

IOWA HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

A Tale of Two States – Minnesota Predicts Revenue Growth While Nebraska Faces Headwinds from Recent Plant Closure

As the Revenue Estimating Conference prepares for its spring meeting next Thursday at 10 AM, other states are going through the process of updating revenue forecasts during their legislative sessions.

In Minnesota, the state’s budget agency released their new forecast which projected additional growth in the state and national economy. Minnesota Management and Budget, the executive branch agency charged with developing the state’s revenue forecasts, projected that revenue would come in \$1.2 billion higher than what they had previously forecast for the 2026-2027 budget biennium.

The budget forecast now expects the national economy to grow in 2026 by 2.7 percent, a sizeable increase over the 2.2 percent growth the office predicted last November. Helping to drive the additional growth is the American consumer. Minnesota Management & Budget now expects national consumer spending to grow 2.8 percent this year, which is higher than the 2.1 percent growth projected last fall.

Minnesota state revenue is expected to growth by \$2.2 billion in the 2028-2029 budget cycle, which will be put together next year. But even with the expected growth, Minnesota’s overspending during Tim Walz’s reign of incompetence as governor would leave the state with a budget shortfall of \$3.35 billion in 28-29 if spending stays on its current trajectory.

The partisan nature of the forecasting process in Minnesota, where the Governor’s budget director decides what the numbers are, means Minnesota Republicans are a bit skeptical over the expected revenue growth.

Nebraska faces a much different picture. Last Friday, the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board held its annual in-session meeting to revise that state’s revenue forecasts. Unlike in Minnesota, the Nebraska panel reduced expected state revenues for the next fiscal year by \$175 million.

The main cause of the decline was the closure of Tyson’s beef processing plant in Lexington, NE. This plant, which employed 3200 workers, is being closed due to the low supply of cattle. A study by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln said that the decision to close the plant would cost Nebraska’s economy \$3.3 billion per year. The drop in revenue in the next budget year overshadowed the fact that the panel increased their revenue estimates for the current year by \$20 million.

The Iowa Revenue Estimating Conference will meet on Thursday, March 12 at 10 AM in the Supreme Court chamber. Iowans will be able to watch the proceedings on the Legislative Services Agency’s YouTube channel.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

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Agriculture

Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) Relief for Farmers Passes House Floor

An issue highly popular amongst farmers in Iowa and across the nation, the Right to Repair their own equipment, continues forward. On Monday, the Iowa House passed a bill specific to Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) HF 2529, by a vote of 57-33.

DEF began to be required in farm machinery under the Green New Deal, with technology that literally stops farm equipment in its tracks if the emissions sensor indicates a concern. This is different than in passenger automobiles, where if there is an emissions issue, the check engine or other indicator light may come on, but the car is not disabled from driving. The passage of this bill has received wide praise in the agriculture community. HF 2529 on DEF is one bill intended to support the economic health and efficiency of Iowa farmers.

Shellfish Farms in Iowa

This week the Iowa House passed House File 2534 that provides the regulatory and support framework for farmers interested in expanding their value-added agriculture businesses on their farms – by raising shellfish. The bill passed 90-0.

Farm-raised fish has been successful, and if Iowa provides the right regulatory environment, the business of farm-raised shellfish may also become more profitable. Shellfish enjoy a soybean-meal based food product, so the potential growth of this farming industry could benefit not only the farmer, but the Iowa economy through the consumption of more Iowa soybeans. Iowa House Republicans are supporting many measures to provide whatever support is possible for Iowa farmers in the 2026 session.

(Contact: Mindy Larsen 1-3096)

Commerce

Commerce Bills Pass House Floor

As the House has started floor debate, many bills from the House Commerce Committee have passed the floor with unanimous support. The bills below prepare Iowa for future electric transmission line development, protect Iowans from financial exploitation, and ensure that Iowans are not disincentivized through insurance from donating organs to someone in need.

HF 2227 – Transmission Line, Ag Restoration - This bill requires certain agricultural land restoration following the construction of a 200-kilovolt electric transmission line.

HF 2228 – Transmission Line Right of Way - This bill requires DOT to coordinate with utilities and transmission line developers regarding the use of highway/interstate right of way's for transmission line construction.

HF 2583 – Transmission Line Emergency Planning - This bill came from discussions with IUC regarding out-of-state transmission owners. The IUC recommended additional emergency planning and response requirements including filing an emergency response plan with the IUC, notifications to IUC and department of homeland security and emergency response, as well as civil penalties for violations of these requirements.

