



“Be sure you put your feet in the right place, then stand firm.”

- Abraham Lincoln

September 23rd, 2011

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Appropriations

(Contact Lon Anderson at 1-5184.)

Inside this issue:

Fiscal Committee Meets, Hears Concern about Revenue

On Wednesday, September 14, the Fiscal Committee of the Iowa Legislature met for the first time since 2007. At the meeting, held at the State Capitol, legislators heard that general fund revenue through the first two and a half months is running less than the current estimate set by the Revenue Estimating Conference.

sentative Raecker and Senator Dvorsky, the committee adopted rules for the 2011 and 2012 interims. This was followed by a presentation by Holly Lyons and Dave Reynolds of LSA. The duo gave a session overview that included the balance sheet, general fund appropriations tracking and a summary of the Governor's item vetoes.

Over the past four years, the Democrats in charge of the Legislature did not hold meetings of the Fiscal Committee. The belief is that this was due to not wanting to give the minority party a platform in which to criticize the gimmicks and other bad budgeting practices used by the Democrats.

“...the ending balance will be more than enough to cover the drop.”

That is no longer a concern as the newly approved budget does not use gimmicks like underfunding entitlements, use one-time money for ongoing spending and does not shift spending into future years.

Jeff Robinson of LSA gave the good news and bad news about general fund revenue. The good news is that FY 2011 is expected to come in at roughly \$50 million above the REC estimate once the books close. The bad news is that FY 2012 revenue is running at 1.4 percent, which is almost one-half of the REC projection of 2.7 percent (after the adjustment for cigarette tax revenue is taken into account).

The membership of the committee consists of:

It is too early to panic but this is cause for concern. The good thing is that due to the insistence of House Republicans, there is a \$282 million ending balance for the FY 2012 budget. If revenue does continue to not meet the REC estimate, the ending balance will be more than enough to cover the drop.

Senator Dvorsky (co-chair)

Next up Lorrie Tritch, the Chief Operating Officer for Information Technology for the Department of Administrative Services gave an update on the IT consolidation efforts that began during the 2010 session. DAS hopes to achieve a minimum of 15 percent cost savings due to the consolidation.

Representative Raecker (co-chair)

Senator Bolkom

Representative Sands

Senator Danielson

Representative Cownie

Senator Kettering

Representative T. Olson

Senator Zaun

Representative Jacoby

All members of the committee were present. After opening remarks by Repre-

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Table listing issue topics and page numbers: Appropriations (1), Agriculture (3), Commerce (4), Economic Growth (5), Education (6), Environmental Protection (8), Human Resources (9), Judiciary (10), Labor (10), Natural Resources (10), Public Safety (12), State Government (13), Transportation (13), Veterans Affairs (13), Ways and Means (14)



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Terry Rich of the Iowa Lottery gave an update on the effort to achieve greater efficiencies in marketing programs for state agencies. This was required by HF 45, the Taxpayers First Act. The goal is to consolidate and reduce the cost of the state's marketing activities. Rich said that the cooperation will allow marketing to become more efficient and agencies will be able to purchase ads at a reduced rate.

Dan Clark of Prison Industries gave a presentation on the Prison Industries budget. In FY 2011, Prison Industries generated almost \$2 million of revenue and general fund offsets. The question about whether the Legislature should have more control over the Prison Industries budget was not answered.

John Benson of Homeland Security was next up with a presentation about Presidential disaster declarations. As of this month there are 14 open Presidential disaster declarations dating back to the winter storms of 2007 to the most recent flood in Dubuque and Jackson counties in July 2011. The estimated cost of these disasters is just under \$2 billion in federal funds and almost \$200 million in state funds. This funding will come from the new Performance of Duty

standing appropriation in the Economic Emergency Fund.

Here is the breakdown of the fourteen Presidential disaster declarations and the estimated costs:

Winter storm, February and March 2007 -- \$78.8 million federal, \$10 million state

Tornado and flood, May 2007 -- \$15.6 million federal, \$2.5 million state

Storms and floods, August and September 2007 -- \$8 million federal, \$1.2 million state

Winter storm, December 2007 -- \$32 million federal, \$4.6 million state

Tornado and floods, May through August 2008 -- \$1.535 billion federal, \$125 million state

Storm, July 2009 -- \$8.2 million federal, \$1 million state

Winter storm, December 2009 -- \$8.1 million federal, \$1.4 million state

Winter storm, January 2010 -- \$161 million federal, \$20.6 million state

Storm and flood, May 2010 -- \$5.8 million federal, \$1.9 million state

Tornado and floods, June through August 2010 -- \$76.6 million federal, \$11 million state

Storm and tornado, April 2011 -- \$2.88 million federal, \$965K state

Floods, May through August 2011 -- \$18.8 million federal, \$3 million state \*

Windstorm, July 2011 -- \$9.7 million federal, \$1.3 million state

Tornado and floods, July 2011 -- \$6.5 million federal, \$862K state

\* Does not include any permanent work estimates

After a short recess for lunch, Dave Reynolds of LSA gave a presentation summarizing Iowa's tobacco settlement. Iowa receives between \$50 million and \$80 million annually from the four major tobacco industry manufacturers. A total of 78 percent of the proceeds go to repay bonds that were issued in 2001. These bonds paid for vertical infrastructure projects in the state. The remaining 22 percent is deposited annually into the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund. The RIIF received \$14.2 million in FY 2011.

## Making Sense of the Federal Budget Deficit and U.S. Debt

With thanks to Representatives Horbach and Lukan, here is a quick and easy way to explain the federal budget deficit and total amount of U.S. debt to your constituents.

