

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **Contacting Your Legislators**
- **Capitol News**
- **Funnel Survivors**
- **To Bond, or Not to Bond**
- **Iowa to Host White House Forum on Health Care**
- **infoNET Advocacy Resources**
 - Mark Your Calendar!
 - Upcoming Public Forums
 - Bill Tracker

CONTACTING YOUR LEGISLATORS

Finding the Names of Your Legislators:

- ✓ It's on your mailing label (unless you have a PO box or business address, or are new)
- ✓ Call the Legislative Information Office (515-281-5129)
- ✓ Enter your address online
www.legis.state.ia.us/FindLeg/

Your Legislators' Emails can be found at:

www.legis.state.ia.us/aspx/Legislators/LegislatorInfo.aspx

Calls can be made Monday-Friday (leave a detailed message): 515.281.3371

(Senators);
515.281.3221 (Representatives)

Write Senators and Representatives at:

Senator _____ (Representative _____)
State Capitol
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

CAPITOL NEWS

Legislators spent the last two weeks trying to get bills out of committee before today's "funnel" deadline. Today (Friday, March 13) is the first big deadline of the legislative session. Bills that have not passed out of at least one committee by today's deadline are considered dead unless offered later as an amendment to another live bill or as a leadership bill.

Bills that spend money or include a tax are not subject to the funnel deadline. Legislators can debate tax and spending bills at any time during the legislative session.

A bill listed as "dead" can be brought back to life as an amendment to another bill, or by being re-introduced by legislative leaders. Take for instance the autism insurance mandate bills ([HF 1](#) & [SF 1](#)). They were the first bills introduced this year, but they didn't make the cut and died in this week's funnel. Autism activists could ask their legislators to have these bills re-drafted as an amendment, and offer that amendment to another bill during debate. If the majority of legislators vote "yes" on that amendment, it will become part of the bill being debated.

So if you are not the type of person to take "no" for an answer - ask your legislators to continue to work on your issues, and offer amendments! You can view a complete list of the bills that did - and didn't - make the funnel at the end of this report.

What is in a Name?

The Department of Elder Affairs got some unwarranted ribbing last week during Hosue debate on a bill to change its name to the Department on Aging. The name change more closely aligns the department with its federal counterparts, and is more accurate in describing how older Iowans feel about themselves. The department planned to be referred to as the “DA” - but Republican legislators poked fun, saying older Iowans would be offended at the department’s new “DOA” acronym. “I am glad you are changing the name. I always got a funny mental picture of *elder affairs*,” said Republican Senator Nancy Boettger of Harlan after the bill passed out of the Senate committee earlier this month.

Unemployment Insurance Extended

Legislators took a big step this week to extend the state’s unemployment benefits for Iowans being retrained in high-need jobs. Making the change means Iowa will receive \$71 million in additional federal economic stimulus funds to address unemployment. The bill is on its way to the Governor.

Show me the Money

Sometimes newcomers have the most insight. Jessica Gertler, one of the 2009 ID Action Lobbyist Apprentice Program participants, visited the Capitol this week to continue her advocacy on transportation funding and supports for persons with disabilities who want to work. She had the opportunity to watch the lively debate over extending unemployment benefits for people training in high-need areas. Like many things at the Capitol, legislators argued over spending the state’s limited resources.

When asked what she thought about her three visits to the Capitol, Jessica observed, “All these people up here talk about is money. It’s all about the money.”

How right she is. No matter what your issue, eventually it comes down to whether there is enough money, and how the money is spent. And soon, after the March revenue estimates come in, legislators will talk about little else. By our next report (due on March 28), the budget picture should start to take form and we’ll know for sure how much money can be spent, and where legislators are looking at spending it.

Don’t wait until the end of the month to tell your legislators about your budget priorities - where do you want to see taxpayer dollars spent? how do you think the budget should be allocated and why is it important to you? Let your legislators know now, before decisions are made!