HF 2232 – Financial Exploitation - This bill comes from the Department of Insurance and Financial Services to allow for delaying disbursement of funds by insurers when financial exploitation is suspected. The bill includes

notifications to permissible third parties and the insurance commissioner, timelines for delay, and requires insurers to train employees on financial exploitation.

HF 2633 – Organ Donor, Life Insurance - This bill prohibits life, disability, and long-term care insurance from limiting coverage for living organ donors.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Economic Growth

2026 Thriving Communities Announced

Recently, the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) and Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) announced the newly designated 2026 Iowa Thriving Communities are: Clear Lake, Ottumwa, Sioux Center, Urbandale and Waukon.

Now in its third year, the Iowa Thriving Communities initiative recognizes forward-thinking communities that are proactively addressing workforce housing needs. Designated communities complete a highly competitive application process, including a live pitch from teams of local partners to a panel from IEDA and IFA. Selected communities demonstrate best practices in planning, financial support, targeted development, leadership, and employer engagement.

In addition to valuable scoring advantages for the Federal Housing Tax Credit and Workforce Housing Tax Credits, HOME, and Community Catalyst programs (effective through 2026), designated communities will gain statewide and national visibility as models for successful housing strategies.

The 2026 Iowa Thriving Communities will be recognized at the HousingIowa Conference in Cedar Rapids, Sept. 2–4. A free Iowa Thriving Communities Reception will be held on Tuesday, Sept. 2. Learn more at housingiowaconference.com

(Contact: Kristi Kiouss 2-5290)

Education

House Passes Social Studies Standards.....Again

On Tuesday, March 4, House Republicans passed legislation establishing new Social Studies standards. If it seems like you just saw new social studies standards established by the Department of Education, you did. If it seems like you remember the legislature weighing in on this issue in past sessions, you do. In 2024, House Republicans successfully passed legislation establishing new Social Studies standards. The Senate Republicans chose not to pass that legislation. The House standards are detailed, prescriptive, and made certain Iowa students were learning real social studies. Learning the facts. Learning the history of Western Civilization and how America became what it is today. Learning true stories about Americans, reading documents that formed America, understanding why our government and economies work the way they do.

Students should not be taught political opinions such as that America is racist or evil. Students need to be facts. All of them. That includes the dark parts of American history but also the the incredible accomplishments America has had. Iowa's school should not be in the business of turning out students that hate America. Teachers should not be in the business of left wing indoctrination. Social studies should be taught as facts, not as opinion.

For background, Iowa's social studies standards were rate as poor. The Fordham Institute gave Iowa a 'D' for its Civics Standards and an 'F' for it's U.S. History standards. The standards haven't changed since 2017 so a change was in order.

On January 15, 2026 the State Board of Education adopted new Social Studies standards for Iowa schools. These standards were required due to HF 2545 in 2024. HF 2545 said the State Board of Education shall complete a review and revision of the state Social Studies standards. The National Association of Scholars and the Civics Alliance agree those standards fall woefully short. Those groups state "Iowa's Department of Education has failed to provide properly revised social studies standards." They go on to say that "...these standards still impose on Iowa the politicized framework and counterproductive pedagogy of radical national organizations such as the National Council for the Social Studies and the American Institutes of Research." So here we are...again.

[House File 2510](#) gives specifics for our Social Studies standards because the bureaucrats failed. Should students know the Constitution? Bill of Rights? Declaration of Independence? The Mayflower Compact? The Federalist Papers? The Emancipation Proclamation? The Pennsylvania Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery? Of course. These documents and more are listed in the bill. Should students know about Benjamin Franklin? George Washington? Frederick Douglass? Elizabeth Cady Stanton? Abraham Lincoln? Again, of course. These are in the bill. Should Iowa students learn about the United States' republican form of government compared with different forms of government including dictatorship, monarchy, oligarchy, theocracy, communism, and autocracy? Again, of course. This helps put Iowa back on track to lead in education.

(Info from Fordham Institute: <https://fordhaminstitute.org/sites/default/files/publication/pdfs/20210623-state-state-standards-civics-and-us-history-20210.pdf#page=134> and <https://www.nas.org/blogs/statement/iowas-social-studies-standards-revision-falls-short>)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Health and Human Services

House Passes MAHA Bill - Republicans Support, Democrats Oppose

This week, the Iowa House passed legislation titled the Make American Healthy Again bill. House File 2676 passed 65-30, with all Democrats voting no. This comprehensive bill works to ensure that taxpayer funds are not making Iowa's children obese and creating poor health outcomes for life, while also focusing on the reality that physical movement helps not just physical health, but mental health.