- Total Federal Tax Revenue - \$2.17 trillion
- Total Federal Spending - \$3.82 trillion
- New debt added by this deficit - \$1.65 trillion
- Total U.S. debt - \$14.27 trillion

Recent budget cuts - \$385 billion

Converting these numbers in thousands of dollars as if this was a family's budget:

- Total Family Income - \$21,700
- Total Family Spending - \$38,200
- New credit card debt - \$16,500
- Total Family Debt - \$142,700

Total Family budget cuts - \$385

Clearly this path is not sustainable, either for the family in the example or the country. House Republicans worked with the Senate and Governor to create a budget that funds the priorities of Iowans while being sustainable into the future. The budget does not rely on additional borrowing, tax increases or one-time funds. While the size of the budget problems in Iowa pale in comparison to the federal budget problems, the hope is that Congress can adopt a budget

that does not rely on tax increases or additional borrowing.

## Agriculture

(Contact Lew Olson at 1-3096.)

### 10th Anniversary of Water Quality Wetland Initiative

On Wednesday, September 21, 2011, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) issued a press release announcing that Secretary of Agriculture Bill Northey will be participating in a celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) in Iowa on Friday, September 23 at 9:30 a.m. at Reiman Gardens in Ames. The Iowa CREP is a nationally recognized leader in addressing water quality concerns locally and in the Gulf of Mexico. CREP was created by legislation passed by a Republican led General Assembly (SF 2371) in the 2000 session that created a water quality initiative program (Initiative on Improving our Watershed Attributes [I on IOWA]) jointly administered by IDALS and

DNR which contained language creating CREP.

The Iowa CREP is a partnership between

***“landowners voluntarily establish wetlands...”***

the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, the USDA Farm Service Agency and local soil and water conservation districts. Through the program, landowners voluntarily establish wetlands in the heavily tile-drained regions of Iowa. These highly targeted, strategically placed wet-

lands reduce nitrate loading by more than 40-70%. Over the past 10 years, 72 CREP wetlands have been restored or are currently under development, providing water quality benefits to 86,000 acres of land by removing over 54,000 tons of nitrates over their lifetime. These 72 targeted restorations total over 700 acres of wetlands plus over 2,500 acres of surrounding native prairie buffers. In addition to improving water quality, these wetlands provide high quality wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. For more information on the program, farmers can visit [www.iowaagriculture.gov](http://www.iowaagriculture.gov) or talk to their local Soil and Water Conservation District or Farm Service Agency offices.

### Eight Watersheds to Receive Grants from Watershed Improvement Review Board

On Wednesday, September 14, 2011, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship issued a press release announcing that the Watershed Improvement Review Board recently approved eight applications totaling \$1,506,309 in grants to support projects that will improve water quality or reduce flooding in the state. The grant funds will be matched by recipients who will provide approximately \$3.4 million in funding from the local communities to support these projects. As a result, \$4.9 million will be going to improve priority watersheds throughout the state.

The approved projects have already completed watershed assessments that identified critical water resource areas and will focus on implementing specific water quality or flood reduction improvements. The projects will start after a grant agreement is signed between the applicant and the Watershed Improvement Review Board.

Soil and water conservation districts, public water supply utilities, counties, county conservation boards, cities, and local watershed improvement committees were eligible to apply. Individual projects can request up to \$500,000. The Watershed Improvement

Review Board is comprised of representatives from agriculture, drinking water and wastewater utilities, environmental organizations, agribusiness, and the conservation community along with two state senators and two state representatives. The program was created in 2005 by the House Republican Chair of the House Environmental Protection Committee at that time, who is now serving in the State Senate, Senator Greiner.

To receive more information or ask questions about this program, contact Jerry Nepal at 515-281-3599.

Watershed Name	Organization	Project Length	County(ies)	Grant Amount
Coe Creek Watershed	Elliot City	2-years	Montgomery	\$166,460
Duck Creek	City of Davenport	6-months	Scott	\$300,000
Lake Hendricks	Howard	1-year	Howard	\$61,760
Lake Icaria	Adams SWCD	2-years	Adams	\$244,650
Price Creek Watershed	Iowa SWCD	3-years	Iowa, Benton	\$102,695
Rathbun Lake Watershed	Rathbun Land & Water Alliance	5-years	Appanoose, Clark, Decatur, Lucas, Monroe Wayne	\$125,300
12-Mile Lake Watershed	Creston City Water Works	2-years	Union, Adair	\$169,925
Walnut Creek	Montgomery, East-Pottawattamie SWCDs	2-years	Montgomery, Pottawattamie	\$335,600

## USDA Announces Funding for Nine Iowa Businesses

. On Friday, September 16, 2011, the United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a press release announcing approval of loans and grants for more than 500 agricultural producers and rural small businesses across the country to implement renewable energy and energy efficiency measures in their operations. This announcement includes 9 Iowa businesses. The grants and loan guarantees are being provided through the Rural Energy for America Program (REAP), a 2008 Farm Bill initiative. The federal REAP offers funds for farmers, ranchers and rural small business-

es to purchase and install renewable energy systems and make energy-efficiency improvements. These federal funds leverage other funding sources for small businesses. In all, USDA announced more than \$27 million in energy grants and guaranteed loans for projects of which \$1,264,858 went to Iowa producer and small businesses which are specified in accompanying table below.

The current Administration has set a goal of making 10,000 new flex-fuel pumps available to America's drivers within the next five

years – a five-fold increase from today's level. Funding of each award is contingent upon the recipient meeting the conditions of the grant or loan agreement. Grants can finance up to 25 percent of a project's cost, not to exceed \$500,000 for renewables, and \$250,000 for efficiency. A complete listing of Rural Energy for America Program recipients can be accessed at— <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/SupportDocuments/RD-REAP20000-aboveSept2011.pdf>

Borrowers Name	City	Grant Amount	Loan Amount	Energy Type Description
Cresco fuels, Inc.	Cresco	\$49,564	0	Flexible Fuel Pump
Faas Feed & Grain, Inc.	North English	\$144,767	\$144,767	Energy Efficiency
Johnson Oil & L. P. Company	Stacyville	\$35,702	0	Flexible Fuel Pump
Kuntz, Corriel	Grafton	\$28,750	\$28,750	Energy Efficiency
Pfingsten Farms, Inc.	Boyden	\$20,325	0	Geothermal
Producers Co-op Company	Primghar	\$27,996	0	Flexible Fuel Pump
Susie, Roger	Kingley	\$30,250	\$30,250	Energy Efficiency
Van Daele Energy, LLC	Fairbank	\$61,250	\$122,500	Wind
Werning, Barry L	Blairstown	\$35,254	0	Energy Efficiency
Wiota Wind Energy, LLC	Wiota	0	\$504,733	Wind
<b>Iowa Total</b>		<b>\$433,858</b>	<b>\$831,000</b>	

### Commerce

(Contact Brad Trow at 1-3471.)