FUNNEL SURVIVORS

You can look at a complete list of bills that we’ve been tracking for you that made the funnel, and those that didn’t. But we wanted to highlight a few:

Mental Health Parity. Mental health parity survived not just this first funnel - it has also advanced so that it is alive for the rest of session! Both House and Senate committees voted mental health parity bills out before the funnel deadline ([HF 234](#) & [SSB 1002](#)). Legislators are allowed to take a shortcut if two bills that are similar are sitting on both the House and Senate debate calendars. Once one chamber passed the bill, the other chamber can avoid re-sending it to committee, and simply “attach it” to the other bill on the debate

calendar. Lots can still happen, so if ending the inequity in health care coverage for mental illness is important to you, let your legislators know now. A note - SSB 1002 will be renumbered soon, but legislators should still be able to find the bill if you use this number.

Service Animals. Persons with disabilities that use service animals may get help if [HF 106](#) continues to advance. The bill, which made it through the first funnel, would require DHS to apply for a waiver to allow Medicaid to pay for costs associated with using and keeping a service animal. If a waiver is approved, funding would be required to pay for this service.

Prosthetic Insurance Coverage. The bill that requires insurance plans pay for medically-necessary prosthetics made the cut and survived the funnel ([HF 311](#)). The bill has already passed the Iowa House (64-33).

Autism Mandates. As noted above, the bills to require private insurance to pay for autism treatment did not make the funnel ([HF 1](#) & [SF 1](#)). A different bill ([HF 501](#)) did make it out of committee and is safe from the funnel - it requires the state to apply for an autism waiver. Some activists wish that the state would look at a “developmental disabilities” waiver to include more children, not just those with autism. But, as Jessica so appropriately said, “it’s all about the money.” If a waiver is approved, the state will need to find money to pay for its third of the services tab (the federal government picks up the remaining two-thirds).

MS Lottery Games. Since it is “all about the money,” groups are getting creative in finding ways to get money. Activists with the Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society asked legislators to

introduce a bill ([SF 77](#)) to create a new lottery game, with the money generated from the game to go to funding MS education and research. The bill made the funnel, so it is alive until the next deadline.

Automatic Absentee Ballots. Iowa voters who want to vote by mail have to request an absentee ballot for each election, even if they always wish to vote by mail. A new bill that survived the first funnel will change that ([HF 670](#)), allowing a person to request the ballot to come automatically each election. The automatic renewal would expire should the person every miss a vote.

Caucus Time Off. Iowa saw record turn-out in its 2008 first-in-the-nation caucuses. Voting activists were concerned that many Iowans were unable to attend the evening event because they had to work, and feared losing their jobs. Under a new bill that has survived the first funnel ([HF 675](#) & [SF 125](#)), employers would be required to give their employees unpaid time off work to attend the caucuses.

Break Time for Medications. A bill that required businesses to give their breast-feeding employees time to pump breast milk was expanded before passing out of committee ([HF 683](#)). It now requires businesses to also give employees unpaid break time with reasonable privacy to self-administer prescription medications.

Mental health redesign. Sen. Jack Hatch and Sen. Steve Kettering floated their ideas to redesign the seriously underfunded adult mental health and disability services (MH/DS). Sen. Hatch proposed a regional approach with a school-aid type formula to distribute state funds

([SF 134](#)) and Sen. Kettering suggested the state take over paying for everything ([SF 144](#)). Both bills died in the funnel, but discussion is ongoing about ways to provide incentives for counties to regionalize MH/DS services, and funding to be distributed more equitably (like through a school-aid formula). If a decision is made in this area, legislators would likely add it to the Health/Human Services Budget Bill.

TO BOND, OR NOT TO BOND

That is the question. (At least the question being discussed at the Capitol these days.) The Governor has proposed bonding (borrowing money) for \$750 million in infrastructure improvements. He unveiled the details of his plan (called I-JOBS) to create jobs and invest in infrastructure this week, which includes:

- \$250 million for transportation projects (especially road and bridge safety)
- \$175 million to complete important projects already scheduled (including improvements to the Iowa Veterans Home and community colleges)
- \$150 million for public buildings, disaster relief, mitigation projects, housing and other flood-related infrastructure not covered by federal relief
- \$100 million for water quality and waste water improvement projects
- \$75 million for local infrastructure, broadband technology, and alternative energy

Republicans have expressed concern about borrowing money in light of the uncertain economy. To Democrats, the question seems to be more of degree (how much to borrow). Senate Democrats moved quickly to pass their proposal to bond for \$175 million in mostly

planned infrastructure improvements. The bill (SF 376) was voted out of the Senate on a party-line vote (32-18).

