of education to develop and implement (with DPS), a statewide community education initiative for cyber and artificial intelligence awareness.

House Study Bill 635—This bill establishes ownership of artificial intelligence output and trained artificial intelligence. Basically, it provides that if you own what you input into AI, you own the output unless a contract or terms and conditions state otherwise.

House Study Bill 728—This bill establishes four new programs to be administered by IEDA:

- Interactive digital entertainment program
- Game studio investment matching program
- Game industry fellowship program
- Game studio grant program

The bill makes several appropriations and will have to be referred to the appropriations committee for further consideration.

House File 2312—This bill establishes an affordable housing task force to identify state and local regulatory barriers that contribute to the cost of affordable housing and to examine the corresponding public benefit of such regulations relative to their impact on housing costs.

These bills are now eligible for rereferral or debate on the house floor.

(Contact: Kristi Kiou 2-5290)

Education

Iowa Schools Spend Almost \$24,000 Per K-12 Student

During the 2023-24 school year Iowa spent \$23,711.08 per K-12 student. Total education spending reached nearly \$11.5 billion in the 2023-24 school year.

The total number of students that school year was 483,698.7. The average class size in Iowa is roughly 20 students. That means Iowa is spending almost \$474,000 per classroom.

The average teacher salary in Iowa is about \$63,500. With benefits included, it is about \$85,000. That means roughly \$389,000 of non-teacher salary spending per classroom.

Iowa's K-12 schools receive funding from three levels of government. Local, state and federal governments all provide various amounts of tax dollars for K-12 school districts. The latest school year with complete data according to the non-partisan Legislative Services Agency (LSA) is the 2023-24 school year. Across all three levels of funding plus various other financing sources, the total amount of taxpayer funding in the 2023-24 school year was \$11,469,020,542.24.

Almost \$24,000 per student and nearly \$11.5 billion total on K-12 is a significant amount of taxpayer investment in K-12 schools.

Education Committee Passes Bills Promoting School Choice

On Wednesday, the House Education committee passed bills that solidify school choice in Iowa. House Study Bill (HSB) 735:

- solidifies accredited nonpublic school autonomy;
- creates a revolving loan fund for charter schools and nonpublic schools to help with purchasing, acquiring, developing, reconstruction, remodeling, and replacing school buildings;
- makes sure that charter school teachers are eligible for IPERS;
- and says that public schools have to work with community partners for preschool.

HSB 676 is the Governor's charter school bill that makes sure Teacher Salary Supplement (TSS) money follows the student to the charter school, charter school students must be allowed to participate in extracurricular sports and activities at the public school if their school doesn't have the sport or activity, and charter school students have access to driver's education the same as nonpublic and public school students do.

Parents and students deserve options. House Republicans are ensuring school choice stays strong for many years to come.

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Republicans Advance MAHA, Welfare Reform, Mental Health, Foster Care and Child Care Legislation

This week marked the end of “first funnel” – a legislative deadline where bills need to be out of committee to move forward. This year the House Health and Human Services Committee advanced 32 bills. Below are some of the bills that advanced on MAHA, welfare reform and helping the disabled, mental health, foster care and child care:

Make Iowa Healthy Again – House Study Bill 694, titled the Make America Healthy Again bill, comes from the Governor:

- Requires continuing education on nutrition for certain doctors and physician assistants. This section was a component of Iowa’s Rural Health Transportation Program (RHTP) application.
- Allows for additional health services to change without certificate of need approval, including replacement equipment, air transportation, open heart services, organ transplantation services, behavioral health outpatient services, and bed capacity changes. This section was a component of Iowa’s RHTP application.
- Changes certificate of need process to a public comment period rather than a public hearing
- Requires healthy foods for SNAP and summer EBT
- Allows pharmacists to distribute ivermectin for human consumption as an over-the-counter medicine without liability
- Prohibits schools from providing food and beverages with certain ingredients starting July 1, 2027 (section 20)
- Requires Iowa to join the Psychology Compact with 43 states, including all states surrounding Iowa. This section was a component of Iowa’s RHTP application.

