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## **WHY WE NEED A SPECIAL SESSION**

Yesterday Republicans in the Iowa House were given a tour of flood affected areas by Rep Kraig Paulsen of Hiawatha. What members of the House saw firsthand is still indescribable for most who have not been there themselves.

The national news is nowhere to be found here in these neighborhoods. Most of the small businesses are standing alone trying to figure out a way to reopen and whether or not they should. Small towns like Palo are looking around trying to figure out how they are going to pay their bills in the future without property standing to tax. Many people are still living in temporary trailers behind their homes, with no answers available on what they can do for their next move. And, winter is not far away.

A couple of weeks ago I was undecided on the need for a special legislative session to deal with these areas and issues. After hearing the stories of these people I know how important it is to get them answers and assistance so that they can start rebuilding their lives or move on.

And they have waited far too long to get those answers. Congress has failed to act-twice. All we have gotten from Congress is promises to do something.

Our Governor some time ago said he would call a special session to deal with the issues. Yesterday he again said he would call for a special session soon but did not give a date or time. Iowans in these areas are clearly tired of waiting and hearing promises. They need action.

There are a host of items we can do in a quick fashion to help them. Taking the sales tax off building materials and appliances in flood affected areas, using rainy day funds to help bolster local governments through these challenging times and redirecting state funds such as money for a new prison set to be built to flood recovery efforts for small businesses are all items that need to be addressed without waiting for Congress to act.

Republicans in the House are calling for cooperation with Democrats and are putting all other legislative groups on notice that we are willing to work together to get a special session underway and done in a timely fashion. We are ready to set down and put together the framework for a special session because these people depend on it.

Some are also saying we don't want to do this until after the election is over to avoid any issues related to the campaign trail. I say using the campaign for an excuse is not good enough. It is time to put politics aside and work together for the people. That is what we are all supposed to run for office for in the first place.

## **Has Everyone In Your Family Gotten Their Stimulus Checks?**

Most everyone has gotten their federal economic stimulus check by now. However, the IRS tells us that several billion dollars, yes with a b, has not yet been claimed. Many people have gotten confused with the fact that even if they do not normally pay in taxes they still qualified for a stimulus check.

Most of these people are senior citizens on fixed incomes or disabled Americans who have not had to pay in taxes. Even these people were eligible for the stimulus checks.

If you have a parent in a nursing home or a neighbor or friend who is disabled and does not work perhaps ask them if they received a stimulus check. Again, even if they did not pay taxes in recent years because of their income status they were eligible for a stimulus check. To get a clear answer, call the IRS directly at 1-866-234-2942.

## **Good Things Are Happening in America**

Aside from all the bad news you hear happening in America, there are countless positive stories that do not get into the media that show the power of positive thinking and getting off your backside and working together to make things happen.

One such story I would like to share with you is that of the Boys Ranch in Wilton, IA. I recently got to meet the owner, Jim Fry. He and his wife Cathy had a flat tire in New Vienna, one morning, which is my hometown.

They were in the area buying some dairy cattle for their farm. The farm is operated by boys who have run in trouble with the law and are often out of options. With the parents consent, the Fry's take boys who have gotten into severe trouble and move them out to the dairy farm near Wilton. There the boys, under Jim's direction learn the value of hard work. They make hay, pick cork and milk the cows. They stay until the parents and legal parties agree it is time to head back home and try again. The results have been spectacular Jim tells me, and teaches many of these underprivileged youth life lessons they would never otherwise get.

Another one is coming up this weekend, again in my hometown of New Vienna. Some years ago a group of local farmers started a benefit tractor pull. Working together a non-profit group was formed and today hundreds of tractors from at times thousands of miles away come to New Vienna once a year for the tractor pull. Each year thousands of dollars is raised to help a worthy cause. This year a local woman who had severe cancer needs help and the tractor pull will benefit her and her family.

From the mayor to the local fire department and with the help of many farm families the event will again be a huge success, the only reward is helping a neighbor in need.

Isn't it great to live in a state like Iowa where we roll up our sleeves and make good things happen?