## October is National Cyber Security Awareness Month

The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) has once again declared October to be Cyber Security Awareness Month. With computers being a part of our everyday lives at work and at home, computer security is a constant issue. Cyber Security Awareness Month was first established in October 2004 as a way to raise awareness about the need for computer security nationwide.

One area that is receiving increased attention these days is the way parents can protect their children while they are online. While their age helps youth easily adapt to new technologies, their immaturity also

makes them more likely to unintentionally engage in risky behaviors or be targeted by other users, more often peers than strangers. The NCSA has developed a series of tips for parents to help protect their children when they are on-line:

#### **Keep a Clean Machine.**

Keep security software current: Having the latest security software, web browser, and operating system are the best defenses against viruses, malware, and other online threats.

Automate software updates: Many software programs will automatically connect and update to defend against known risks. Turn on automatic updates if that's an available option.

Protect all devices that connect to the Internet: Computers, smart phones, gaming systems, and other web-enabled devices all need protection from viruses and malware.

#### **Protect Your Child's Personal Information.**

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Help your kids own their online presence: When available, set their privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. Remind them that it's ok to limit who they share information with.

**Connect with Care.** When it doubt, throw it out: Remind your children that links in emails, tweets, posts and online advertising are often the way cybercriminals compromise your computer. If it looks suspicious, even if you know the source, it's best to delete or, if appropriate, mark as junk email.

**Be Web Wise.** Stay current: Keep pace with new ways to stay safe online. Check trusted Web sites for the latest information, share with your children, and encourage them to be web wise.

**Be a Good Online Citizen.** Safer for me, more secure for all: What you and your kids do online has the potential to affect everyone – at home, at work and around the world. Practicing good online habits benefits the global digital community.

**Know the protection features of the ISPs** (Internet service provider) and software your children use. Your ISP may have tools

to help you manage young children's online experience (e.g., selecting approved Web sites, monitoring the amount of time they spend online, or limiting the people who can contact them) and may have other security features, such as pop-up blockers. But remember that your home isn't the only place they can go online.

**Remain positively engaged.** Pay attention to and know the online environments your children use. Surf the Internet with them. Appreciate your children's participation in their online communities and show interest in their friends. Try to react constructively when they encounter inappropriate material. Make it a teachable moment.

**Support their good choices.** Expand your children's online experience and their autonomy when developmentally appropriate, as they demonstrate competence in safe and secure online behavior and good decision making.

**Teach critical thinking.** Help your children identify safe, credible Web sites and other digital content. Encourage them to be cautious about clicking on, downloading, posting, and uploading content.

**Explain the implications.** Help your children understand the public nature of the

Internet and its risks as well as benefits. Be sure they know that any digital info they share, such as emails, photos, or videos, can easily be copied and pasted elsewhere, and is almost impossible to take back. Things that could damage their reputation, friendships, or future prospects should not be shared electronically.

**Just saying "no" rarely works.** Teach your children how to interact safely with people they "meet" online. Though it's preferable they make no in-person contact with online-only acquaintances, young people may not always follow this rule. So talk about maximizing safe conditions: meeting only in well-lit public places, always taking at least one friend, and telling a trusted adult about any plans they make – including the time, place, and acquaintance's contact information (at least a name and cell phone number).

**Empower your children to handle problems,** such as bullying, unwanted contact, or hurtful comments. Work with them on strategies for when problems arise, such as talking to a trusted adult, not retaliating, blocking the person, or filing a complaint. Agree on steps to take if the strategy fails.

For additional information on cyber-security, visit: [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org).

## Economic Growth

(Contact Louis Vander Streek 1-3626.)

### Governor Announces Members of New Economic Development Authority Board

The passage of House File 590 this last session created the new Partnership for Economic Progress. Part of that legislation called for the elimination of the existing Department of Economic Development and its 15-member Board. In its place will be the new Economic Development Authority and its 11-member Board.

With the phasing out of the old Board, Governor Branstad announced on September 16 the names of the individuals who will sit on the Economic Development Authority Board. These individuals include:

Dawn Ainger, Genova Technologies, Inc.; resident of Hiawatha

David Bernstein, State Steel; resident of Sioux City

Pete Brownell, Brownells; resident of Grinnell

Dr. Ted Crosbie, Monsanto; resident of Earlham

Brenda Cushing, Aviva; resident of West Des Moines

Larry Den Herder, Interstates Companies; resident of Sioux Center

Kay DeLange, Cargill; resident of Fremont

John Lisle, Lisle Corporation; resident of Clarinda

Rosemary Parson, FBL Financial Group, Inc.; resident of Urbandale

Delia Meier, Iowa 80 Group, Inc.; resident of Eldridge

Daniel White, John Deere Dubuque Works; resident of Dubuque

The requirements for who may serve on the Board are laid out in HF 590. The legislation stipulated that: the representation of the Authority must have two individuals from each of Iowa's four congressional districts, and three members are to be selected at large. These members will be appointed by

the Governor and approved by the Senate to four year terms. The legislation makes a requirement that some of the seats be represented by certain areas of the economy:

- 1 member of the Iowa Innovation Council,
- 1 person with professional experience in finance, insurance, or investment banking,
- 1 person with professional experience in advanced manufacturing,
- 1 person with professional experience in small business development
- 1 person with professional experience representing the interests of organized labor,

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- 6 persons who are actively employed in the private, for-profit sector of the economy or who otherwise have substantial expertise in economic development.

