Inside this issue:

Appropriations 1
Agriculture 3
Commerce 4
Economic Growth 4
Education 5
Environmental Protection 6
Human Resources 7
Judiciary 7
Labor 8
Natural Resources 8
Public Safety 8
State Government 9
Transportation 9
Veterans Affairs 9
Ways & Means 10

Appropriations

(Contact: Brad Trow at 1-3471)

Senate Budget Targets—What are the Differences with the House?

Last week, Senate Republicans made public their Fiscal Year 2020 budget targets. They are proposing that state General Fund spending stay at the same level as the current fiscal year (FY 2019), with the state spending $7.6193 billion for the year. The Senate’s funding plan would allocate the dollars in the following manner.
What are the differences between the House and Senate? Let’s look at each budget area.

**ADMINISTRATION & REGULATION**

House - $52,420,985

Senate - $55,576,149

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is $3.155 million higher than the House. This is likely caused by the Senate paying for the Governor's Broadband initiative in this budget, while the House Republican plan has Broadband funding coming from the Rebuild Iowa’s Infrastructure Fund (RIIF).

**AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES**

House - $41,107,522

Senate - $39,961,522

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is $1.146 million lower than the House for this budget. Funding at this level would prevent the state from providing additional resources to the Department of Natural Resources for additional park rangers or increased funding for the ISU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab.

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

House - $41,028,345

Senate - $41,628,345

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is $600,000 higher than the House for Economic Development.

**EDUCATION**

House - $961,044,271

Senate - $946,955,971

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is $14.088 million lower than the House for the Education budget. At the Senate's level, it would very difficult to provide Community College funding at a level higher than what the Governor proposed. House Republicans have already committed to give community colleges a $7 million increase over FY 2019 – which is $2.338 million more than what the Governor had proposed.

The Senate’s funding level would also make it very tough to meet the Governor’s request for the Future Ready Iowa program. The House Republican funding plan already is committed to meeting the Governor’s request. General education support for the state’s three public universities would likely be significantly lower under the Senate's proposed budget target.

**HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES**

House - $1,941,888,698

Senate - $1,928,358,285

The Senate proposal is $13.350 million lower than the House for the HHS budget. At the Senate’s level, it would be very difficult to match the House’s commitment of an additional $19 million for Medicaid reimbursements to Iowa’s nursing homes. It would also be hard, under the Senate spending plan, to address the financial concerns of the state’s 82 critical access hospitals. House Republicans are providing $1.5 million in their budget plan to restore cost settlement for these Medicaid providers. It would be tough to continue the momentum for improving Iowa’s mental health provider network at the Senate’s spending level, while the House has the resources to expand access to assertive community teams.

The Senate’s targets have significant differences from what the House proposed earlier in February. House Republicans plan to spend $7.6680 billion in FY 2020, which is an increase of just $48.6 million over the current year’s spending levels. Percentage wise, the Senate increase is 0%, the House increase is 0.63%. The differences are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SENATE TARGETS</th>
<th>FY 2019 Adjusted</th>
<th>FY 2020 Senate</th>
<th>Diff from FY 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Regulation</td>
<td>$48,466,893</td>
<td>$55,576,149</td>
<td>$7,109,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag &amp; Natural Resources</td>
<td>$39,357,522</td>
<td>$39,961,522</td>
<td>$604,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>$40,216,345</td>
<td>$41,628,345</td>
<td>$1,412,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$912,675,487</td>
<td>$946,955,971</td>
<td>$34,280,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td>$1,962,894,820</td>
<td>$1,928,358,285</td>
<td>-$34,536,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice Systems</td>
<td>$751,532,636</td>
<td>$763,240,901</td>
<td>$11,708,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Aid to Schools &amp; other standing appropriations</td>
<td>$3,864,188,258</td>
<td>$3,843,610,788</td>
<td>-$20,577,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</td>
<td>$7,619,331,961</td>
<td>$7,619,331,961</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET TARGETS</th>
<th>FY 2019 Adjusted</th>
<th>FY 2020 House</th>
<th>FY 2020 Senate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration &amp; Regulation</td>
<td>$48,466,893</td>
<td>$52,420,985</td>
<td>$55,576,149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ag &amp; Natural Resources</td>
<td>$39,357,522</td>
<td>$41,107,522</td>
<td>$39,961,522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>$40,216,345</td>
<td>$41,028,345</td>
<td>$41,628,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>$912,675,487</td>
<td>$961,044,271</td>
<td>$946,955,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Human Services</td>
<td>$1,962,894,820</td>
<td>$1,941,888,698</td>
<td>$1,928,358,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice Systems</td>
<td>$751,532,636</td>
<td>$770,370,901</td>
<td>$763,240,901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Aid to Schools &amp; other standing appropriations</td>
<td>$3,864,188,258</td>
<td>$3,860,115,038</td>
<td>$3,843,610,788</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL FUND TOTAL</td>
<td>$7,619,331,961</td>
<td>$7,667,975,760</td>
<td>$7,619,331,961</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of FY 2020 On-going Revenue - $7.8684 billion