Welfare Reform – House Study Bill 696 aims to focus Iowa’s public assistance programs on caring for disabled Iowans and preparing able-bodied adults for life after welfare. This bill also implements requirements found in the federal One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB).

- **Helping the Disabled:**
 - Makes the following changes to the Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities Program:
 - Expands eligibility from 250% FPL to 300% FPL. DHHS estimates this will cost \$3 million in FY27, \$5 million in FY28 and \$9.7 million in FY29.
 - Excludes pension accounts from income eligibility determinations. DHHS estimates this will cost \$1.275 million in FY27, \$1.945 million in FY28 and \$3.8 million in FY29.
 - Strikes limits on DHHS charging premiums
 - Requires DHHS to maintain a website for individuals to pay premiums electronically
 - Requires a study and annual reporting on Medicaid Exceptions to Policy
 - Requires an increased base reimbursement rate for HCBS providers in rural areas to cover the travel time and expenses incurred
 - Requires DHHS to amend rules regarding the rates of special population nursing facilities to allow for the transfer of high-needs individuals from ChildServe to On With Life.
 - Requires DHHS to convene a work group to examine the unique service needs of high-acuity pediatric recipients of Medicaid and hawk-I with a report due to the legislature.
- **OBBB Implementation:**
 - OBBB requires states to cost share in SNAP costs if payment error rate exceeds 6% beginning in FFY2028 and removes the ability for a state to waive erroneous excessive payments under Medicaid if they exceed 3% error rate.

- This bill requires DHHS to submit quarterly reports to the legislature detailing SNAP and Medicaid error rates.
- This bill seeks multiple waiver requests regarding the SNAP error rate including excluding individuals under 22 years of age from income, allow for automated sources to determine eligibility/benefits, require benefits to be used within 3 months, and only attribute the errors of DHHS to the SNAP error rate
- Requires full implementation of SF494 from 2023 by January 1, 2027.
- OBBB require that beginning October 1, 2028, Medicaid expansion states must provide “for the imposition of such deductions, cost sharing, or similar charges determined appropriate by the State” (in an amount greater than \$0 but below \$35) to individuals between 100%-138% FPL.
 - This bill codifies the current practice of \$8 copay for nonemergent use of the ER and \$5 monthly contribution for not receiving a preventative health exam. Additionally, this bill prevents individuals from re-enrolling in IHWP after multiple failures to pay \$5 monthly contribution unless they pay back premiums.
 - This bill allows IHWP providers to impose a fee of \$5 or less on a member based on their failure to attend a scheduled appointment with the provider.
 - This bill also imposes a \$5 copay for diagnostic dental procedures and \$1 copay for a prescription drug when a suitable generic equivalent drug is available to the member.
- **Welfare Reform:**
 - Allows DHHS to require proof of at least 12 months of residency in Iowa on applications for public assistance. This section exempts individuals receiving Social Security.
 - Requires DHHS to restrict participating in WIC to citizens and qualified aliens and codifies use of the SAVE program for public assistance eligibility.
 - Codifies the DIAL annual public assistance fraud report
- **Ensuring Legislative Oversight:**
 - Requires DHHS to do a cost neutral analysis prior to submitting a waiver request for Medicaid to CMS. If the waiver is determined to be not cost neutral to the state, DHHS shall not submit the request unless approved by a majority vote of both chambers of the legislature.

Mental Health Institutes – House File 2292 requires the state to double the number of inpatient psychiatric beds at each state mental health institute and to apply for a waiver of the federal IMD exclusion. Institution for Mental Diseases (IMD) is a federal prohibition on Medicaid reimbursement for adults (age 21-64) stays in psychiatric facilities with more than 16 beds. 17 states have approved 1115 waivers with CMS to allow for Medicaid funding to be used at these facilities. 10 states have pending applications.