September 15 was the last meeting of the IDED Board. At the meeting it made its last awards to a number of companies. Included in this batch of incentives were two awards to big companies announcing major expansions in the state. The Board approved \$3 million in direct financial assistance to Al-

coa, which will be a portion of an overall \$300 million physical expansion. Microsoft was also a recipient of an award that allocated tax incentives through the High Quality Jobs program to expand its data center in West Des Moines.

## Education

(Contact Jason Chapman at 1-3015.)

### ISU President Search Finalists Announced

The search committee tasked with finding a new president for Iowa State announced the two finalists this week. The two finalists are Steven Leath, current Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs and Interim Vice President for Academic Planning at the University of North Carolina; and Kumble Subbaswamy, current provost, Executive Director of the University of Kentucky Research Foundation, and professor of physics at the University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Current ISU president, Gregory Geoffroy, announced on March 25th of his intention to leave his post. He plans to stay no later than July 31, 2012, but will remain president of Iowa State until a successor is named.

The Board of Regents appointed the search committee to fill the position on June 23.

The committee consists of 18 members and is co-chaired by College of Business dean Labh Hira and ISU alumnus Roger Underwood. The committee also includes two regents, a faculty representative from each college; presidents of the Faculty Senate, P&S Council, Government of the Student Body and Graduate and Professional Student Senate; two representatives each from the alumni association and ISU Foundation; and two non-voting members of the regents staff.

Dr. Leath earned his education at University of Illinois, the University of Delaware, and Pennsylvania State University, with majors in plant science and plant pathology. Dr. Subbaswamy earned his education at Bangalore University and Delhi University, both in India, and at Indiana University, with majors in physics.

The Board plans to announce the next President at their meeting on September 27th. This will follow a campus visit by each candidate, which includes meeting with campus constituencies and an open forum with question and answer. The search committee will present a final summary of the visits to the Board on Monday, September 26th. There will be a question session open to the public in the Uelner executive board room on the ISU campus, following a 10:30 closed session interview with each candidate.

Additional details on each candidate and their schedule can be found here: <http://www.presidentsearch.iastate.edu/>

### Iowa Safe and Supportive Schools Announced

This spring several questions arose from a federally-supported effort to improve the safety and learning conditions at Iowa schools. A survey was developed and administered to determine the "Safety Index" at the tested schools and the scores from that test helped determine which schools would be part of the program. The test results are now in and the schools were announced by the Department of Education this week.

The questions that came in the spring revolved around who was involved in the development of the surveys administered. There were two different student surveys given. One version is the Iowa Youth Survey (IYS) and the other is the Comprehensive School Climate Survey (CSCI). Both tests contain questions and items that address school safety, engagement, and environment.

The IYS has been administered to 6th, 8th and 11th grade students in Iowa schools for several decades. The Iowa Department of

Public Health developed and coordinates the administration of the survey in partnership with multiple state agencies, including the Department of Education. The CSCI was developed by the National School Climate Center, a non-profit organization working to promote positive and sustained school climates. Multiple surveys available at the national level were reviewed by the DE when applying for the grant and CSCI was the only valid and reliable survey that included school safety, engagement, and environment. There are also versions of the CSCI that were administered to parents and staff.

Iowa was one of 11 states to be awarded nearly \$17.5 million in federal money to participate in the program. The first year the state received about \$3.5 million to administer the tests and choose which schools would receive the remaining \$14 million over the next 3 years.

48 high schools agreed to participate in the surveys, which were to be completed by the

end of May. 12 were selected (based on need; they were identified as Persistently Low Achieving Schools, Schools in Need of Assistance, and/or involvement in other statewide initiatives), and the additional schools were randomly selected to represent a cross-section of Iowa schools. Of those 48 who took the surveys, 20 were chosen from the results, those which scored lowest on the test.

The schools chosen will study issues such as bullying, school safety, attendance and student engagement over the next four years. The DE, in conjunction with AEAs, will work directly with each of the selected schools to design and implement activities that improve conditions for learning. Information will be gathered each year for four years. By the fourth year, the final survey will show the nation that Iowa is a leader in improving conditions for learning.

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The following schools were the ones chosen to participate: Dubuque Senior, Oelwein, Armstrong-Ringsted, East Green, Columbus Community, Davenport Central HS, Louisa-Muscatine, Iowa Valley, Olin

Consolidated, Des Moines East, Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn, Sioux City West, West Sioux, Abraham Lincoln in Council Bluffs, Burlington Community, Keokuk, Ottumwa, Winfield-Mt Union, Waterloo East, and Waterloo West.

## Alternative Licensure for Teachers through Rules

One of the ideas that often is part of an education reform agenda is allowing alternative paths to teacher licensure. It's argued that an individual who has years of experience in a particular field of study would do well to be able to share that experience in a classroom setting with students. Opponents of such an idea state that someone without training in classroom management and pedagogy would not do well in a classroom setting and students would suffer as a result.

It's likely that the new plan being introduced this fall by Governor Branstad will include some sort of alternative licensure path. Education Director Jason Glass and the Governor's assistant for education, Linda Fandel, have stated as much in their discussions about the plan. What form that will take, however, is yet to be seen.

But the Board of Educational Examiners, which provides licensing for teachers in Iowa, took a step in the Rules process last week towards implementing some alternative licensure for non-educators and the debate described above took place.

The Rule, ARC 9660B, is titled Preliminary Professional Career Authorization, and it's purpose is to allow non-educators the opportunity to obtain a license to teach in a number of specific subjects - if they meet particular requirements. The licensure in this case, as stated by BOEE Director George Maurer, is meant to be an emergency last-resort option only, used in cases where a school district needs to fill a position in need and has not had success finding a licensed teacher for the spot.