- Administration & Regulation: 97.45%
- Education: 0%
- Health & Human Services: 96.83%
- Justice Systems: 31.18%

Increase over Adjusted FY 2019

- Administration & Regulation: 0.63%
- Education: 0%
- Health & Human Services: 0%
- Justice Systems: 298.6%

Ending Balance (in millions)

- Administration & Regulation: $0
- Education: $0
- Health & Human Services: $0
- Justice Systems: $0

*(Continued on next page)*
(Continued from page 2)

**JUSTICE SYSTEMS**

**House** - $770,370,501  
**Senate** - $763,240,901

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is **$7.130 million lower** than the House for this budget. At the Senate’s level, it would be difficult to provide the funding necessary to maintain the current level of State Troopers while holding training academies to bring on an additional 10 troopers, as the House budget plan does. The Senate plan would also have trouble addressing issues within the Indigent Defense program and addressing staffing needs within the state’s correctional system.

**STATE AID TO SCHOOLS & OTHER STANDING APPROPRIATIONS**

**House** - $3,860,115,038  
**Senate** - $3,843,610,788

The Senate is proposing a funding level that is **$16.604 million lower** than the House’s level. The difference is likely a decision to fund state technology programs within the RIIF budget, instead of the General Fund where the House is providing for it.

Another difference between the House and the Senate is in the amount of money left in the General Fund. With a difference of $48.6 million in spending, a person might expect that there would be a similar difference in the ending balance. But that is not the case. The Senate expects to have $311.8 million left over at the end of FY 2020, while the House level is $298.6 million. Why the much smaller difference? Revenue adjustments.

Senate Republicans have already announced that their budget targets also include $38.8 million in tax changes, with the phasedown of the inheritance tax leading the way. That bill would reduce state revenue by $30 million in FY 2020 and another $85 million in Fiscal Year 2021. The impact of this change could also be felt on last year’s tax reform law. The reduction in revenue from the phase-out of the inheritance tax could have the impact or delaying or preventing the state from ending federal deductibility as was envisioned in the 2018 tax reform law.

Work on the budget will continue next week, allowing the House to be ready to move budget bills once.

**Agriculture**

**House Ag Panel Passes Bi-Partisan Agricultural Facility Trespass Measure**

On Wednesday, March 6, 2019, the Iowa House Agriculture Committee passed by a 21-aye to 2-nay vote House Study Bill 236. The bill creates new agricultural production facility trespass provision in Iowa code chapter 717A that specifies certain offenses relating to agricultural production operations that cause economic damage or other injury which could include: sabotage, adulterations, and destruction of property such as agricultural crops or animals. The measure provides for a criminal offense of agricultural production facility trespass that involves the use of deception to obtain access to a facility not open to the public with intent to cause physical or economic harm or other injury to the facility’s operation, property or persons. The offense may include obtaining employment with agricultural production facility by deception with intent to harm the operation, property or person. The legislation is similar to aspects of an Idaho law that has withstood a federal Court challenge.