Subacute Mental Health Facilities – House File 2543 makes the following changes based on the subacute mental health facility interim committee:

- Removes the 10 day limit
- Prohibits prior authorization for admission and the first 15 days of treatment. Allows MCOs to review for medical necessity after 45 days of treatment and once every 30 days following.
- Prohibits MCOs from discharging a patient without proper mental health supports in place
- Requires private health insurance coverage
- Establishes a PMIC bed tracking system
- Requires DHHS and DIAL to review rules to removes barriers to subacute care

Foster Parent Training – House File 2163 strikes specific hour training requirements from code for foster parent licensure and renewal. Instead, this bill allows DHHS to determine the need for training based on the experience and training of the individual foster parent and the needs of the child being placed in their care.

Foster Parent Address – House File 2526 prohibits DHHS and their agents from providing the unredacted address of a foster parent to the biological parent of the child in their care.

Child Care Worker CCA – House File 2514 makes child care employees providing care directly to children eligible to receive Child Care Assistance if working at least 32 hours per week and have children enrolled in child care. DHHS has been providing this coverage through a pilot program since July 2023. In January 2025, DHHS presented that 2,105 families have been served by the pilot with an average of 302% FPL.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Judiciary

More Judiciary Bills Survive the First Funnel

HF 2333- Service Animals in Training

Iowa House File 2333 expands and clarifies the rights of people with disabilities to be accompanied by their service animals, including a service animal in training, in public places and any locations permitted by law. The bill ensures that no additional fees can be charged for service animals or service animals in training, though owners are liable for any damages. It also keeps penalties in place for anyone who knowingly denies or interferes with these rights.

HF 2274 Internet Age Verification

House File 2274 requires operators of websites and applications that contain a substantial amount of content considered pornographic for minors to implement reasonable age verification measures to prevent access by individuals under eighteen. The bill defines what constitutes pornographic content and outlines acceptable verification methods, such as digital identification or other commercially reasonable processes. It prohibits retaining identifying information from age verification unless required by law, mandates data security measures, and exempts news organizations and certain internet services. The Attorney General is tasked with enforcing these requirements, including issuing fines for violations.

HSB- 571 DNA

This bill expands the requirement for individuals to submit DNA samples to include not only those convicted or given deferred judgments for felonies or aggravated misdemeanors, but also anyone arrested for these offenses. It allows for automatic DNA expungement if charges are dismissed, acquitted, or not filed within a year of arrest.

HSB 663- Verification for Employment and Licensure

This bill requires Iowa state agencies, institutions, and licensing boards to use federal systems (E-Verify and the SAVE program) to confirm the citizenship and lawful presence of individuals when hiring for state jobs or issuing professional licenses. The bill bars illegal immigrants from being hired by the state or receiving professional licenses. It also makes changes to Iowa's voting laws ensuring illegal immigrants ineligible to register to vote or vote, and adds strict criminal penalties for false voter registration. Additionally, the bill revises bail and pretrial detention rules, making it harder for people charged with serious offenses—and for illegal immigrants charged with indictable offenses—to be released before trial.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

Labor

Registration for the 2026 Build My Future event in Des Moines is Open

Build My Future is a hands-on career immersion event that highlights careers available in Iowa for high school students in Iowa. The event will be held on Wednesday, April 15th at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Last year the event had 7,200 students, 120+ schools, 20+ career pathways, and 100 business exhibitors, with this year's event expected to be even larger.

This year's career pathways include:

- Manufacturing
- Healthcare/Nursing
- Law Enforcement & Emergency Services
- Military
- Culinary, Restaurant & Hospitality
- Agriculture
- Commercial & Residential Construction
- Heavy Equipment Operators
- Trucking/Driver
- Automotive
- IT & Cybersecurity
- Energy
- & More!

To register as a business, click here: <https://iowaskilledtrades.com/exhibitor-and-partnership-registration/>

(Information from IowaWorks and Iowa Skilled Trades)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Local Government

Bill to Move City and School Elections to Even Years Advances

This week the Local Government Committee reported out of committee [House File 2191](#). As amended, the bill moves school board and city elections from November in odd years to even year general elections. If enacted, that means every even year Iowans would get to vote on all elected officials. This change likely means more civic engagement and higher voter turnout for city and school elections. These elections, currently held in odd years, have a large impact on property tax policies and policies that directly affect Iowans where they live.