The Senate plan makes improvements to the Mitchellville Correctional Facility (\$47.5 million), Iowa Veteran's Home (\$20.6 million), community-based corrections, repairs to the Capitol complex tunnel system, lake restoration and dredging projects, renovations for Iowa Public Radio, improvements at the Iowa State Fairgrounds, construction of an agricultural exhibition center, projects at public transit agencies and improvements at commercial airports. A second part of the bonding plan, yet to be unveiled, will likely be aimed at projects that help disaster-affected communities, flood prevention projects, and renovations of state buildings and recreational trails.

IOWA TO HOST WHITE HOUSE FORUM ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

Health care was one of the top issues debated in last year's Presidential race. It remains a hot topic at our State Capitol, and that may be a reason that President Obama has selected Des Moines as one of five sites for a White House Forum on Health Care.

The Iowa forum, which will be hosted by Governor Chet Culver on March 23, will bring together people with varying perspectives to talk about reforming health care. A few hundred Iowans will be invited to attend the event, with a limited number of tickets available to the public and will be given out by lottery.

To request a ticket, you can do so online (www.idph.state.ia.us/healthreform/) or call toll-free (800-645-8864) between Monday, March 16 and Wednesday, March 18.

You can also submit a question for consideration by the forums here:
www.idph.state.ia.us/healthreform/.

infoNET ADVOCACY RESOURCES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Advocating Change Day 2009 will be held on Wednesday, April 1, 2009. We have moved it up a week to avoid the national tornado drill that always disrupts our activities - so don't worry about those alarms going off this year! Registration deadline is March 20, but space always fills up early, so don't wait. You can register online at:
www.idaction.org/idaction/change_day_registration.htm.

UPCOMING PUBLIC FORUMS. Attending a Public Forum is the best way to advocate for an issue. Legislators really do listen - and they hold public forums on their own time (usually Saturday mornings) to give people who can't travel to Des Moines a chance to talk about what is important to them. Because in the end, what is important to you, is important to your legislators!

Tips on attending forums are available at:
http://www.infonetiowa.com/advocate/local_forums.php. A full list of forums planned is also available there.

FRIDAY, MARCH 20

8:30 a.m. - Dubuque - One Mean Bean at 2728 Asbury Rd #750 - *Rep. ISen. hart Office Hours*

10:00 a.m. - Pocahontas - Pizza Ranch or Family Table - *Sen. Kibbie & Rep. Frevert/Mertz*

10:00 a.m. - Clear Lake - Clear Lake Bank and Trust at 322 Main - *Rep. Upmeyer*

SATURDAY, MARCH 21

8:00 a.m. - Audubon - Audubon Economic Development Office - *Sen. Boettger*

8:00 a.m. - Creston - Congregate Meal Site at Restored Depot - *Sen. Reynolds, Rep.s Reasoner & Dolecheck*

8:00 a.m. - Humboldt - Humboldt City Hall at 29-5th Street South - *Sen. Kibbie & Rep. Frevert/Mertz*

8:00 a.m. - Shenandoah - - *Sen. Houser*

8:30 a.m. - Missouri Valley - Rand Community Center, 100 S. 4th - *Sen. Seymour*

9-10:30 a.m. - Council Bluffs - Council Bluffs Library at 400 Willow Ave - *Pottawattamie County Area Legislators*

9:00 a.m. - Hawarden - City Hall - *Rep. Soderberg & Sen. Feenstra*

9:00 a.m. - Mason City - Borealis Coffee Shop at 316 N. Federal Ave - *Sen. Ragan & Rep. Steckman*

9-11:00 a.m. - Newton - DMACC Campus in Newton - *Sen. Black & Rep. Geri Huser*

9:00 a.m. - Oelwein - Luigi's at 1020 S. Frederick Avenue - *Heckroth, Schoenjahn, Ficken, Thomas, Wenthe*

9:00-11:30 - Urbandale - Urbandale Chamber Office at 2900 Justin Drive, Suite L - *Rep.. Raecker & Sen. Zaub*

9:15-11:15 a.m. - Burlington - Location TBD - *Rep. Cohoon & Rep. Sands*

10:00 a.m. - Algona - Algona City Hall or Library - *Sen. Kibbie & Rep. Frevert/Mertz*

10:00 a.m. - Carroll - Carroll Fire Station - *Sen. Kettering & Rep. Roberts*

10-noon - Cedar Falls - AEA 267, 3712 Cedar Heights Drive - *Black Hawk County Area Legislators*