**IDALS Reveals Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Report**

On Monday, March 4, 2019, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) issued a press release wherein Iowa State University, the IDALS and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy Annual Progress Report is now available to the public.

The annual report provides progress updates on point source and nonpoint source efforts to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus loads leaving the state.

**United States Wins WTO Dispute with China**

On Thursday, February 28, 2019, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foreign Agricultural service (FAS) issued a press release announcing that the World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement panel found that China has provided trade distorting domestic support to its grain producers well in excess of its commitments under WTO rules. China’s market price support policy artificially raises Chinese prices for grains above market levels, creating incentives for increased Chinese production of agricultural products and reduced imports. This panel report is a significant victory for U.S. agriculture that will help American farmers compete on a more level playing field. This dispute is the first to challenge China’s agricultural policies that disregard WTO rules and shows that the United States will take whatever steps are necessary to enforce the rules and ensure free and fair trade for U.S. farmers, ranchers, workers, and businesses.

In December 2016, the U.S. requested that the WTO establish a dispute settlement panel to consider whether China provides “market price support.” Market price support programs are some of the most trade-distorting agricultural policies, and are therefore subject to clear limits under the WTO Agreement on Agriculture and a WTO Member’s specific commitments. Under WTO rules, China may provide non-exempt support up to the de minimis level of 8.5 percent of the value of total production of a particular commodity, a commitment set out in China’s WTO accession agreement. The panel report agreed with the United States that China provided domestic support to its agricultural producers in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, well in excess of its WTO commitments. Specifically, the panel found that China had provided support in excess of permitted levels for Indica (long-grain) rice, Japonica (short- and medium-grain) rice, and wheat, in every year. Each finding individually established that China broke its overall agricultural domestic support commitment for agricultural producers.

For corn, the panel declined to make findings on the support provided to corn in 2012-2015 given that China had apparently changed its program in 2016, just prior to the WTO’s establishment of the panel. Compliance with WTO rules will lead to a reduction in the excessive support provided to China’s grains producers and should increase market forces in China, leading to a more level playing field. Read more about the United States’ challenge, including additional details about how China’s excessive domestic support to its grain producers breaches its WTO commitments.
Private Electric Generation Bill Passes House Commerce Committee

Iowans understand the importance of shared infrastructure because it benefits all of us. When Iowans fuel up their cars at the gas pump, a portion of what they pay goes to the Road Use Tax Fund which is used to improve our roads and bridges across the state. The more you use the roads, the more you pay to maintain them through the fuel tax. It is a common sense system that has served Iowans well for a long time.

This week the House Commerce Committee considered HSB 185, which proposes an equitable change to how customer use utility infrastructure and the costs associated with that use. The goal is to make sure costs are not inequitably transferred from one consumer to another. The bill moved out of committee ahead of the funnel deadline and will be eligible next week.

At its core, HSB 185 is about equity and fairness. The bill simply allows electric companies to do what RECs and municipal utilities currently have the ability to do: charge customers based on their energy usage and the demands placed on the system. Currently, rate regulated electric companies (Mid-American and Alliant) are not able to charge all customers for their use of the infrastructure used to provide electricity to their home or business. Private generation customers (e.g. customers who generate solar energy) do not pay for these infrastructure costs, even though they use it more than traditional customers. These customers take energy off the grid and send energy back to the grid using the distribution infrastructure more than a regular customer.

Utilities must ensure the electric grid has reliable service 24/7 for all of their customers, including private generation customers. Private generation customers are really “super-users” because they both receive and send energy through the grid. Private solar customers use the grid for all but about 40 seconds of an average day because they’re almost always either receiving or sending energy. This means they are not off the grid. And since they are not off the grid it seems reasonable to expect all customers to equitably share the costs of it – whether they receive energy, send it, or both.

Many have expressed concern that HSB 185 will completely change the current structure and system. However, this legislation does not eliminate net metering. With net metering, a customer that owns private solar can “bank” excess energy and use it to offset their bill when their energy needs are greater than the energy they produce. Under the proposed legislation, net metering is still one of a menu of billing options solar customers could choose. In addition, HSB 185 “grandfathers in” current solar energy customers with their existing status, maintaining the pricing and payment structure they currently have.

