

IOWA HOUSE REPUBLICANS

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IowaHouseRepublicans.com

Appropriations

House Continues Work on Fiscal Year 2027 Budget

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The House of Representatives has started formulating Iowa’s budget for the next fiscal year. Budget bills began moving through subcommittee last week, culminating with the House Appropriations Committee approving five bills Wednesday to advance to the floor.

Unlike the Senate, which has yet to reveal any proposed budget bills, the various House bills represents the initial proposal from the chamber. The bills spend the following amounts of money:

	Estimated FY 2026	Governor FY 2027	House FY 2027	House FY 2027 vs. Est. FY 2026
Administration and Regulation	\$ 73,714,090	\$ 73,101,113	\$ 73,331,113	\$ -382,977
Agriculture and Natural Resources	46,605,670	46,905,670	47,261,670	656,000
Economic Development	40,337,127	38,448,145	39,348,145	-988,982
Education	1,031,576,216	1,046,430,902	1,050,657,903	19,081,687
Health and Human Services	2,557,314,264	2,578,335,922	2,561,294,417	3,980,153
Justice System	924,933,800	936,006,002	937,137,002	12,203,202

The House budget represents a 1.6 percent increase in state General Fund spending when compared to the current year’s budget.

The bills setting out the actual line items have begun moving towards consideration on the House floor. The House Appropriations Committee approved five budgets on Wednesday, including:

- Administration and Regulation (HSB 771)
- Agriculture and Natural Resources (HSB 772)
- Economic Development (HSB 773)
- Justice Systems (HSB 775)
- Judicial Branch (HSB 776)

The other two budgets, Health and Human Services (HSB 777) and Education (HSB 778) have been approved by their budget subcommittees and await further action in the full Appropriations Committee. Work continues to put together the Transportation and Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund budget bills. These bills do not spend General Fund dollars.

(Contact: Brad Trow 1-3471)

Agriculture

Raw Milk or Raw Milk Products: Expansion of Opportunity to Sell

House File 2767 provides raw milk or products made from raw milk, an expansion of the opportunity to sell this local product. The bill provides that a raw milk seller may advertise, market, sell or distribute raw milk or raw milk product, if all of the following apply:

- (a) dairy farm has a license
- (b) the home food processing located on the premises of a raw milk dairy farm
- (c) the dairy farm and milk meet requirements of Chapter 195 of Iowa Code.

At a Farm-To-Table event, the raw milk/raw milk product must be on the premises of the producer's raw milk dairy, but otherwise may be sold similar to a Cottage Food. Raw Milk or raw milk products can be delivered to an individual, for use by the individual and individual's family or non-paying guests. (Cannot deliver to a farmers' market or retail.)

Last, the bill requires labeling on the raw milk or raw milk products, similar to the labeling required for cottage foods.

(Contact: Mindy Larsen 1-3096)

Commerce

Governor Signs Commerce Bills

Recently, the Governor signed six bills that came from the House Commerce Committee. The bills below do the following:

SF 2214 – 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 ways for transmission line construction.

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.

SF 572 – Health Facility Ownership - This bill prohibits Chinese, Russian, and North Korean ownership of hospitals and health care facilities.

SF 2215 – Contingent Deferred Annuities - This bill exempts contingent deferred annuities from Iowa's nonforfeiture law. A contingent deferred annuity is an insurance product for retirement funds. This is model language from the NAIC.

HF 2497 – Car Sharing - This bill sets up the insurance and liability framework for peer-to-peer car sharing programs under an agreement between a shared vehicle owner and a shared vehicle driver.

HF 2582 – Public Adjustors - This bill is language proposed by the Department of Insurance and Financial Services, though, not a department bill. The bill relates to implementation of last year's legislation that created additional requirements for public adjusters. The bill provides fraud oversight of public adjusters, provides for exemptions related to insurance companies, and updates financial responsibility requirements.

Education

Iowa's Class of 2025 Graduation rate reaches 88.8%, Exceeding Pre-pandemic Rates

Iowa's high school graduation rate increased half of a percentage point, reaching 88.8% for the graduating class of 2025, according to figures released today by the Iowa Department of Education. This marks the highest graduation rate in the past five years and the first time since 2020 that Iowa's graduation rate has exceeded prepandemic levels.