Iowa currently ranks 11th in the nation for adult obesity. One in six children in Iowa are considered obese. Obesity leads to high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and, as many of the members of this legislature are concerned, several types of cancers. These obesity related diseases often disproportionately affect lower-income individuals at a higher rate. The leading cause of death in Iowa is heart disease.

SNAP Healthy Standards – This bill prohibits soda and candy from being purchased under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The legislature would like to emphasize the nutrition aspect of this taxpayer funded program to assist low-income individuals. According to a 2016 USDA study of foods purchased with SNAPs funds, 20 cents of every dollar was spent on sweetened beverages, desserts, salty snacks, candy and sugar. This bill ensures that taxpayer funds are not going to fund poor health outcomes that do not alleviate hunger.

School Nutrition – This bill prohibits schools and vendors from serving breakfast and lunch that contain blue dye 1 and 2, green dye 3, potassium bromate, propylparaben, red dye 40, yellow dye 5 and 6. This bill also requires education standards to include instruction on nutrition and to emphasize the importance of animal-based protein, dairy, vegetables, and fruit. This section is the first step to ensuring that taxpayer funds are not harming Iowa's children and setting them up for a future healthy lifestyle.

Technology in Schools – This bill recognizes the harm constant use of technology has on children’s learning, attention span, and mental health. The bill reasonably limits K-5 digital instruction to 60 minutes per school day while also allowing parents to opt out of all digital instruction. This bill prohibits the use of cell phones during recess, when children should be playing rather than sitting behind another device. This bill also requires school districts to go through their device policy and see if one-to-one devices are really necessary for education.

Physical Activity and Participation in Activities - This bill requires additional PE throughout the school week and requires the presidential fitness test. Importantly, this bill also requires high school students to participate in at least one cocurricular or extracurricular activity prior to graduation. Children need physical activity to create healthy habits as they grow, and participation in activities provide a sense of belonging and community that is necessary to leading a successful life.

Physician Nutrition Education – This bill requires medical schools in Iowa to require at least 40 hours of coursework on nutrition and metabolic health to graduate. This bill also requires nutrition continuing education for certain doctors and physician assistants. These initiatives aim to ensure that our medical community is focusing on their patients leading a healthy lifestyle.

This bill additionally allows pharmacies to offer ivermectin over-the-counter and for the state to participate in the psychology compact to attract more psychologists to Iowa.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Judiciary

Republicans Advance Strong Anti-Crime Bills

We’ve seen it countless times across the country, career criminals who have never had to face consequences for their actions harming and even killing innocent people. House Republicans have had enough and introduced three major pieces of legislation this year. On Wednesday, the bills were passed off the house floor and sent to the Senate for their consideration. Below is an explanation of the bills;

House File 2542- Habitual Offenders

House File 2542 takes a serious approach to repeat offenders by creating a clear point system to identify those who repeatedly break the law. Under the bill, all felonies and certain high-level aggravated misdemeanors count as one point, while all other aggravated misdemeanors and some serious misdemeanors count as half a point. Once someone reaches three points, they qualify as a habitual offender and shall be sentenced to a minimum of 20 years in prison. A person sentenced under this is not eligible for parole

This bill addresses the revolving door we see too often in our justice system. Instead of treating repeat low-level violent or drug-related offenses as isolated incidents, HF 2542 recognizes the pattern and the growing risk to the community. When someone consistently refuses to follow the law, there should be real consequences. By establishing a mandatory minimum 20-year sentence at the three-point threshold, the bill ensures that chronic offenders are held accountable and that communities are protected.

House File 2505- Bail and Bond Updates

House File 2505 strengthens Iowa’s bail and bond system by closing loopholes and setting clearer standards for pretrial release. Instead of relying on vague or inconsistent criteria, the bill creates a structured framework judges must follow when deciding who is released and under what conditions. This legislation ensures that bond amounts and release decisions reflect the actual risk a defendant poses to the community. The bill creates more consistency, more accountability, and a system that puts public safety first.

House File 2719- Judicial Transparency

This bill increases judicial transparency by requiring the State Commissioner of Elections to collect and publish clear, objective performance data on judges. Instead of relying on anecdotes, Iowans will have access to straightforward metrics like sentencing patterns, bond decisions, and reversal rates when evaluating judges in retention elections. The goal is simple: more transparency, more accountability, and better-informed voters. When the public can see consistent, factual data about how judges perform on the bench, it strengthens trust in our courts and in the retention process itself.