10:00 a.m. - Clarinda - - *Sen. Houser*

10:00 a.m. - Corning - Community Center - *Sen. Reynolds & Rep. Dolecheck*

10:00 a.m. - Dennison - Cronk's Café - *Sen. Seymour*

10:00 a.m. - Harlan - Harlan Public Library - *Sen. Boettger*

10:00 a.m. - Logan - Logan Community Center, 108 W. 4th - *Rep. Windschitl & Sen. Seymour*

10:00 a.m. - Muscatine - Green's Tea & Coffee at 208 W. 2nd Street - *Rep. Reichert*

10:00 a.m. - Nevada - Nevada City Hall Council Chambers at 1209 6th St - *Sen. Olive*

10:00-noon - Washington - Washington County Courthouse, 2nd Floor - *Sen. Schmitz & Rep. Marek*

10:00 a.m. - Waverly - Waverly Public Library - *Sen. Heckroth*

10:30 a.m. - Akron - Akron Public Library - *Rep. Soderberg & Sen. Feenstra*

10:30 a.m. - Cedar Rapids - Mercy Medical Center, Halligan Education Center - *Linn County Area Legislators including Dvorsky*

10:30 a.m. - Signourney - Keokuk County Courthouse, 101 S. Main - *Rep. DeBoef*

Noon - Greene - Greene Public Library 231 W. Traer Street - *Sen. Heckroth*

Noon - Westfield - Westfield Community Center - *Rep. Soderberg & Sen. Feenstra*

1:00 p.m. - Buffalo - Buffalo City Hall at 329 Dodge Street - *Rep. Gayman*

1:00 p.m. - Mt. Ayr - Extension Office - *Sen. Reynolds & Rep. Dolecheck*

TBA - Independence - Independence Public Library - *Sen. Schoenjahn*

FRIDAY, MARCH 27

8:30 a.m. - Dubuque - One Mean Bean at 2728 Asbury Rd #750 - *Rep. ISen.hart Office Hours*

Noon-1:00 - Davenport - Clarion Hotel, 5202 Brady Street - *Scott County Area Legislators*

Noon - Osceola - Terrible's Casino - *Sen. Reynolds & Rep. Reasoner*

1:00 p.m. - Hubbard - Zederbaum Restaurant at 201 East Maple - *Sen. Sodders*

SATURDAY, MARCH 28

8:00 a.m. - Rock Rapids - Forster Community Building, 404 1st Ave - *Rep. Alons*

8:30-10:00 a.m. - Fort Dodge - Iowa Central Community College - *Rep.. Miller & other Fort Dodge Area Legislators*

8:30-10:00 a.m. - Mount Pleasant - Iowa Wesleyan College Chadwick Library - *Mount Pleasant Area Legislators*

8:30 a.m. - Oskaloosa - Smokey Row at 109 S Market - *Rep. Palmer*

9:00 a.m. - Aurora - Aurora Library at 401 Woodruff - *Rep. Ficken*

9:00 a.m. - Des Moines - Northwest Community Center at 5110 Franklin Ave - *Rep. Petersen*

9:00 a.m. - Glenwood - - *Sen. Houser*

9:00 a.m. - Maquoketa - Maquoketa City Hall at 201 E. Pleasant - *Sen. Stewart & Rep. Schueller*

9:00 a.m. - Winterset - Farmer's & Merchants State Bank (on the square) - *Rep. Tymeson & Sen. Appel*

9:30-11:30 a.m. - Clive - City Council Chambers - *Sen. Ward*

9:30 a.m. - Decorah - City Hall - *Sen. Wilhelm*

9:30-11:30 a.m. - Iowa City - Emma Harvat Hall in Iowa City City Hall - *Johnson County Legislators & Sen. Schmidt*

10:00 a.m. - Davenport - St. Ambrose - *Scott County Area Legislators*

10:00 a.m. - Dyersville - Country Junction Restaurant at 913 15th Ave SE - *Sen. Hancock*

10:00 a.m. - Osage - 1st United Methodist Church 819 Main Street - *Rep. Kuhn*

10:00 a.m. - Sac City - - *Sen. Kettering*

10:00 a.m. - Sioux City - Siouxland Center for Active Generations at 313 Cook Street - *Woodbury County Legislators*