The solar industry will remain highly subsidized – over 50% of the installation cost for solar is covered by federal and state tax credits. HSB 185 does not affect federal, state or local tax subsidies that solar customers currently receive and which cover at least half of the cost of a typical residential solar installation.

HSB 185 is an equitable and fair solution because it stops the transference of costs from those who can afford private solar to all other customers and gives customers more options for connecting solar to the electric grid.

April Main Street Application Workshops

The Iowa Economic Development Authority’s Main Street Iowa program will host regional workshops in April for communities interested in applying for Main Street Iowa program designation in 2019.

The application workshops will provide an overview of the application, the competitive designation process, and strategies to complete the application.

Communities interested in applying for Main Street Iowa designation in 2019 are required to have local representation at one of these workshops.

State Center, April 3
City Hall, Community Room (2nd Floor)

Manning, April 4
Timmerman Shelter House / Manning City Park

Elkader, April 9
Central State Bank (Community Room)

There is no cost for the application workshops but pre-registration is appreciated. Please contact Michael Wagler, Main Street Iowa State Coordinator, for more information relating to Main Street Iowa or the application workshop. (michael.wagler@iowaeda.com or 515.348.6184)
Proposed for New Rules for Seclusion and Restraint Issued

New rules were proposed last month by the Department of Education regarding how schools handle seclusion and restraint within their respective school districts, including rules around how seclusion rooms are to be constructed and used. This rewrite of existing rules was prompted after a 2016 press investigation and a 2017 state investigation into how Iowa City (in particular) and other districts used seclusion rooms. Following those investigations a state work group convened educators, parents, administrators, and advocates, which led to the new proposal.

The rule sets uniform standards for the state that:

- Prohibit corporal punishment, prone restraint, and mechanical restraint
- Explain parameters for physical restraint and seclusion
- Describe other limits on physical contact with students

It defines what is and isn’t corporal punishment and what reasonable and necessary force include and look like. It requires appropriate training of employees, notification periods for parents (including periodically during the restraint or seclusion), and documentation of such incidents. Debriefing after the incident (within 5 days) must also occur with parents. If a school uses seclusion rooms, the new rules describe what those must look like and what safety measures must be included.

Iowa law governing seclusion and restraint is found in Code section 280.21, titled “Corporal punishment.” It doesn’t specifically mention seclusion and restraint, “corporal punishment” means the intentional physical punishment of a student. The Department has interpreted this to include seclusion and restraint, so Iowa Administrative Rules flesh out what this means.

While public comment period and the public hearing for these rules have ended (March 5), you can still find information about the rules on the legislature's website. The rule will be before the legislative Administrative Rules Review Committee this week as a Notice. It will then appear before the committee again at a later date this Spring for final review.

Current rules: [https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/4276C.pdf](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/4276C.pdf)

New rules: [https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/4276C.pdf](https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/4276C.pdf)

Home School Families May Now Enroll in Iowa Learning Online

Home-schooling families may now directly enroll in Iowa Learning Online (ILO) courses. This is the result of legislation passed and signed last year allowing this access. SF 2131 not only provided a new option for quality education for home school families, but also provided opportunities for those students to interact with other students and Iowa-licensed teachers through ILO.

ILO is a program run through the Department of Education. It provides an a la carte style menu of course to public and private schools. If a district in rural Iowa wants to provide a course on Mandarin Chinese but can’t hire a teacher for the course, they can access this content through ILO. Until last year Iowa law did not allow home school students to access this same course catalog.

With the change in law, now any Iowa resident family participating in full or partial Independent Private Instruction, Competent Private Instruction, or Private Instruction may choose to enroll in ILO courses. Families participating in dual-enrollment have options. Option one is to enroll the student directly in an ILO course as part of their home-school instruction and assume the tuition costs. Option two is to request that the local district enroll the student in an ILO course, assume the tuition costs and provide district credit (the local district has the right to decline).

