

House Republicans Offer Regents Reform

(DES MOINES)—Republican Representatives Royd Chambers (R-Sheldon), Annette Sweeney (R-Alden), Jeff Kaufmann (R-Wilton) and Pat Grassley (R-New Hartford) crafted legislation aimed at reforming the Board of Regents and their policies as an attempt to find more budget efficiencies and savings for the state.

“House Republicans took a serious look at ways to save Iowans money and help protect one of Iowa’s most vulnerable groups, it’s students,” said Rep. Royd Chambers. “We think this plan is a step in the right direction.”

Their policy, which is House File 2358, will also be offered as an amendment to the state government reorganization plan that will be taken up by the House this week. The bill outlines five ideas which Republicans think will help improve and streamline the Regents. The legislation:

--Limits any tuition increase to Higher Education Price Index (HEPI)

--Creates a Cost-Savings Task Force chaired by the State Auditor

--Mandates Public Hearings before any tuition increase

--Asks each university president to compose a comprehensive plan with benchmarks to decrease tuition, decrease administration costs and increase graduation rates

--Creates an analysis of professor teaching time

“Tough budget times call for all Iowans to tighten their belts and the Regents are no different. We must stop pushing the pain on down the line to Iowa college students and their families,” said Rep. Annette Sweeney. “It’s time to make some comprehensive changes and bring true reform to state government, and this is just one way we can do that.”

Republicans are hoping for bipartisan support for all or part of their proposal.