State data show 88.8% of students in Iowa's class of 2025 (35,116 students) graduated within four years, increasing 0.5 percentage points from 88.3% for the class of 2024 (34,158 students). The class of 2024 was the first time graduation rates matched those before the pandemic for the class of 2019. Now, for the class of 2025, graduation rates are also up 0.5 percentage points from 88.3% for the class of 2019.

"In our class of 2025, nearly 1,000 more Iowans earned their high school diploma—a powerful accomplishment positioning them to learn more and earn more," said Iowa Department of Education Director McKenzie Snow. "Through the hard work of our students, families and educators, Iowa significantly narrowed graduation rate gaps experienced by students with disabilities, low-income backgrounds, and experiencing homelessness. These gains reflect Iowa's collective focus on accountability for learner outcomes and our unwavering commitment to empowering all students to meet high expectations."

In addition to overall gains, several student groups experienced significant graduation rate gains, including:

- Up 1.6 percentage points for students with disabilities (gains three times higher than Iowa's overall gains)
- Up 1.0 percentage point for students with low-income backgrounds (gains two times higher than Iowa's overall gains)
- Up 4.9 percentage points for students experiencing homelessness (gains ten times higher than Iowa's overall gains)

Graduation rates for both male and female students increased, but the graduation rate for females continues to outpace that of males by 3.4 percentage points. Students who are Black or African American experienced gains five times higher than Iowa's overall gains, up 2.5 percentage points.

Graduation rates for students who are English learners declined 1.2 percentage points, underscoring the importance of the Iowa Department of Education's continued investment in both current and future teachers supporting English learners through improved professional learning and preparation.

Iowa's four-year graduation rate for the class of 2025 is higher than several of its neighboring states. Michigan, North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota and Nebraska recently reported 2025 graduation rates below Iowa's, at 84.0%, 84.2%, 84.9%, 86.1% and 87.9%, respectively. Among other Midwestern states, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Wisconsin reported 2025 graduation rates above Iowa's, at 89.0%, 89.8%, 91.4% and 92.0%, respectively. Kansas and Ohio have not yet released 2025 four-year graduation rates.

Iowa graduation rates are calculated with a formula established by the U.S. Department of Education. Unique student identification numbers allow school districts to account for all ninth-grade students as they move through high school. At the state level, the method helps determine when a student graduates, even if the student has switched districts during high school.

Iowa's five-year graduation rate — which reflects students who were part of a graduating class but took an extra year to finish high school — was 90.6% for the class of 2024, up by 0.7 percentage points from 89.9% for the class of 2023, and exceeding the prepandemic rate of 90.5% for the class of 2019.

Iowa's annual dropout rate reflects the percent of students in grades 9-12 who dropped out of school during a single year. The annual dropout rate was 2.30% (3,574 students) for the 2024-25 school year, showing lower dropout rates from both last year (2.59% in the 2023-24 school year) and before the pandemic (2.61% in the 2018-19 school year). More information on Iowa's graduation rates and dropout rates, including rates by school district and student group, are available on the Department of Education's [Graduation Rates and Dropout Rates webpage](#).

(Info from Iowa Department of Education)

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Health and Human Services

House Ensures Parental Involvement in HPV Vaccine

This week, the Iowa House sent Senate File 304 to the Governor to ensure that parents are involved in the decision to inject a vaccine into their own child.

Current Iowa Code allows for minors to consent to very few medical treatments *without* parental consent. One of those is for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. This code section has been construed to include the ability for a minor to consent to the Hepatitis B vaccine and the HPV vaccine. All other vaccines, including those for whooping cough, measles, mumps, polio, pneumococcal, require parental consent, just like 99% of health care services.

Senate File 304 simply removes the ability for a child as young as 9 to consent to the HPV vaccine without their parent being involved in the discussion.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Judiciary

AMBER Alerts Working Across the Country to Save Children

When a child is abducted, time matters. Every minute counts, and the faster information gets out, the better the chances of bringing that child home safely. That's exactly what the AMBER Alert system was designed to do.

The AMBER Alert program was created after the abduction and murder of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman from Arlington, Texas. In the aftermath, her community searched for a better way to provide notifications when a child is missing. Local broadcasters and law enforcement worked to create a system that provides immediate alerts to the public.