House Bill Emphasizes Race-Neutral and Merit Based Policies

House File 2711 promotes a colorblind system by eliminating requirements that mandate affirmative action plans, diversity quotas, or preferential treatment based on certain characteristics. Instead, a race-neutral, gender-neutral, and merit-based governance in Iowa. Outdated provisions in state law that tie policies, programs, employment, education, and licensing to considerations of race and gender are replaced with a focus on equal opportunity for all individuals based solely on qualifications, character, and hard work.

Mandates requiring affirmative action plans and reports are eliminated. Instead of forcing the state to give preference to certain businesses based the characteristics of the business owner, the state will now give preference to Iowa based businesses.

The bill shifts emphasis to reporting on equal opportunity efforts that apply neutrally to all qualified participants. This aligns with the stated goal of creating a merit-based system where hiring, promotions, and contracts reward individual ability and performance, not group identity.

Additionally, the bill repeals mandates for dubious and often ideologically motivated implicit bias training for law enforcement.

Iowa should be a "merit-based state" where opportunities are open to all without favoritism tied to race, gender, or other group identities. The Supreme Court has already found certain affirmative action policies to be unconstitutional. The bill fosters a system that judges people by their skills, work ethic, and achievements—ensuring fairness and encouraging excellence across the board.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

Labor

Top 25 Job Postings in Iowa (Updated February 2026)

1. Registered Nurses - 3,854
2. Physicians, All Other - 1,768
3. Customer Service Representatives - 1,416
4. Nurse Anesthetists - 830
5. Retail Salespersons - 794
6. Nursing Assistants - 740
7. Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses - 723
8. Family Medicine Physicians - 718

9. General and Operations Managers - 702
10. Fast Food and Counter Workers - 639
11. Critical Care Nurses - 508
12. Stockers and Order Fillers - 505
13. First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers - 482
14. Physical Therapists - 455
15. Project Management Specialists - 453
16. Teachers and Instructors, All Other - 443
17. Teaching Assistants, Special Education - 427
18. Radiologic Technologists and Technicians - 421
19. Computer Systems Engineers/Architects - 414
20. Managers, All Other - 403
21. Cooks, Restaurant - 397
22. Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners - 397
23. Accountants and Auditors - 381
24. First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers - 370
25. Medical Assistants - 359

Employers With The Most Openings

1. UnityPoint Health - 1,498
2. Trinity Health - 1,409
3. The University of Iowa - 1,126
4. Fareway Stores, Inc. - 517
5. Vituity - 480

(Info from IowaWorks <https://workforce.iowa.gov/jobs/openings/top-25-job-postings>)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Local Government

Several Local Government Bills Passed by Iowa House

The House of Representatives recently passed several bills that had previously been reported by the Local Government Committee. Below is a brief summary of those bills.

HF 2157 - Abandonment of Dogs and Cats

Amends to code to require an animal shelter volunteer or employee to accept the dog/cat to not be considered abandoned. Under current law county attorneys cannot prosecute individuals who drop animals off outside the shelter.

HF 2618 - Eliminating Smart Planning Principles

Repeals Chapter 18B, which requires state agencies, local governments, and public entities smart planning principles to consider 10 principles when considering zoning and development. Chapter 18B does not require the application of the principles creating confusion and debate in local communities about what is required when zoning decisions are being made. Does not change any laws for counties or cities concerning zoning regulations and processes.

HF 2255 - Redaction of Elected Officials Personally Identifiable Information

Expands the eligibility to request redaction of personally identifiable information from public websites for members of the General Assembly and federal and statewide elected officials. Directs the Secretary of State to submit recommendations for how to protect such information for those seeking election while verifying their residency.

HF 2520 - Short-Term and Expected Vacancies for City and County Officials

This bill would prohibit a petition to force special elections to fill vacancies for county and city officials if the remainder of the term is less than 6 months. Also creates an opportunity for elected county and city officials to submit in writing at least 73 days before the next general election to their governing board the known date they will leave the office to allow the council or board to declare a vacancy and allow the position to be filled at the next general election for the remainder of the office's term.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

State Government

Several State Government Bills Passed by Iowa House

The House of Representatives recently passed several bills that had previously been reported by the State Government Committee. Below is a brief summary of those bills.