10:30-noon - Des Moines - North Side Library at 3516 5th Avenue - *Rep. Ford*

10:30 a.m. - Webster City - City Council Chambers at 400 Second Street - *Sen. Olive & Rep. Bailey*

11:00 a.m. - Waverly - Waverly Public Library at 1500 W. Bremer Ave - *Sen. Heckroth*

11:30 a.m. - Waukon - Waukon Vets Club across from the court house - *Sen. Wilhelm*

12:00-1:30 p.m. - Jefferson - Pizza Ranch at 206 N. Wilson Street - *Sen. Beall*

12:30 p.m. - Winthrop - Winthrop City Hall at 354 W. Madison - *Rep. Ficken*

1:00 p.m. - Kalona - Kalona Public Library at 510 C Avenue - *Rep. Marek*

2:00 p.m. - Allison - Allison Public Library at 412 Third Street - *Sen. Heckroth*

3:00 p.m. - Riverside - Murphy's Bar and Grill at 71 East First Street - *Rep. Marek*

BILL TRACKER

The new *infoNET* Bill Tracker can be easily searched, organized, copied/pasted, and downloaded to meet your needs. Organize it in a way that makes sense to you - by title, bill number, status, or topic.

The Bill Tracker is updated daily, and is available online in two places:

www.infonetowa.com/current_issue/active_bills.php

www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=INFONET#

And remember, if you do not have a computer or the Internet, many local libraries have public Internet access and computers available for patrons. Many also offer basic training on the Internet, just ask your local librarian about what is available.

BILL TRACKER – FUNNEL SURVIVORS

HF 45 - Medicaid Suspension During Confinement (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee) - DHS currently ends all Medicaid benefits for people committed to a correctional institution (county or city jail, detention center, prison, community-based corrections). When a person is released, they have to reapply and it can take some time to reinstate Medicaid. This bill requires DHS to suspend the Medicaid benefits of anyone confined for up to 12 months, allowing immediate reinstatement of benefits upon release. People confined more than a year will still have their Medicaid benefits terminated. Requires the facility where the person is confined to notify DHS about a person's release so eligibility can be redetermined prior to release. Sponsored by Rep. Heddens Notes: Rep. Heddens (Floor Manager); Subcommittee: Sens. Bolkcom, Bartz, and Schmitz

HF 74 - Searchable Budget and Tax Information (Status: House Floor) - This bill would require the department of management to develop and make available to the public by January 1, 2011, a single, searchable budget database website which would allow the public at no cost to search an aggregated database that would provide the names and principal location or residence of recipients of state funds, amount of funds expended, the agency that provided those funds, and several other details. The disclosure would not be required for individual

recipients of state assistance. The bill would also require the department of management, in consultation with the department of revenue, by January 1, 2010, to develop and operate on an internet site a searchable database of all the tax rates in the state for each taxing district. HF 74 is sponsored by Rep. Paulsen, Struyk, Helland & Upmeyer Notes: Rep. Frevert (Floor Manager)

HF 106 – Service Animals/HCBS Waiver Eligibility (Status: House Floor) - Directs DHS to apply for a waiver to add the purchase and maintenance of a service animal to the list of eligible services under the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers. Sponsored by Rep. Heaton Notes: Rep. Heddens (Floor Manager)

HF 121 - MHI & Resource Center Resident Prosecution (Status: House Ways & Means Committee) - Does not allow residents of state mental health institutes and state resource centers (Glenwood/Woodward) to be charged with willful injury. Sponsored by Rep. Struyk Notes: Subcommittee: Bukta (Chair), Bell & Sands

HF 145 - Disabled Veterans Property Tax Exemption (Status: House Ways & Means Committee) - Exempts the first \$150,000 of a disabled veteran who has a disability rating of 70-99% from property taxes. Exempts the first \$300,000 of a disabled veteran who has a disability rating of 100% from property taxes. Allows this exemption to transfer to the surviving spouse as long as unmarried. Does not appropriate money and requires local governments to absorb the cost of this exemption. Effective upon enactment, for taxes due on or after 7/1/2010 (filing deadline is 10/1/2009). Subcommittee: Not yet assigned