The license would be a three-year, non-renewable license allowing a non-educator to teach in grades 9-12 in the subject areas of foreign language, mathematics, chemistry,

physics, biology, or music. The applicant must have:

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with a minimum GPA of 2.5
- At least 5 years of work experience in the content area to be taught
- And must meet the subject matter coursework requirements for the secondary teaching endorsement of the area they would teach
- In addition, they must undergo a state and national criminal background check, and the school district must provide documentation showing they have exhausted all other hiring options.

During the three-year license, the non-educator must complete board-approved training in methods of teaching, curriculum development, measurement and evaluation of students and programs, classroom management, code of ethics, and diversity training for educators.

An attorney from the ISEA appeared before the Rules Committee to speak against the idea. Their complaints were that this would put an individual in front of the kids who had no idea how to teach in a classroom setting while the non-educator worked on building their credentials. They argued this would make the classroom of students "guinea pigs" for an experiment, putting their education in jeopardy.

They also argued, as well as committee member Sen. Courtney, whether the BOEE was overstepping their bounds by putting something through the Rules committee that should see legislative consideration first. Director Maurer argued that the legislature has provided the BOEE legislative

authority to create, and regulate educator licenses and this Rule was within their authority.

Iowa Code Chapter 272.2 states:

The board of educational examiners is created to exercise the exclusive authority to:

1. a. License practitioners, which includes the authority to establish criteria for the licenses; establish issuance and renewal requirements; create application and renewal forms; create licenses that authorize different instructional functions or specialties;
13. Adopt rules to provide for nontraditional preparation options for licensing persons who hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, who do not meet other requirements for licensure.

The Rule was noticed and has not been filed yet. Whether or not it will come before the committee for a vote remains to be seen, but it's likely that it will. The debate will continue over the BOEE's authority and whether putting someone in front of the classroom who has experience in the working world and has not gone through a traditional teacher preparation program is positive or negative for the child.

## Environmental Protection

(Contact Lew Olson at 1-3096.)

### DNR Announces Grant Program for Rural Iowa Communities

On Thursday, September 8, 2011, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that starting September 8th small Iowa communities can apply for funding to address neglected buildings in a new grant program from the Iowa DNR's Financial and Business Assistance Section. The Derelict Building Grant Program provides small communities and rural counties financial assistance for abandoned commercial and public structures. Grants will help improve the appearance of the streets, revitalize local economies and alleviate the environmental concerns these buildings can pose. Rural communities with populations of 5,000 or less qualify. Financial assis-

tance will include asbestos removal, build-

***“populations of 5,000 or less qualify”***

ing deconstruction and renovation and other inspections and site assessments. The DNR is partnering with Keep Iowa Beautiful in the application and review process for the program. The applications are due November 1, 2011. This program was initially authorized in 2010 (HF 2525, section 24), and amended this past session in the IDALS and DNR appropriation bill (SF 509, sec-

tions 2324) to increase the annual allotment of state solid waste tonnage revenues for this purpose from \$100,000 to \$400,000 for this purpose. Additionally, this language extended the program from a 4-year to a permanent one.

For more information and to obtain an application for the Derelict Building Grant Program, go to <http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/LandStewardship/WasteManagement/BusinessIndustry/DerelictBuildingProgram.aspx> or contact Scott Flagg at (515) 281-4876 or [Scott.Flagg@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Scott.Flagg@dnr.iowa.gov).

### DNR Seeks Applicants to Form Watershed Management Authorities

On Thursday, September 15, 2011, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that DNR and the Iowa Economic Development Authority are seeking cities and counties interested in collaborating to reduce flood risks and improve water quality within a watershed. Interested cities or counties can apply to the DNR to form a Watershed Management Authority. Only counties declared federal disaster areas during the 2008 floods, and cities within those 85 counties, are eligible. A Watershed Management Authority is an

agreement between political subdivisions (cities, counties, and soil and water conservation districts) to foster cooperation and ultimately to improve conditions in the watershed.

Funding is available for up to six applicants for \$30,000 each in seed money to form Watershed Management Authorities. Award recipients are expected to have six months to invite all political subdivisions in the watershed to participate, establish a board of directors and enter into a formal agreement with all interested parties. Alt-

though one city or one county must be the lead applicant, letters of support from other political subdivisions in the watershed can strengthen an application. The full request for proposal is available at <http://bidopportunities.iowa.gov/>. Interested cities or counties are encouraged to attend an informational meeting Sept. 28 at 1 p.m. in the Wallace State Office Building, third floor conference room, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines. Proposals are due by 4 p.m. Oct. 21. Send proposal by email to [Jeff.Berckes@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jeff.Berckes@dnr.iowa.gov).

### DNR Announces Grants Available to Rural Fire Departments

On Tuesday, September 13, 2011, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that it has grant money available for Iowa's rural fire departments to help purchase equipment to battle wildfires. The grants offer funding assistance for wildfire suppression equipment, personal protective equipment and communications equipment.

The Volunteer Fire Assistance Applications are due Oct. 15, 2011. The grant provides 50 percent reimbursement for wildland fire equipment with a maximum reimbursement grant of \$3,500 per department. The Wildland Fire Report Form should be submitted as wildland fires are responded to

and as prescribed/controlled fires are assisted with. Additionally, DNR Forestry Bureau Fire Program Opportunities outlines the programming opportunities available to Iowa's fire suppression agencies by the DNR Forestry Bureau in cooperation with federal, state and local partners. The grants package and the Wildland Fire Report form is available:

<http://www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/Forestry/FirePrevention/FirePrograms.aspx>



## Regional Management Work Group to Discuss Finances, Sharing Property Tax Dollars

In a change of plans, the mental health redesign work group focusing on regional management will have a discussion of financial issues at its next meeting on September 27. One of the issues in this discussion is the potential for counties to share their mental health property tax levy with other counties in their region.

Originally, financing the mental health system was to be exclusively handled by the legislative interim committee. Advocates of regional management have pressed DHS to allow the regional group to begin looking at

how counties could pool their mental health funds. The Department agreed this week to have the discussion at the upcoming next Tuesday.