HF 2328 – Report on State Employee Salaries

Requires DAS to provide the report on state employee salaries on the Department's website. Electronic copies may still be requested by individuals for a fee not to exceed the cost of providing an electronic copy.

HF 2509 – Airport Alcohol Sales

Amends code to allow licensed retailers at commercial airports to sell and dispense alcohol an hour before the earliest scheduled commercial flight.

HF 2588 - Public Improvement Exclusions

Equipment acquired by or for a city utility related to an electric generating project is excluded from the definition of "public improvement". Adds the furnishing of a manufactured home, including construction of the foundation or tiedown systems as excluded from "public improvement".

HF 2330 – Public Document Request Standards

Iowa Public Information Board bill to create more direct acknowledgement and provide estimated times and costs for fulfilling a public records request.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Transportation

Speed Cameras About to Come Back Into the Conversation

When the General Assembly passed legislation during the 2024 session covering the use of automated traffic enforcement (ATE) systems (aka “speed cameras”), the use of these traffic control devices was limited to those communities that had cameras operational before January 1, 2024 and received a permit from the DOT.

The law said that those communities who didn’t get a permit or whose cameras were put up after January 1, 2024 had to wait until the summer of 2026 to apply to put their cameras into effect. The calendar has now turned to March 2026, and officials are starting to talk about submitting their application to the DOT. So it is time for a refresher on this law and what communities must do to get a permit.

For a city or county to operate an automated traffic enforcement (ATE) system, they have to show the speed and safety issues at the camera’s location and how utilizing the speed camera is necessary to improving traffic safety at that location.

Communities apply to the Department of Transportation for a permit to set up the speed camera and issue citations for those caught speeding. In order to get a permit, they have provide the Department with the following information showing that the ATE system is needed to improve traffic safety:

Here is what they have to show DOT in order to keep operating the ATE system:

- *Number of traffic violations at the location of ATE system in the year prior to it being put into operation;*
- *Number & severity of accidents at the location of the ATE system;*
- *Analysis of the speed data for the locations of the ATE system;*
- *Cause of critical safety issues at that location;*
- *Alternative methods to reduce safety and accident issues at that location that the community has already employed;*
- *Any discussion with outside sources on the traffic issues;*
- *An explanation detailing that the ATE system is appropriate and necessary to address the traffic safety issues at that location.*

The law also sets a standard for all speed cameras. Penalties cannot be imposed if a driver is less than 10 miles an hour over the speed limit. The law also sets out a statewide fine schedule. The fines would be:

- Between 10 and 20 mph over - \$75 fine;
- Between 20 and 25 mph over - \$100 fine;
- Between 25 and 30 mph over - \$250 fine; and
- In excess of 30 mph over - \$500 fine.

Fines would be doubled in construction zones. Violations will be considered civil infractions and will not be considered by DOT in determining driver’s license sanctions. Violations will also not be considered in the determination of auto insurance premium rates.

The bill also sets requirements for signage around the ATE systems. Communities who are granted permits from the DOT are also required to perform calibration tests on the cameras and document these efforts. And annually, a community with a permit would be required to submit a report to the DOT.

The new law places some restrictions on the use of mobile speed cameras. Communities with populations under 20,000 are not allowed to use this type of ATE system.

It is not known how many communities will be applying to use these systems to improve traffic safety. But a number of communities already have the infrastructure in place, so members should expect to start hearing from local officials about how ATE systems are needed in their areas.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Ways & Means

Tax Credit for Nurse Mentors

House File 327 passed unanimously out of subcommittee this week. The bill creates a nurse practitioner preceptor tax credit for Iowa residents. A preceptor is defined as an ARNP who is licensed by the board. A clinical preceptorship means a mentoring experience under the direction of a nursing program where a preceptor is used to provide a clinical learning experience for a student who is a resident enrolled in the nursing program.

In order to be eligible for the tax credit provided in House File 327, a preceptor must:

- Provide (for free) instruction and supervision during a clinical preceptorship,
- Be employed at the clinical facility where the preceptorship occurs,
- Be selected by the nursing program in collaboration with the clinical facility to participate in the clinical preceptorship, and
- Have at least one year of experience in the preceptor role.

If these conditions are met, a tax credit of \$1,000 per clinical preceptorship is available. At least 100 hours of clinical learning experience must be provided, and one preceptor may not accrue more than \$2,000 in tax credits in the aggregate. The tax credit is refundable and applies to tax years 2026 and after. House File 327 is now available for full committee consideration.

(Contact: Kristi Kiou 2-5290)