HF 234 & SSB 1002 - Mental Health & Substance Abuse Parity (Status: House & Senate Floors) - Enacts the "Equality in Health Care & Veterans Wellness Act." Directs the Department of Public Health and Department of Human Services work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to maximize mental health and substance abuse services and resources for veterans. Requires all health insurance plans include equal coverage for mental health and substance abuse treatment. Includes all conditions listed in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic & Statistical Manual for Mental Disorders. The only plans exempt from this requirement are businesses that are self-insured (ERISA plans) -

only federal law impacts them. Effective 1/1/2010.
Notes: Rep. Wessel-Kroeschell (Floor Manager);
Sen. Schmitz (Floor Manager); SSB 1002 will be
renumbered soon

**HF 311 - Prosthetic Device Insurance Coverage
(Status: Senate Commerce Committee) -**

Requires all health insurance plans to cover the
costs of prosthetic devices prescribed by a doctor. In
order for the device to be covered by the insurance,
it must be "medically necessary" as defined by
federal law for health insurance for Americans with
disabilities. Effective 7/1/2009. Notes: Passed
House 64-33; Subcommittee: Rielly (Chair),
Courtney & Hartsuch

**HF 320 - Voters in Primaries (17-1/2 year olds)
(Status: House Floor) -** Allows voters that are 17-
1/2 to vote in a primary election, as long as they will
be 18 years old by the time of the general election.
Currently, a 17-1/2 year old may register to vote at
the time of the primary, but cannot actually vote in
the primary. Successor to HF 195. Notes: Rep.
Isenhardt (Floor Manager)

**HF 478 - Diabetes Insurance Coverage (Status:
Senate Commerce Committee) -** Successor to
HSB 153. Requires insurance plans to cover
outpatient diabetes self-management training (10
hours/year) for any individual diagnosed with any
type of diabetes. Current law requires only 10 hours
of initial training for certain types of diabetes.
Applies to individual, group, and public employer
plans. Effective upon enactment to plans started or
renewed on or after 7/1/2009. Notes: Passed House,
96-0; Subcommittee: Dandekar (Chair), Behn &
Rielly

**HF 501 - Autism Waiver Request (Status: House
Floor) -** Directs DHS to apply for a Home and
Community Based Services (HCBS) Medicaid
waiver for people under 21 years of age with autism.
Requires DHS to work with the Iowa Autism Council
and other interested parties in the development of
this waiver. Sponsored by Rep. Alons, L. Miller,
Heaton, Baudler, Schulte, Smith & Upmeyer Notes:
Rep. Thede (Floor Manager)

**HF 514 - Psychiatric Residency Programs
(Status: House Appropriations Committee) -**
Appropriates \$1.4 million to establish an additional
14 psychiatric residency programs at the University
of Iowa. Sponsored by Rep. Heaton Notes:

Subcommittee: Not yet assigned

**HF 646 - County MH/DS Services Funding
(Status: House Appropriations Committee) -**
Appropriates \$14 million to the County Mental
Health/Disability Services (MH/DS) Risk Pool to
provide grants to counties to eliminate or avoid
waiting lists this year (FY 2009) and next year (FY
2010). Effective upon enactment. Sponsored by
Rep. Raecker Notes: Subcommittee: Not yet
assigned

**HF 670 - Absentee Voting/Automatic Renewal
(Status: House Floor) -** Allows voters who have
voted by absentee to request that an absentee ballot
automatically be sent to them in all of the following
elections. If a voter does not vote in an election, the
voter's status as an ongoing absentee voter is
ended. Notes: Rep. Gaskill (Floor Manager)

**HF 675 & SF 125 - Presidential Caucus/Time off
Work (Status: House & Senate Floors) -** Requires
businesses to give employees unpaid time off work
to attend a Presidential Caucus for up to four hours,
beginning one hour prior to the start of the precinct
caucus. Sponsored by Sen. Quirnbach, Danielson,
Gronstal, Fraise, Appel, Kibbie, Black, McCoy,
Bolkcom, Stewart, Ragan, Schmitz, Beall, Dotzler,
Wilhelm, Soddors, Schoenjahn, Heckroth, Dvorsky,
Horn & Hatch & Rep. Gayman; Successor to HF 366
Notes: Rep. Gaskill (Floor Manager); Sen. Dearden
(Floor Manager)