**“...share their mental health property tax levy.”**

The big issue will be what happens with a county’s property tax revenues. As it was envisioned during the legislative session, it could be possible that County A’s property

tax funds would be placed in a multi-county pool and used for services in County B and C. This concept was not well received by a number of county supervisors at the time.

The regional work group meeting will begin at 10 AM on Tuesday, September 27 in the Supreme Court Chamber. PLEASE NOTE – this is a change in location, due to the high interest in the work of this group. For information on the agenda and handouts for the meeting, please visit: <http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Partners/MHDSRedesign.html>

## Mental Health Funding Update

### Mental Health Risk Pool Funds Distributed, More Available in December

As part of the mental health work done by the Legislature this year, \$10 million was provided to the Mental Health Risk Pool Board for distribution amongst counties with existing waiting lists for services. The Board met in August to distribute the funds. Four counties received funding:

- Polk County - \$7,732,181
- Scott County - \$619,809
- Clinton County - \$656,973

- Jackson County - \$29,271

After the distribution of these funds (appropriated in SF 209), just under one million dollars remained available for the appropriation. But additional funds are available.

First, \$1.3 million of risk pool funds distributed in FY 2010 to six counties remained unspent at the end of FY 2010. Since these counties had a fund balance above 5 percent of their total mental health expenditures, the funds are returned to the risk pool for future distribution. Also, the Legislature permitted counties to return mental health

funds to the state in order to qualify for FY 2012 allowed growth funding. Nineteen counties gave back \$3.8 million to the state so that they could receive growth dollars this year. These funds are also deposited in the risk pool.

These actions mean there will be \$6,084,784 in the risk pool this fall. Counties that have instituted waiting lists for mental health services since the start of FY 2012 are eligible to apply for these funds. Details on this will be provided to counties later this year by the Department of Human Services.

## DHS Mental Health Redesign Work Groups

**Friday, September 23**  
Mental Health Redesign Listening Session – Waterloo

1-3 pm Hawkeye Community College

1501 E. Orange Rd.

Tama Hall Room 107A

Waterloo, Iowa 50701

**Tuesday, September 27**  
Children’s Services - United Way of Central Iowa, 1111 Ninth Street, Des Moines\*  
Regional Governance – Iowa State Capitol, Supreme Court Chamber, Des Moines – LOCATION CHANGE  
Brain Injury Services - United Way of Central Iowa, 1111 Ninth Street, Des Moines\*  
Commitment/Court-DHS Issues – State Judicial

Building, 1111 East Court Avenue, Des Moines  
**NOTE - \* - Location of meeting may be changed to Iowa State Capital**

**Friday, September 30**  
Mental Health Redesign Listening Session – Sioux City

1-3 pm

St. Luke’s Hospital

2720 Stone Park Blvd.

Sioux City, Iowa 51104

**Tuesday, October 4**  
Adult Mental Health Services – United Way of Central Iowa, 1111 Ninth Street, Des Moines  
Adult Intellectual Disability Services – United Way of Central Iowa, 1111 Ninth Street, Des

Moines

**Thursday, October 6**  
Commitment/Court-DHS Issues – State Judicial Building, 1111 East Court Avenue, Des Moines

**Friday, October 7**  
Mental Health Redesign Listening Session – Council Bluffs

1-3 PM

Iowa Western Community college

2700 College Road

Loft Hall

Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503

## Judiciary

(Contact: Amanda Freel, 1-5230)

### Iowa Violent Crime Rate Drops

Violent Crime is on the decline in Iowa as well as the rest of the nation according to an FBI Report released this month. The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR) examines four offenses: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault and compares the crimes to previous years.

Across the nation violent crime dropped 6% from 2009 to 2010, with an estimated 1.25 million violent crimes committed. In Iowa there were 8,333 violent crimes in 2010, which is a 1.8% drop from 2009. While the number in Iowa may still seem high, statistically, Iowa has a lower per capita violent crime rate than the national average.

In 2010, Iowa reported approximately 6,447 aggravated assaults, 1,011 robberies, 836 forcible rapes, and 39 murders. Alone, these numbers may look large, but when you compare Iowa with Kansas, who has a

slightly smaller population than Iowa, it's easy to see that Iowa is an extremely safe place to live. In 2010, Kansas had 7,780 aggravated assaults, 1,544 robberies, 1,107 forcible rapes and 100 murders.

**“...a 1.8% drop from 2009.”**

No one is exactly sure why the violent crime rate has decreased. One criminologist has suggested that several factors play a role including: an aging population, stronger police forces and higher prison rates and even our current economic situation. In the past 5 years violent crime rates around the nation have dropped drastically and there does not appear to be one key reason, but

instead many factors leading to safer streets.

Iowans can be proud of our police officers and other public safety employees who have worked to keep Iowa a safe state to live. While a drop in violent crime is always good, Iowans should never become complacent and should remain vigilant no matter where they live.

## Labor

(Contact Louis Vander Streek 1-3626.)

### Iowa's Unemployment Ticks Up, Remains Well Below National Average

The unemployment rate in Iowa for the month of August was 6.1%, an increase from the 6.0% rate in July. The national average remained at 9.1%, as it had been previously for the month of July. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Iowa's unemployment rate ranks 8th lowest among

**“...Iowa's unemployment rate ranks 8th lowest.”**

the fifty states and the District of Columbia.

The seven states ahead of Iowa include: North Dakota (#1 – 3.5%), Nebraska (#2 – 4.2%), South Dakota (#3 – 4.7%), New Hampshire (#4 – 5.3%), Oklahoma (#5 – 5.6%), Wyoming (#6 – 5.8%), and Vermont (#7 – 5.9%). The states that are worst off include: Michigan (#49 – 11.2%), California (#50 – 12.1%), and Nevada (#51 – 13.4%).

According to numbers released by Iowa Workforce Development, the state saw a decrease in nonfarm employment of 2,300 jobs. The bulk of these losses came in the categories of Construction; Trade, Transportation, and Utilities; and Leisure and

Hospitality. However, compared to a year ago at this point, the state of Iowa has added a total of 20,000 nonfarm jobs.