What started in Texas didn't stay there long. By 2003, AMBER Alert became a nationwide program. Today, Iowa runs its own system, continuing that original mission and has successfully saved many children in the state.

When an AMBER Alert is issued, the goal is speed and visibility. Spread information fast and in as many ways as possible.

- **TV and radio** break into regular programming with details about the child and suspect

- **Cell phones** receive alerts in the affected area
- **Highway signs** display vehicle descriptions and license plate numbers

Not every missing child case triggers an AMBER Alert, and that's intentional. Law enforcement follows strict criteria to make sure when an alert goes out, people take it seriously:

- There must be a confirmed abduction
- The child is believed to be in real danger
- There's enough information for the public to actually help
- The child is under 18

The strength of the AMBER Alert system comes down to one thing: people paying attention. When thousands of people are suddenly looking for the same vehicle or suspect, it becomes much harder for someone to disappear.

That awareness has led to the safe recovery of thousands of children across the country. It's proof that when communities, law enforcement, and technology come together, it works.

At the end of the day, AMBER Alerts are more than just notifications—they're a reminder that protecting kids is something we all have a role in.

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

Labor

House Passes Apprenticeship Bill

On Wednesday, the House Republicans passed a priority workforce bill. The bill focuses on making sure our Iowa students have the opportunities they need to successfully enter the workforce while also filling positions Iowa needs. The bill appropriates \$9.5 million to a new Career Training Physical Program. The purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance for construction of new facilities and procurement of equipment that expands the capacity of community colleges and unionized and nonunionized private sector apprenticeship programs to provide education and training for workers in high-demand fields in Iowa. All the groups offering these apprenticeship programs are doing vital things for Iowa and for Iowa students. This funding helps the expansion of these efforts.

Some school districts are already doing a great job offering pre-apprenticeship programs. This bill encourages other districts to partner with apprenticeship sponsors and the Iowa Office of Apprenticeship. Schools can establish new coursework in areas such as plumbing, HVAC, and math for skilled trades; align their coursework to meet requirements of registered apprenticeship programs; and expand their current programs to offer additional opportunities.

House Republicans heard time and again from community colleges that the Last Dollar Scholar program was working however more control over the program would make it more successful. These colleges know what jobs are needed in their area and shouldn't be hamstrung in their efforts to train Iowans for those jobs.

Feedback from Iowans helped House Republicans create these pathways for students to experience apprenticeship programs early on so they are able to earn a living in a high-pay, high-demand fields. This helps Iowa students, Iowa families, and Iowa's future.

(Contact: Kristin Rozeboom 1-3015)

Local Government

Accessory Dwelling Unit Cleanup Signed into Law

One issue that Iowans have voiced their concerns with is housing affordability. It is an issue that affects Iowans in all age groups and is felt in rural and urban areas. There are many contributing factors to housing affordability including supply and inventory, property taxes, gaps in the rental market, building codes, zoning, and other regulations.

Last year a new law benefiting families, seniors, and individuals seeking flexible living arrangements was passed. After the law went into effect in July, cities and counties were 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.

[Senate File 2369](#), a small cleanup of the new law was signed into law by the Governor last week. The bill clarifies several definitions from last year's law requiring the allowance of ADUs by cities and counties to define the size calculations of ADUs and primary residential units. Additionally, the new law states that cities and counties can only regulate ADUs in historical preservation districts to the extent that other buildings are regulated based on historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of the district.

House Republicans have continued to explore where unnecessary and burdensome processes can be eliminated or streamlined to improve the speed and affordability of new housing.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Public Safety

Stricter Bail Requirements Approved by House and Senate

It will soon be more difficult for those who break the law to be released on bond. SF 2399 creates stricter bail requirements and prohibits a person from being released on their own recognizance in most cases. Below is a more detailed summary of the bill.

1. Stricter Bail Requirements

- **Bond Schedule Consistency:** Magistrates are generally required to follow the uniform bond schedule. If they want to set bail at an amount lower than what the schedule suggests, they must now provide a written justification for doing so.
- **Inflation Adjustments:** The bill directs the judicial council to update the bond schedule to account for inflation, it hasn't been updated since July 2017.