**HF 683 - Break Time for Medications (Status:
House Floor) -** Requires employers give employees
a reasonable daily break time to self-administer
prescription medications or breast-feed/express
milk. Requires reasonable efforts to provide a
private room or other location, other than a toilet
stall. Applies to employers of all sizes. Sponsored by
Rep. Abdul-Samad; Successor to HF 10 Notes: Rep.
Abdul-Samad (Floor Manager)

**HF 708 - Absentee Ballot Delivery/Health Care
Facilities (Status: House Floor) -** Clarifies that if a
hospital or health care facility resident requests an
absentee ballot before the ballots are printed, the
county auditor is to deliver the ballot within five days
of them being printed. Successor to HF 274 Notes:
Rep. Gaskill (Floor Manager)

HSB 85 & SF 21 - Cancer Clinical Trials

Insurance Mandate (Status: House Floor) -

Insurance plans are required to include coverage of approved cancer clinical trials if they pay for other cancer treatments. Effective 7/1/2009. Sponsored by Sen. Bolkcom Notes: Rep. T. Olson (Floor Manager); Subcommittee: Bolkcom, Hartsuch & Rielly

HSB 175 & SSB 1228 - Transportation Budget (Governor's Recommendations) (Status: House Appropriations Committee) -

Appropriates funds from road funds to pay for the operations of the Department of Transportation (DOT). Since no general fund dollars are used to pay for DOT operations, no across-the-board cuts were made in 2009 and none are recommended in 2010. Spends a total of \$352.8 million from the Road Use Tax Fund and Primary Road Fund (an increase of \$16.1 million, or .05%). Increases are due to increased facility leases (\$145,000), upgraded permitting systems (\$225,000), road salt cost increases (\$7.3 million), fuel costs (\$5.8 million), and identity theft protection in driver's licenses and REAL ID compliance (\$1.1 million). There is no change in funding for public transportation or rail service, although these may receive additional funding through the federal stimulus package. Requested by the Governor. Notes: Subcommittees: Cohoon (Chair), Bailey & Huseman; Dvorsky (Chair), Kettering & McCoy

HSB 259 - Psychiatric Medical Institution for Children (PMIC) Insurance Mandate (Status: House Floor) -

Requires private insurance plans to pay for PMIC admission if it is for a biologically-based mental illness as currently defined in Iowa's mental health parity law, the child meets the Medicaid admission criteria, and the child meets the acuity criteria for inpatient benefits. Notes: Rep. Smith (Floor Manager); bill will be renumbered soon

SF 77 - MS Support Fund/Lottery (Status: Senate Floor) -

Adds a new scratch and pull-tab lottery game to benefit persons with multiple sclerosis (MS). Funds received from the games would be used to create an MS Support Fund to provide financial assistance to organizations in this state that support and assist persons with multiple sclerosis or fund MS research. Sponsored by Sen. Zaun. Notes: Sen. Courtney (Floor Manager)

SF 137 - Wage Discrimination (Status: House Floor) -

Makes it illegal to discriminate against

employees (and pay them less) because of age, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion or disability. Allows the Civil Rights Commission to award damages to a person subject to wage discrimination. Notes: Passed Senate, 32-18. Rep. Lensing (Floor Manager)

SF 151 - Iowa Railway Finance Authority Repeal (Status: House Transportation Committee) -

Successor to SSB 1167. This bill would repeal the Iowa Railway Finance Authority and transfers those duties and responsibilities to the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT), including administration of the passenger rail service revolving fund. The bill also expands the authority of the Director of IDOT to enter into agreements for developing passenger rail service serving Iowa. Notes: Sen. Beall (Floor Manager); Subcommittee: Bell (Chair), Roberts and Wendt

SF 178 & HF 712 - Private Cause of Action

(Status: House & Senate Floors) - Iowa is the only state in the nation without a law that allows a person to sue a company for consumer fraud. Only the Iowa Attorney General (AG) can file an action under Iowa's Consumer Fraud Act. The AG's Office receive more than 6,000 complaints each year, and cannot prosecute all of them. Passing this bill would mean Iowans who are the victims of consumer fraud, often vulnerable people, could take court action. This is very important now after the floods and tornadoes, as many of these frauds happen when people pay a contractor to fix their homes, and the person never does the work. Right now, the person who was the victim of that fraud would not be able to take action. This law would let that person take the contractor to court. The law does not apply to insurance companies, attorneys, banks and credit unions, public utilities, hospitals, health care facilities, hospice programs, health care and mental health providers, public accountants, engineers, architects, and landscape architects. Requested by the Iowa Attorney General Notes: Sen. Kreiman (Floor Manager); Rep. Palmer (Floor Manager)

