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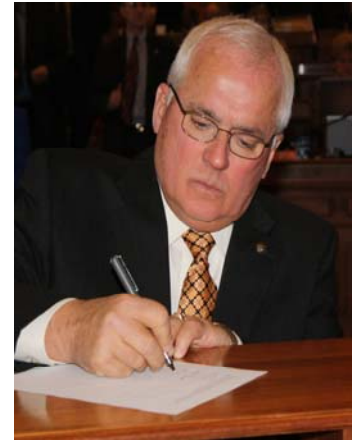
House of Representatives

State of Iowa

Eighty-Third General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, Iowa 50319



OLSON'S OBSERVATIONS

On Monday, the Iowa House passed a major piece of legislation with overwhelming bi-partisan support. [SF 2088](#), the State Reorganization bill, passed unanimously. Because of the different philosophies and approach to government, it is rare to see the entire legislature working in harmony. There were over one hundred amendments offered in the House, there was give and take within both parties. I am happy to say one of the amendments that I worked on passed the House and keeps the Empowerment Program intact. The Legislative Service Agency said that the reorganization would save \$68.2 million for the general fund and an additional \$56.1 million to other state accounts. Since the House amended the Senate version, the bill must now be reconsidered by the Senate.

Unfortunately, this year we have been slow on passing legislation to help Iowans battle the poor economy. One piece of legislation that is available to us, yet we have not taken action on, is coupling tax laws. Coupling is updating our tax code so it incorporates changes made on the Federal level. Leadership did not introduce legislation last year to update and are slow to act this year. The main reason for lack of action is because it reduces state income tax revenue. If we would pass legislation to couple, Iowa taxpayers could save \$34.53 million in taxes for FY 2010. I have constituents tell me that because of the lack of coupling our tax code, their student loan application process has become more complex. Some of the ways Iowans will be affected if we do not couple are:

- No deduction for educator expenses (\$250 out of pocket),
- No deduction for tuition and fees for higher education,
- No deduction for tax free treatment of IRA distributions for charitable donations,
- Iowans who claim the earned income tax credit will have to revise their calculation, and
- All unemployment compensation will be taxable for Iowans, even though the first \$2,400 is exempt on the federal level.

We have now passed the halfway point of this session of the legislature. Following are some bills that survived the first funnel and still eligible for action this session;

- [House File 2075](#) Mandated Coverage of Cancer Clinical Trials. The bill clarifies that Iowa regulated insurance plans will provide coverage of services and drugs for Iowans participating in cancer clinical trials.
- [House File 2229](#) Prohibiting Dental Insurers from setting fees for non-covered services.
- [HF 2107](#) Allows the voluntary severance and annexation of real property between two municipalities and allows them to enter into an agreement to share the property tax revenue and zoning rights.
- [HSB 660](#) Creates a Watershed Planning Advisory Council to make recommendation to the Governor and General Assemble concerning suggestions on how to best clean up and improve the quality of surface water in the state.
- [HF 744](#) Strengthens law enforcement's efforts to capture sexual predators by making the offense of "attempting to entice a child" a class "D" felony.
- [SF 434](#) Transparency Nuisance Citation requires a nuisance citation issued on a piece of property be filed with the district court and recorded on appropriate land records.
- [HSB 721](#) A bill stating it is the intent of the Legislature to enact a law relating to the issuance of permits to carry concealed weapons.
- [SF 2062](#) Early Retirement Incentive.

I will continue to keep you informed about these issues as they develop in the Iowa House. Always feel free to contact me on any issue before the Iowa Legislature. I can be reached at 515/281-6055 during the week or by e-mail at steven.olson@legis.state.ia.us.