After moving school board elections to November starting in 2019 Iowa saw a 156% increase in school board election turnout. The increases we have seen in voter turnout for local elections since 2019 has been an important step in increasing Iowans' voice in policies that directly affect their local community. By having all elections held in November of even years we can continue to increase voter turnout for these local elections.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Natural Resources

State and Federal Water Quality Programs In Iowa Reach Over \$500 Million Annually

Iowa is has been dedicated to improving water quality for decades through soil conservation and land management. In 2013 the financial commitment compounded even further with the passage of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy (INRS). The Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy (INRS) is implemented by the Iowa Department of Agriculture, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and Iowa State University.

Last week, the House Natural Resources Committee hosted a speaker from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to update legislators on the state of water quality programming in Iowa. In 2023 (the most recent year available) the combined federal and state investment in water was over \$500 million. The INRS “dashboard” demonstrates farmer’s adoption of practices along with the ever-increasing number of acres that are protected in Iowa. The presentation showed amazing aerial lidar images of farms over time, showing startling detail of conservation practices. Pictures don’t lie, and the watershed specific lidar images that monitor the adoption of practices over the past few decades show the huge increases in farmer’s investments.

Efforts are ongoing but progress on Iowa’s water quality is real and accelerating.

(Contact: Mindy Larsen 1-3096)

Public Safety

Public Safety Wraps Up First Funnel In a Bipartisan Manner

The last Public Safety meetings of first funnel were filled with bi-partisan work. Below are some bills that received votes from Republicans and Democrats.

HSB 705 Drug Free Homeless Service Zones

House Study Bill 705 proposes the creation of "drug-free homeless service zones" in Iowa, establishing stricter penalties for drug-related offenses near facilities that serve the homeless and receive government funding. The bill makes it a criminal offense to sell or attempt to sell controlled substances within 300 feet of these facilities and holds facility operators criminally responsible if they knowingly allow clients to possess or use drugs on the premises. Penalties for violations are heightened, including longer sentences, mandatory fines, and a loss of eligibility for certain state assistance grants for offending facilities. The bill also requires that clearly visible signs be posted at the main entrances to these facilities to mark them as drug-free zones.

HSB 752- Regulating Foreign Entities, Drones and International Directives

House Study Bill 752 addresses concerns about foreign influence and technology. The bill bans state and local governments from using drones made by certain foreign companies—especially those linked to countries seen as security risks—and require officials to switch to safer, approved drones. It would also make it a crime to fly foreign-made drones near important sites, like power plants or military bases.

The bill sets new rules for people who work in Iowa as agents or lobbyists for foreign governments, requiring them to officially register and report their activities.

Finally, International health or government organizations (like the United Nations or World Health Organization) cannot force any rules or orders on Iowa unless the state legislature specifically agrees to them. Iowa agencies and officials would be required to ignore and not help enforce any international regulations unless Iowa lawmakers have approved them first.

HSB 732- Electronic Court Notification System

This bill requires the Iowa state court administrator to establish an electronic notification system by July 1, 2027, for all pending and future criminal cases. Through this system, individuals involved in criminal proceedings—including defendants, victims, witnesses, attorneys, and legal guardians—would receive text-based notifications about case events, appearance reminders, and fee information. The system must ensure the confidentiality of nonpublic information.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

State Government

State Government Committee Advances Constitutional Convention Proposals

[House Joint Resolution 2004](#) was reported out of the State Government Committee this week. The resolution calls for a convention under Article V of the U.S. Constitution. The resolution aims to propose amendments that will impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit its power and jurisdiction, and establish term limits for federal officials and members of Congress.