2. Limitations on "Own Recognizance" (Pretrial Release)

The bill significantly limits when a defendant can be released on their "own recognizance" (released based on a promise to return to court without paying money).

- **Eligibility:** A defendant is only eligible for this type of release if they are charged with a nonviolent, nondrug simple or serious misdemeanor.
- **Exclusions:** This means anyone charged with a felony, a drug-related offense, or a violent crime would likely be required to post bail or meet other strict conditions to be released.

3. Verification of Pretrial Evaluations

If the Department of Corrections completes a pretrial release evaluation (a report used to help a judge decide if a person is a flight risk), the evaluator must now verify all information in that report before giving it to the magistrate. This is intended to ensure the judge is making decisions based on accurate data.

4. Restrictions for Specific Crimes

The bill explicitly states that the standard bond schedule cannot be used to simply release someone if they are charged with:

- Going armed with intent.
- Possession of a firearm by a felon.
- A "forcible felony" (such as murder, robbery, or sexual abuse).

(Contact: Amanda Wille 1-5230)

State Government

Governor Signs Charitable Calendar Raffles into Law

As the legislative session approaches the final stretch, several State Government Committee bills that have moved through the legislative process were signed into law by the Governor last week.

[House File 2506](#), is a new law to allow charitable organizations to distribute prizes up to one year from the day of a drawing for a charitable raffle. These qualified organizations are organizations that are tax exempt nonprofits, educational institutions, churches, and civic groups. These organizations do have to obtain a license from the Department of Inspections, Appeals, and Licensing to ensure fair and equal practices.

By changing the law to allow prizes to be awarded up to a year after a raffle drawing these organizations can organize "calendar raffles" which have become a popular fundraising method for many nonprofit groups. These calendar raffles consist of selling individually numbered calendars that have drawings throughout the life of the calendar, either weekly, monthly, or sporadically, and the individual with the calendar number that is drawn for that date wins the prize. Calendar raffles are popular in other states due to their ability to have multiple "raffles" with a much lower overhead cost of doing many individual raffles. Upon enactment Iowa's nonprofit organizations will have yet another fundraising tool at their disposal.

(Contact: Jason Covey 1-3626)

Veterans Affairs

Veterans Affairs Bills Sent to Governor

Recently, the House Veterans Affairs Committee has sent two bills to the Governor for her consideration.

House File 2491 provides free tuition to a regent school for veterans with a permanent service-connected disability rating of 100%. There is no limit on the number of degrees a veteran can receive, as long as they have been accepted into the program. The veteran must have exhausted all other federal financial assistance.

Additionally, Senate File 93 allows national guard members and reservists to serve on the county commission of veterans affairs.

(Contact: Natalie Ginty 5-2063)

Ways & Means

House Republicans Support EMS Funding and Tax Credit

House Republicans spearheaded the effort to create the EMS levy to ensure dedicated emergency medical services funding. When an Iowan calls 911—they should feel confident a prompt response is coming and House Republicans are ensuring that. This week a pair of EMS bills passed the House Ways and Means Committee in support of that goal.

Currently, 21 counties have a county-wide, voter-approved EMS levy. House File 92 relates to that levy found in Iowa Code 422D. The bill stops TIF districts from swiping the increment on the EMS levies and spending it however they want. Although it seems obvious the money was specifically for EMS funding because the money was voted on by the residents of the county *specifically for EMS funding*, that hasn't always been the case. TIF related development project were never meant to receive that money and any other interpretation is misleading and dishonest. The bill applies to property taxes due and payable in fiscal years beginning on or after July 1, 2026.

Another bill that passed the House Ways and Means Committee this week is House File 2280. Currently, an emergency medical services member who is certified as a first responder under Code chapter 147A may claim an individual income tax credit for services performed in the amount of \$250. House File 2280 modifies the credit to also allow EMS personnel to claim the tax credit if they are a volunteer ambulance driver. House Republicans will continue to recognize the local responders who donate their time and talents for the safety of their community. This tax credit is just a small token for the sacrifice they make. The bill applies retroactively to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2026.

Both EMS bills are now available for full consideration by the House.

(Contact: Kristi Kiious 2-5290)