

Iowa House of Representatives

State Representative Cecil Dolecheck

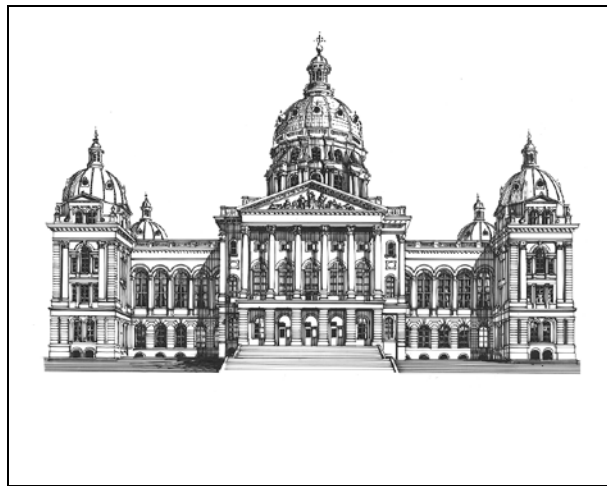
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For the week of April 4th, 2011



Plan One' Takes a Trip Across the State for Public Comment

Iowa's first look at redistricting "plan one" came last week. This week the plan takes to the road for public meetings all over the state. The Temporary Redistricting Advisory Council is charged with holding these public hearings to gather public comment on the plan and summarize those comments into a report.

The first public meeting was held Monday in Council Bluffs with ICN interactive sites in Mason City, Sioux City, and Spencer. On Tuesday, the council met with the public in Bettendorf. The Wednesday public hearing was in Cedar Rapids with ICN interactive sites in Dubuque, Ottumwa and Waterloo. The final public hearing is Thursday in Des Moines. The sites were picked with the intent that they would cover all four new congressional districts.

After the redistricting tour is over—the advisory council will submit a report based on the comments gathered. Three days after the report is submitted, plan one can be voted on by either chamber. The bill does not "start" in one chamber like budget bills generally do. Whichever chamber calls the bill up on the floor first will have the first opportunity to vote on plan one. The vote must be straight up or down. There can be no amendments. Based on the above outlined schedule it is likely that the advisory council will submit their report on Friday, April 8 and that plan one will be eligible for debate by either chamber on Wednesday April 13.

Broad Based Property Tax Reform Passes Ways and Means

HF 671- Increases school financing by increasing the regular program foundation base (thus providing broad based property tax relief) passed the full Ways and Means Committee with a 15-10 vote last week.

An amendment was adopted in committee that eliminated the requirement of cities and counties to define essential or nonessential services.

Over the last ten years property taxes for cities, counties and school has far outpaced inflation. As the bill moves to the House Floor, the goal will be to provide property tax relief while slowing the rate of future property tax increases to a more sustainable level.

House Labor Bills Killed in Senate

The Senate Labor and Business Relations committee failed to take up or move any of the labor bills that the House had passed over to it. The House had passed four labor bills off of the floor of the House before the end of February, but the Senate decided to not even take them up in committee.

The bills that died as a result of not passing out of a Senate committee before the second funnel include:

- HF 149 – would have required the Department of Economic Development to include the phrase ‘Iowa is a Right to Work State’ on its materials
- HF 401 – would have stated that personal injuries sustained during nonwork hours and while on a personal errand are not compensable for workers’ compensation benefits
- HF 473 – would have forbidden pre-qualifying for bidding on contracting bids, prohibited the use of project labor agreements, and expand reciprocal preference language to include labor force.
- HF 525 – would have reformed Iowa’s collective bargaining law to restore the balance between labor and the taxpayer, which many claim favors labor at the expense of the taxpayer

Governor Signs Executive Order Rescinding Iowa RICE Rule

On Monday, April 4, 2011, Iowa Governor Terry E. Branstad signed [Executive Order number 72](#), which rescinds the Iowa “RICE” (reciprocating internal combustion engine) rule. The RICE rule was adopted by the Environmental Protection Commission and went into effect on February 11, 2011. This rule forces back-up diesel generators to be retrofitted with very expensive new parts, even though the engines are rarely used, frequently only 10 to 20 hours a year. Governor Branstad commented-- “Lieutenant Governor Reynolds and I recently joined Iowa House and Senate Republicans on their ‘Rules and Regulations’ tour where we learned of many regulations burden Iowa business. This administration is serious about removing burdensome regulations. The economic impacts of administrative rules need to be considered when being adopted.”

Sixty-seven Iowa utilities would have added costs because of this rule, which would likely result in higher prices for the Iowa consumer. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently enforces the RICE rule on a federal level, but the EPA is reevaluating it due to the significant costs associated with its implementation. Governor Branstad plans to send the EPA a copy of this executive order to encourage them to reconsider changes to the entire rule, while keeping in mind the economic impact on utilities.

Stolen Valor to the House Floor

The committee of Veterans Affairs came back a second time to discuss a bill relating to the “stolen valor” bill already approved by the Senate. The bill, SF 397, would criminalize someone attempting to impersonate a decorated veteran for monetary gain.

Falsely claiming to have received medals including the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Navy Cross, or the Distinguished Flying Cross, would be a serious misdemeanor.

The bill passed out of committee unanimously and will now move to the floor.

What do you think? Email me your thoughts. My e-mail address is: cecil.dolecheck@legis.state.ia.us the number for the House switchboard is 515-281-3221, Seat 65

Visitors to the House include : Mr. And Mrs. Robert Cochran of Lenox.

Information about my legislative forum schedule, past newsletters and biography can be found at www.iowahouserepublicans.com/members/cecil-dolecheck