To enroll, contact the ILO registrar at regis-trar@iowalearningonline.org. Or for more information, visit: [http://iowalearningonline.org/home-school-enrollment](http://iowalearningonline.org/home-school-enrollment)

New Statewide Assessments Begin

You may hear about Iowa students just starting to take the new statewide assessment, which opened this month. This is as a result of legislation passed and signed by the Governor last year (HF 2235). Students are required to take statewide assessments annually to meet federal and state law requirements.

The New Assessment

The new assessment, called the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress, or ISASP, is being developed by the same entity, ITP at the University of Iowa. The test will include the following content areas and grades:

- Reading – grades 3-11
- Language/Writing (which includes grammar and mechanics) – grades 3-11
- Mathematics – grades 3-11
- Science – grades 5, 8, 10

The Previous Assessment

The test previously required by Iowa law is the Iowa Assessments, a test produced and administered by the Iowa Testing Program (ITP) out of the University of Iowa. The Iowa Assessments is the successor to the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), a rebranding which occurred in 2011.

The argument against continuing the Iowa Assessments was primarily that they don’t align with Iowa's academic standards, ie. what is being taught in the classroom.

- Standards – determined at the state level for what students should learn in each subject and in each grade
- Curriculum – chosen by the districts, determines how to teach the standards
- Assessment – the accountability piece, are students learning what they’re being taught
What is being tested and how long are the tests?

Although these tests are not timed, the recommended time allotment is 60 minutes each for the reading, mathematics, and science tests, and 120 minutes for the language and writing test. The test will be available in paper/pencil and online. The window for test administration begins in March and extends through May.

English Language Arts skills tested will include reading comprehension, text-based writing, mechanics and usage. Artificial Intelligence will be used to score the writing, which will include the following considerations: the use of evidence from text; organization; language use, tone, and style; and production of writing, which includes the student’s ability to address the topic and produce a cohesive argument.

In mathematics, the skills tested align to the grade-level focus areas of the Iowa Core Mathematics Standards and item types will include multiple choice, technology enhanced item type, and shorter constructed response.

In science, the assessment will focus on the three dimensions of the Iowa Core Science Standards: practices, cross-cutting concepts, and disciplinary core ideas.

Test results and how were the assessments vetted?

Students, schools, and districts can expect to get reports on the results of the assessment after the completion of a standard setting study. Proficiency and readiness indicators will be reported after the first year. Growth indicators will be available after year two.

How are the assessment funded?

The legislature created a new appropriation last year to help with the new costs associated with the new assessment. Previously districts were covering the costs of the Iowa Assessments on their own. This was a cost of the about $1.6 million annually. The new assessments are estimated to cost about $4.3 million annually. In order to prevent districts from taking on any new costs, the legislature appropriated $2.7 million to cover the difference in costs between the old and new assessments.

Additional information on the new assessment can be found at http://iowa.pearsonaccessnext.com/.

Environmental Protection

House Environmental Protection Panel Passes DNR Administrative Procedures Updates and Modernization Measure

On Tuesday, March 5, 2019, the Iowa House Environmental Protection Committee passed House Study Bill 81 by a unanimous 19-aye vote (2-absent). The bill is comprised of two divisions. The first division addresses DNR issuance of an administrative order and timeframe for an appeal. Currently, the regulatory timeframe depends upon what type of entity seeks an appeal with some current Code provisions providing for a 30-day appeal; others 60-day appeal periods. This legislation specifies 60-days in a new Code section (455B.110); and specifies how entities are to be notified of an order and when the 60-day appeal process commences. The second division of the bill allows DNR to exempt from permit requirements a class of waste disposal systems from permit requirements that do not discharge into water of the state and are not currently exempt.

