

Sweeney from the Statehouse 3-4-10

On Monday, the House passed [HF 2462](#), known as the PPEL (physical plant and equipment levy) bill. Under Iowa law, a school board can approve a levy up to 33 cents per \$1,000 assessed valuation for PPEL. The voter approved portion of PPEL allows for a levy up to \$1.34 per \$1,000 assessed valuation. [HF 2462](#) expands the uses for the board approved PPEL to include all computers, computer related equipment, computer software, technical support services and the cost to repair any equipment including school buses. To clarify, this bill allows the use of the board levy funds and will include repairs. In the past a school could use PPEL to buy a school bus, but not repair it. The bill takes effect upon enactment and would be applicable to the current school year budget. This will greatly help out rural schools.

The Government Reorganization bill that we have talked about in recent weeks passed out of both houses. It is nice when we work together on stream lining government. I am hoping we look hard at new ways to use technology. I have offered to be on the interim committee to look into this.

The legislature in recent weeks has passed the Disaster Case Management bill, [HF 2422](#). The bill received unanimous support in both chambers. [HF 2422](#) directs the Rebuild Iowa Office to work with the Department of Human Services, Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division to establish a statewide disaster case management system. The system would be activated by a Governor's proclamation of a disaster emergency or the declaration of a major disaster by the President. These state agencies are directed to work with nonprofit, voluntary and faith-based organizations active in disaster recovery. The purpose of this bill is to shorten the learning curve and speed the process of recovery following a future disaster. Hopefully, these agencies have time to organize. Hopefully Iowa does not experience the spring flooding and hail storms like the example of one that we had in Eldora. Yeah Rah to the people that work hard for the city of Eldora! They received notice of CDBG grant \$400,000 (imminent threat) to repair homes with damage that had no insurance or under insured.

We have talked about the "Race to the Top" funds that were hurriedly passed through the legislative process the first week. Here are the finalists: Colorado, Delaware, the District, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina and Tennessee. Iowa was not one. My understanding is that Iowa can reapply and will get critiques on why we did not receive the funding and when we reapply we can address these issues. I am concerned about some legislation that was passed this year depending on this money. Some how the saying my grandma told us "don't count your chickens before they are hatched" is coming to mind.

A fun weekend is planned by visiting East Marshall Government Class, talking with Pachyderm club, listening post in State Center at 3:30 pm at the Library on Friday and then County Conventions on Saturday in Marshalltown at 10:00 and Hardin County in Iowa Falls at 11:00.

Visitors to the capitol this week were Marshall County Cattlemen's group with their chaperone Leah Moser, an Angus friend of mine Landi McFarland, Earth Movers of Iowa and their leader Dan Rasmussen, and James Nehring from Owasa.