## Natural Resources

(Contact Dustin Blythe 1-3452.)

### REAP Meetings To Be Held At 18 Locations Through October 27

The Department of Natural Resources recently published the REAP meeting schedule that will be held from Sept. 20 through Oct. 27. There will be 18 meetings throughout the state.

REAP is Iowa's outdoor recreation and conservation funding program, has a 22-year, \$260 million funding history for parks, soil,

water and habitat improvements, roadside prairies, historical development and conservation education.

The REAP Act has a formula that distributes funding to farmers, conservation organizations, educators, cities, counties, historians, and state projects. Funding comes from gaming revenues and sales of

natural resource license plates.

The schedule is listed below. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. with an open house showcasing REAP's positive impact on the 18 regions. Each assembly will begin at 6:30 p.m.

	CITY	Date	LOCATION	COUNTIES IN REGION
1	<b>Cedar Falls</b>	9/20	<b>Hartman Reserve Nature Center</b> 657 Reserve Drive, Cedar Falls 3 blocks north of Rainbow Drive	<b>REGION 7:</b> Black Hawk, Bremer, Buchanan, Butler, Chickasaw, Grundy
2	<b>Monona</b>	9/21	<b>Community Center</b> 104 S Egbert St. 1 block east of N Main Street	<b>REGION 1:</b> Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette, Howard, Winnebago
3	<b>Coralville</b>	9/22	<b>North Ridge Pavilion</b> 2250 Holiday Rd. Coralville, IA 52241	<b>REGION 10:</b> Benton, Iowa, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Washington
4	<b>Maquoketa</b>	9/27	<b>Hurstville Interpretive Center</b> 18670 63 <sup>rd</sup> St., North of Maquoketa on Hwy 61	<b>REGION 8:</b> Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque, Jackson
5	<b>Mason City</b>	9/28	<b>Lime Creek Nature Center</b> 3501 Lime Creek Road, less than one mile north of Mason City on Hwy 65, then take Nature Ct. Rd	<b>REGION 2:</b> Cerro Gordo, Floyd, Franklin, Hancock, Kosuth, Mitchell, Winnebago, Worth
6	<b>Marshalltown</b>	9/29	<b>Grimes Farm and Conservation Center</b> 2349 233 <sup>rd</sup> St., West of Marshalltown From the west, take Exit 181 from Highway 30. Turn left at Highland Acres Road and head north for about half a mile. Turn left again on 233rd Street. From the east, take Exit 182 (Highland Acres Road) and turn right. The road will make a peculiar little jog as it goes over Iowa Avenue, but keep on going north for another half a mile or so. Turn left on 233rd Street.	<b>REGION 6:</b> Hardin, Marshall, Poweshiek, Tama
7	<b>Correctionville</b>	10/4	<b>Correctionville Community Center</b> 312 Driftwood (Hwy 31)	<b>REGION 4:</b> Cherokee, Ida, Monona, Plymouth, Woodbury
8	<b>Spencer</b>	10/5	<b>Clay County Regional Events Center</b> 800 W. 18 <sup>th</sup>	<b>REGION 3:</b> Buena Vista, Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Lyon, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Sioux
9	<b>Fort Dodge</b>	10/6	<b>Bob Heuen Shelter at Kennedy Park</b> 1415 Nelson Ave., approximately 5 miles north of Fort Dodge on 15th street or County Road P56	<b>REGION 5:</b> Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Webster, Wright
10	<b>Muscatine</b>	10/10	<b>Environmental Learning Center</b>	<b>REGION 9:</b> Muscatine, Scott

<b>Burlington</b>	10/11	<b>City Auditorium - Banquet Room</b> 200 North Front Street	<b>REGION 16:</b> Des Moines, Henry, Lee, Louisa
<b>Fairfield</b>	10/12	<b>Fairfield Library</b> 104 West Adams Avenue	<b>RE- GION 15:</b> Davis, Jefferson, Keokuk, Mahaska, Van Buren, Wapello
<b>Shenandoah</b>	10/18	<b>Shenandoah Chamber and Industrial Association</b> 100 S. Maple	<b>REGION 13:</b> Fremont, Mills Montgomery, Page
<b>Council Bluffs</b>	10/19	<b>Council Bluffs Public Library</b> 400 Willow Avenue	<b>REGION 17:</b> Pottawattamie, Harrison, Shelby, Cass
<b>Carroll</b>	10/20	<b>Conservation Center at Swan Lake State Park</b> Southeast of Carroll	<b>RE- GION 12:</b> Audubon, Carroll, Crawford, Greene, Guthrie, Sac
<b>Moravia</b>	10/24	<b>Honey Creek Resort State Park</b> 12194 Honey Creek Pl.	<b>REGION 18:</b> Appanoose, Lucas, Monroe, Wayne
<b>Creston</b>	10/25	<b>Southwestern Community College</b> <b>Performing Arts Center/Multipurpose Room</b> 1201 W. Townline St.	<b>REGION 14:</b> Adair, Adams, Clarke, Decatur, Madison, Ringgold, Taylor, Union
<b>West Des Moines</b>	10/27	<b>Raccoon River Park Lodge</b> 2500 Grand Avenue	<b>REGION 11:</b> Boone, Dallas, Jasper, Marion, Polk, Story, War-

**Public Safety** (Contact: Amanda Freel, 1-5230.)

**Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division and Department of Public Safety**

Last week, the Iowa Department of Public Safety and the Department of Transportation announced plans to examine merging the DOT Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division with the Iowa State Troopers. It is believed this move will create more efficiency between the two groups and perhaps save money in the long run.

The work done by the Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division started in 1941 amidst concerns that overweight trucks would damage Iowa's roadways. These peace officers, often called "blue coats," because of their blue uniforms, are responsible for enforcing all state and federal regulations that apply to commercial vehicles travelling Iowa's roadways. They also inspect commercial vehicles, enforce traffic laws and assist other law enforcement officers when needed.