The amendment adopted by the Committee additionally made several technical verbiage corrections to the bill and added some additional provisions. The amended language included DNR sought changes to the bill that replaced the term ‘entity’ with the term ‘person’ to clarify the terms of use in the DNR Code sections dealing with permitting. The term ‘a person’ is already defined in the DNR Code chapters and used in similar text in DNR Code provisions. The amendment included new language brought to the Subcommittee by rural water system stakeholders to remove an unnecessary regulatory burden when these systems are merely extending distribution lines as long as a licensed engineer is involved and the system’s hydraulic modeling complies with standards for water supply systems adopted by the Environmental Protection Commission.
Recent Iowa Poll Validates House Republicans Priorities

The Des Moines Register recently released a new Iowa Poll that found that 74% of Iowa adults see opioid use, 65% see mental health, and 50% think Iowa's Medicaid program is a crisis or a big problem. Over the last year, House Republicans have worked to pass significant reforms to improve all three areas.

Opioids

Last session, the legislature passed legislation to address the opioid epidemic, and since then, has seen significant improvements. House File 2377 passed unanimously through both chambers and specifically prevented doctor shopping for opioids, reduced over-prescribing, and provided support to Iowans suffering from opioid addiction. There are currently 86% of prescribers registered with the Prescription Monitoring Program, which is a large increase since just this July when there were only 58% of prescribers registered.

House Republicans continue to build upon the work from last year to find additional ways to treat individuals with opioid addiction. The House Human Resources Committee recently passed House File 623, a bill to require immediate treatment for those seeking help for opioid abuse. HF 623 specifically requires Iowa Medicaid to provide at least one form of medication-assisted treatment without prior authorization so when someone is ready for treatment, they can get the care they need right away.

Mental Health

Last session, with complete bipartisan support, the legislature passed a comprehensive mental health bill to fill gaps in Iowa's adult mental health system. House File 2456 increased access to mental health services and created new services for urban and rural communities in Iowa. By removing the statewide sub-acute bed cap and adding new services to the core list required by Iowa's 14 Mental Health and Disability Service (MHDS) Regions, this bill helps deescalate mental health patients before crisis and wrap services around them when they are prepared to return home.

Building off of last year’s comprehensive mental health bill for adults, the legislature is now focusing on building the foundation for a children’s mental health system. This week, the House Human Resources unanimously passed House Study Bill 206. This bill develops Iowa’s first coordinated children’s mental health system. This bill ensures that immediately there is local access and coordination to mental health services for children, and that parents have a place to turn when seeking treatment for their child.

Medicaid

Last session, based on feedback from constituents, House Republicans persuaded the governor to sign legislation related to holding managed care organizations accountable to providers and to members and passing even stronger oversight of the Medicaid system.

Recently, the House Government Oversight Committee brought in the Director of the Department of Human Services and the CEOs of the two MCOs to ensure there has been progress since the oversight legislation was passed. The committee specifically focused on credentialing uniformity, prior authorization standardization, and payment accuracy.

House Republicans are dedicated to assisting any Medicaid member or provider that is having issues navigating the managed care program. The MCOs are contractors for the state, and they should be held accountable if they are not fulfilling the obligations to the state and those it serves. Please contact me if I can assist in any way.

Bi-Partisan Work Continues on House Judiciary Committee

The Judiciary committee is arguably one of the busiest committees in the House, but also one of the most bi-partisan committees. Republicans and Democrats work together on complicated legislation to improve Iowa’s criminal and civil laws. As of Tuesday, March 5th, the committee had passed 33 bills to the House Floor. Of those, only five passed on party lines, meaning 85% of the legislation has been bi-partisan.

Working together isn’t always easy. House Republicans have listened carefully to House Democrats during subcommittees and have requested many amendments to solve problems Democrats had with different pieces of legislation. Below are some bills that passed out thanks to great bi-partisan work.

HF 328-Vulnerable Elder

HF 328 amends the definition of vulnerable elder to clarify that a person's age does not necessarily make them vulnerable, but their mental or physical condition or personal circumstances is what makes them more vulnerable after the age of 60.

HF 534- Female Genital Mutilation

HF 534 prohibits female genital mutilation and prohibit people from taking children out of the country to have this gruesome act performed. Members of the subcommittee met with community representatives as well as advocates. After careful consideration, penalties were altered to help protect women and their daughters while still ensuring the proposed law could adequately be enforced.