Key highlights of H.J.R. 2004 include:

1. **Fiscal Responsibility:** The resolution addresses the pressing issue of national debt by advocating for amendments that promote responsible budgeting and spending practices at the federal level. This initiative aims to ensure that future generations are not burdened by excessive debt.
2. **State Sovereignty:** H.J.R. 2004 seeks to reclaim the rightful authority of states by limiting federal overreach. By reducing the federal government's jurisdiction, states can better address the unique needs and concerns of their citizens, fostering a more responsive and effective governance structure.
3. **Accountability in Government:** The resolution proposes term limits for members of Congress and federal officials, promoting a government that is more accountable to the people. By encouraging fresh perspectives and reducing the influence of career politicians, H.J.R. 2004 aims to enhance democratic representation.
4. **A Call to Action:** H.J.R. 2004 reflects the founders' vision of a government that is responsive to the will of the people. It empowers states to act as guardians of liberty, ensuring that the rights and freedoms of citizens are protected against federal overreach.

In summary, House Joint Resolution 2004 represents a call to restore the principles of limited government, fiscal responsibility, and accountability. By advancing this resolution, Iowa is taking a significant step towards safeguarding the rights of its citizens and ensuring a brighter future for generations to come.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

Busy Week for House Transportation Committee

Funnel Week is always a busy time for House policy committees, and that certainly was the case for the House Transportation Committee as they moved a number of proposals to the House Floor.

Maintaining safe roads has always been a top priority for the Committee, and that was no different this week. The panel passed a proposal that would require drivers operating a commercial motor vehicle to be proficient in English. Applicants for a commercial driver's license would be required to take a test to demonstrate proficiency, and drivers on the road could be stopped if they can't speak English. The bill, House Study Bill 698 doesn't just address drivers – it also penalizes the trucking companies that are hiring people who don't meet the Federal and state CDL standards. Fines are imposed on these employers and companies would not get back their trucks until those are paid.

The committee also looked to continue the fight against human trafficking by requiring human trafficking prevention training for those getting a commercial driver's license in Iowa. House Study Bill 697 would require the completion of a class in this prior to receiving a CDL.

Improving driving skills of young drivers was another topic discussed by the committee. When the Legislature revised the school permit law two years ago and created the new special minor's restricted license, strong penalties were included to deter minors from not using this privilege wisely. Some drivers have had this license suspended, which leaves them with no ability to get behind the wheel. House File 2113 was adopted by the Committee to give these drivers the ability to improve their driving skills by being able to obtain a learner's permit and drive while having a parent present.

The Transportation Committee started the process of revising Iowa's abandoned vehicle laws with the passage of House Study Bill 667 took the jumbled current language and produced a streamlined version of the law. This will serve as the starting point for ongoing conversations about changes to address concerns that some towing companies are using the law to sell towed vehicles at an accelerated pace.

Placing guardrails on the use of license plate readers was another hot topic in the committee. House File 2161 was moved with a significant amendment to require city councils and county boards of supervisors to authorize their law enforcement agencies to utilize this form of technology. The bill places some limits on how the information garnered from these devices could be used.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Veterans Affairs

House Veterans Affairs First Funnel Bills

The House Veterans Affairs Committee advanced 5 bills this year to support Iowa Veterans and the Senate advanced two House bills from the 2025 session. This week marked the end of "first funnel," a legislative deadline to have bills out of committee. Below is a list of some of those bills to help Iowa's veterans.

- **Regent Tuition** – House File 2491 provides free tuition to the regent schools for veterans with a permanent service-connected disability rating of 100%.
- **Service Animal Training Grant** – House File 2467 establishes a \$5,000 grant program to fund service animal training for veterans. Provides a \$100,000 appropriation to establish the program.
- **Staff Sergeant Howard Highway** – House File 2478 names the segment of highway 30 by Marshalltown as Staff Sergeant William Nathaniel Howard Highway after he was killed in Syria in December while serving in the Iowa army national guard.
- **In-State Tuition** – House File 175 requires Iowa's community colleges and regent universities to provide in-state tuition for veterans, their spouse, their dependent children, and their survivors, no matter state of residence.
- **Veteran License Plate** – House File 779 allows reserve forces and Iowa national guard members to receive the United States veterans license plate.
- **Hyperbaric Oxygen Program and Fund** – House File 2481 establishes a veterans traumatic brain injury recovery program and fund to allow for the free treatment of veterans with PTSD or traumatic brain injury with hyperbaric oxygen treatment.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)