Iowa Public Safety Commissioner Larry

Noble and Iowa DOT Director Paul Trombino, along with Governor Branstad and others in the departments are examining the merger. If the merger happens, the Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division and its 106 officers will become a part of DPS, while still maintaining their current motor vehicle enforcement roll. Commissioner Noble has pointed out that other states have run Motor Vehicle Enforcement under the Department of Public Safety with success.

***"this move will create more efficiency ..."***

Many questions remain about the merging of these groups, including funding, and what will happen with an investigation team within DOT who look into identify theft, odometer fraud and other crimes. The Gov-

ernor, Commissioner Noble, Director Trombino and state Senators and Representatives will be addressing these issues in the coming weeks and hope to have solutions and a fully working plan in several months.

## State Government

(Contact Kristi Kielhorn at 2-5290.)

### IPERS Board Moves Forward on Divestment Research for Terrorist Companies

This week the IPERS Investment Board voted unanimously to accept a proposal from IW Financial and move forward with research to evaluate the availability and costs of expert consulting service to support the requirements by House File 484. House File 484 was passed last session and prohibited state funds and funds administered by the state from investing in companies that engage in certain business activities in Iran. The bill asked that IPERS

issue an RFP on behalf of all state funds, and they did so on June 1 of this year.

IW Financial was the only company to submit a proposal under the RFP. The proposal estimates a total annual cost of \$45,000 (this includes the research for all five public retirement funds). House File 484 directs that the public retirement funds split the cost of this research. Terms of the contract have been given to IW Financial for their

review. Two of the other public retirements funds have also approved of IW Financial's proposal and it is expected the other two will do so shortly.

## Transportation

(Contact: Kristi Kielhorn, 2-5290.)

### Commission Approves \$3.6 for Public Transit Projects

Last week, The Iowa Transportation Commission voted to approve more than \$3.6 million in public transit project funding. The money will fund 44 public transit projects through the Public Transit Infrastructure Grant Fund, the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) program and through the New Freedom program.

In the 2011 session, the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund budget appropriated \$1.5 million for fiscal year 2012 to the Public Transit Infrastructure Grant Fund. The money is used to build new or improve public transit facilities. The commission approved eleven projects to improve various facilities in Ames, Des Moines, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque and Sioux City.

The Job Access and Reverse Commute program is a federal program aimed at sup-

porting transportation services for low-income persons to help them access jobs, training opportunities and daycare services. The program requires that communities with a population over 200,000 receive a direct allocation from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and that communities under that population threshold receive money from the commission. The commission approved \$653,662 to fund transit projects in Ames, Cedar Rapids, Coralville, Iowa City, Sioux City and Waterloo. The commission also approved \$566,989 for smaller, non-urbanized projects. Those projects included Muscatine and regional agencies throughout Iowa.

The commission also approved \$617,583 in funding from the New Freedom federal formula grant program. This program attempts

to reduce barriers to transportation and provide more mobility options to disabled persons. The approved projects applied for funding through an application process. Like the JARC program, transit agencies in larger Iowa communities receive New Freedom funding directly from the FTA. The commission approved projects in the following smaller communities: Muscatine, Iowa City, Sheldon, Manchester, Dubuque, Delaware County, Boone, and central and southwest Iowa.

More specific information on the individual project awards can be found on the Iowa Department of Transportation's website.

## Veterans Affairs

(Contact: Jill Jennings, 1-3440.)

### Traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial

The Dignity Memorial Vietnam Wall, a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, is currently traveling the country to honor Vietnam veterans. The memorial arrived in Iowa on Sept 16th where it was greeted by hundreds of Iowans, a fly-over by the National Guard, a 21 gun salute, and an hour-long opening ceremony.

Commandant David Worley reported at the

quarterly commission meeting that after the opening ceremony there was a reading of all 58,000 names of the servicemen and women who died or went missing in Vietnam. The readings were done by volunteers from the community.

At 240 feet long and 8 feet high, the three-quarter-scale replica is near the size of the Washington, D.C., original. The Wall was in

Des Moines until Sunday September 18th before it headed to Louisiana.

The Wall was created in 1990 and has visited more than 225 cities. This was the first that the exhibit was shown in Iowa. The names of 855 Iowans are etched on the monument, including 103 from the Des Moines area.

## Ways and Means

### Voters Want State Government Reform

In a recent Wall Street Journal Editorial, Douglas E. Schoen who served as a pollster for President Clinton revealed the results of a national survey of 1,000 randomly selected registered voters in 10 polls in individual states. In general, Americans want bold action to stabilize the finances of state government. Here are some major bullet points from that survey:

Specifically, 78% say their state faced a budget crisis this year, and 68% say that the crisis was resolved with spending cuts.

Only 6% said state governments did not tax enough.

Voters blame politicians for creating or making the problem worse. 48% say elected officials make careless and self-serving decisions.

47% want to cut government spending, while 31% want public employees to contribute more towards their benefits.

In response to specific “either or questions.”

A majority (51%) would not be willing to cut social services programs to maintain the compensation of public employees; and 60% say that education and health care should not be cut so that salaries and benefits of public employees could stay at current levels.

**“48% say public employee salaries should be frozen...”**

48% say public employee salaries should be frozen.

64% say they are not willing to raise taxes to pay for public employee salaries at current levels.

Programs identified to be cut

56% support reducing certain state services to address state budget crises.

Voters are inclined to cut libraries and park services and least inclined to cut education, health care, police and fire protection.

However, 60% of voters oppose increasing state sales taxes, income or other taxes to reduce budget deficits.

Clearly the electorate wants to pare back public employee benefits while holding the line on taxes wherever possible. In addition, they don’t want their taxes raised or programs cut to pay for employee benefits at current levels.

Here in Iowa with two major floods and revenues starting to slow a bit, House Republicans have taken the prudent and cautious step of balancing our budget, not increasing taxes, ensuring our reserves are full while leaving a small ending balance as a cushion as we head into the next session.