HF 395-Prettrial Contact, Minor and Defendant

This bill protects a minor victim from having to come face to face with their abuser during pretrial actions. As amended, the bill allows a minor to have their interview or deposition done outside the presence of the defendant either through a closed circuit system or other manner to ensure the defendant cannot have contact with the minor. A caretaker who engages in this action could be charged with a serious misdemeanor for this offense.
**Labor**

**Future Ready Iowa Internship Pilot Program**

The Future Ready Iowa Internship Pilot Program is a funding opportunity that targets organizations who can provide high school students with internship opportunities to allow them to explore and prepare for high-demand careers. The focused audiences are youth at risk for not graduating high school, from low-income households, and are underrepresented populations in Iowa’s workforce, such as minorities and youth with disabilities.

How to apply:

Learn more about the Future Ready Iowa Internship Pilot Program and submit a plan on how your organization will effectively offer internships and possible employment services for at least a six-week period to a minimum of 10 youth. Programs must serve high school students who would otherwise face barriers to success and gainful employment, and focus on giving them experience in high-demand career fields. $250,000 is available and applications are due by March 20th.

**Natural Resources**

**State Youth Archery Tournaments Begins March 9**

The DNR provided the following information:

An estimated 1,900 Iowa students from fourth through 12th grade will be at the Iowa State Fairgrounds March 9-10 competing in the Iowa State Archery Tournament.

The two-day bullseye competition will be held in the Richard O. Jacobson Exhibition Center while the one-day 3-D competition will take place in the Elwell Family Food Center.

“We are really fortunate to have so much interest in this program and event,” said Donise Petersen, archery coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “Archery really levels the playing field allowing students of all sizes and abilities to participate and excel.”

The tournament features a full field of 88 teams shooting for $16,800 in scholarships and other prizes and a chance to go to nationals later this spring. Results will be posted online at [http://nasptournaments.org](http://nasptournaments.org).

The state tournament is sponsored by the Iowa Bowhunters Association, Whitetails Unlimited, Iowa State Archery Association, Raised At Full Draw, Individual Shooting Code, Haney Family and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The tournament is again partnering with the Food Bank of Iowa to help those in need. Anyone contributing nonperishable food or monetary donations will be entered into a drawing for prizes, including targets and a bow.

Tickets are available for $5 at the door. Attendees may receive a $1 discount by showing their hunting or fishing license. 17 and younger get in free. The admission on Saturday includes access to the bullseye and 3-D tournament.

**Public Safety**

**Public Safety Committee Eliminates Extreme Proposals During Funnel Week**

At the end of this week bills filed by Representatives will either move out of committee or die for the year. Most of the focus is the good legislation that succeeds, but it’s also important to highlight how the funnel helps weed out bad policy. Below are some bills sent to the House Public Safety Committee that will not survive the funnel deadline.

**House File 32-“May” Issue Permit Policy**

This bill would take Iowa back to a “may” issue permit. This allows a County Sheriffs to deny a law abiding Iowan a firearms permit for any reason, or no reason at all. The bill also allows a Sheriff to deny a person a firearms permit if they were found not guilty of a crime, or if they had charges against them dismissed. A person wrongly denied a permit would still have the right to appeal, but would have to pay court costs and other fees, even if they succeeded in their appeal. This makes it extremely difficult and costly for law abiding Iowans to exercise their Second Amendment rights.

HF 65- Ban on “large capacity” Ammunition Feeding Devices

HF 65 makes it an aggravated misdemeanor to buy, sell, or even possess any ammunition feeding device that holds more than 10 rounds of ammunition. This includes any magazines, belts, drums or similar devices that can hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition. The bill makes no consideration for business selling these magazines, or law abiding Iowans who own them under current law. If House Democrats were in charge and advanced this Bloomberg-esque language, law abiding Iowans would immediately be criminals facing the possibility of 2 years in prison and fines up to $6,500. The language is so extreme, it seems to require law enforcement to confiscate these devices from everyone. There are no exceptions for currently owned devices, or for law enforcement. This bill wreaks havoc on Iowan’s freedom, law enforcement officers, courts, prisons and business.
Sports Betting Passes House State Government Committee

Last week the Iowa House State Government Committee passed HSB 198 which allows Iowans to place wagers on collegiate, professional, and certain Olympic sports. The bill passed with a vote of 13-10 and received bipartisan support. HSB 198 authorizes the Iowa Racing & Gaming Commission to determine the scope of bets that may be placed on collegiate, professional, and certain Olympic sports.

Throughout the subcommittee process, legislators heard discussion on four different sports wagering proposals contained in four separate study bills. HSB 101 allowed the casinos to offer sports wagering on site and on a mobile device. To register for the mobile application, the individuals are required to go into a casino and register for the first 18 months. After the first 18 months a person could register without going into a casino. HSB 102 allowed for Iowans to participate in Daily Fantasy Sports. HSB 103 allowed the Iowa Lottery to offer sports wagering at locations that already offered lottery tickets. HSB 124 allowed the Iowa Horsemen’s Benevolent and Protective Association to have the sole license to operate or conduct sports wagering.

The Iowa House State Government ultimately allowed for sports wagering to be conducted by the casinos. The committee determined that it was not necessary for there to be an in-person registration to use a mobile application. This bill also allowed for Iowans to participate in Daily Fantasy Sports. The bill has been sent to Ways & Means Committee and may continue to evolve before it becomes law.

Road Use Equity Passes House Transportation Committee

The increased use of electric vehicles has had an impact on the infrastructure (roads and bridges) in the state of Iowa. Electric vehicles pay either reduced or no fuel tax because they either use much less gas than normal vehicles (in the case of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles) or no gas (in the case of battery electric vehicles). The fuel tax funds are directed to the road use tax fund (RUTF) and the money is then distributed to infrastructure projects across the state. In 2018 the reduction to the RUTF was estimates at just under $320,000 and is expected to quickly grow as electric vehicles become more popular – up to $45M by 2030.

This week the House Transportation Committee passed legislation that would require all vehicles using the road to pay for the wear and tear they contribute. HSB 197 has three main parts to ensure all vehicles pay their share based on recommendations from the DOT.

First, there is a supplemental registration fee for electric vehicles that will be initially phased in over a three year period. The registration fee also differentiates between battery electric vehicles ($130/yr), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles ($65/yr), and electric motorcycles ($9/yr), recognizing that they all impact the infrastructure and RUTF in different ways. Second, a 2.6 cents per kilowatt hour (kWh) excise fee is imposed on commercial electric fuel charging stations to ensure an equitable contribution from commercial and out of state electric vehicles using our road system. Finally, there is a 65 cents per gallon excise fee on hydrogen fuel, so commercial vehicles powered by hydrogen fuel contribute their share to the RUTF.

All vehicles driving on the road should contribute to construction and repair of our infrastructure. HSB 197 creates an equitable solution to ensure funding remains for Iowa roads and bridges.

Veterans Affairs

House Veterans Affairs Committee Passes Bill

The House Veterans Affairs committee met this past Wednesday to discuss HSB 229.

This bill relates to the removal of county veterans service officers. It adds in a new section to the code which states that an executive director or administrator shall only be removed from office by the commission, subject to the approval of the board of supervisors. This mirrors the current appointment process for county veterans service officers and was well received in subcommittee. This bill passed out of committee (17-0).
Extension for 2018 Farm Returns

This week the Iowa Department of Revenue granted an extension for certain taxpayers to file and pay 2018 Iowa individual income tax returns without underpayment of estimated tax penalty. Taxpayers who earn at least two thirds of their income from farming or commercial fishing will have until April 30 to file and pay their 2018 returns.

The Iowa Code and administrative rules allow the Director of Revenue to provide further time for filing returns if good cause exists and to waive penalties for underpayments of estimated tax if the underpayment was due to unusual circumstances and imposition would be against equity and good conscience. On February 28, 2019, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) issued notice 2019-17 which provides an extension through April 15, for farmers and fishermen to make estimated payments before being subject to estimated tax penalties. The Director found that this extension and waiver by the IRS is an unusual circumstance warranting a similar extension and waiver for Iowa income tax purposes.