SF 187 - Special Deer Hunting Licenses/Non-Ambulatory Persons (Status: House Natural Resources Committee) -

Allows a non-ambulatory person to get one any sex deer hunting license valid during any deer hunting season. This person is not required to pay the wildlife habitat fee, but must still buy the deer hunting license and hunting license, be

otherwise qualified to hunt, and pay the \$1 fee for deer herd management. A "non-ambulatory person" means someone with paralysis of the lower half of the body, including spinal cord injuries. Notes: Passed Senate, 50-0; Subcommittee: Not yet assigned

SF 236 & HF 692 - PMIC Reimbursements

(Status: House Floor) - Directs DHS to work with Psychiatric Medical Institutions for Children (PMICs) to develop a new reimbursement methodology that is acuity (need) based. The new methodology is to be in place by 7/1/2011. For FY2010 and FY2011, DHS is required to set the new maximum daily rate for PMIC providers at \$182.27 (based on 103% of the patient-day weighted state average cost. Requires DHS apply for federal approval to pay a cost-based rate to the PMIC located at the Independence Mental Health Institute (total cost to operate PMIC at Independence is \$320.23/day, but federal government only matches up to \$167.19/day). Fiscal note expects \$810,000 in additional costs to the state in FY 2010 and FY 2011, but the increased rate is offset by a savings in \$780,000 of additional federal matching funds and \$30,000 in out-of-state placement avoidance (so no fiscal impact). Effective upon enactment. Requested by Governor Culver. Notes: Passed Senate, 46-0; Rep. Heddens (Floor Manager)

SF 261 & HF 540 - Pilot PA Mental Health

Fellowship (Status: Senate Appropriations Committee) - Appropriates \$300,000 annually for three years for a pilot Physician Assistant (PA) Mental Health Fellowship Program in the Department of Public Health. The program is to make specialized training and support available for physician assistants to help them provide mental health services and address Iowa's shortage of mental health workers. The 12-month fellowship is limited to three students per year and is performed in collaboration with the University of Iowa Osteopathic Physicians, a central Iowa hospital, psychiatric medical institution for children, Iowa Veterans Home, and other clinical partners. Elderly, youth, and general population clinical experiences are to be provided to students in the program. Participants are eligible for a \$50,000 stipend plus fringe benefits and loan forgiveness up to \$20,000 if employed in a shortage area when beginning practice. Sponsored by Sen. Sodders & Noble, and Rep. Wessel-Kroeschell & Upmeyer Notes: Subcommittee: Dvorsky (Chair) & Kettering; House

Human Resources Subcommittee not yet assigned

SF 264 - Local Board Gender Balance II (Status: Senate Floor) - States that appointments to local boards is open to all members of the community without bias or preference toward gender, race, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other demographic trait. Requires local governments to actively seek appointments from all groups in the community, so merit alone can be considered. Requires all county, city, and school governments to report the total number of members appointed to boards, and the total number of those that are men and women. Requires this report to be available to the public. Notes: Sen. Quirmbach (Floor Manager)

SF 297 - Disabled Veteran Homestead Property Tax Freeze (Status: Senate Floor) - Successor to SSB 1066. Freezes the property taxes due on a disabled veteran's home. Effective upon enactment for tax years beginning on or after 7/1/2009. Notes: Sen. Sodders (Floor Manager)

SF 341 - Personal Assistants/Service Animals

(Status: Senate Floor) - Currently, persons with disabilities using a service animal have the right to bring the animal with them into public place or with them in airplanes, motor vehicles, railroad trains, buses, streetcars, boats, hotels, lodging places, eating places, places of public accommodation, amusement, or resort, and other places to which the general public is invited, without any additional cost. This bill would allow a person that assists the person with a disability by controlling the assistive animal to also be allowed in these places without additional cost. Sponsored by Sen. Zaun Notes: Sen. Dearden (Floor Manager); Successor to SF 247

SF 389 - Health Care Reform (Status: Senate

Floor) - Expands on last year's health care reform initiative. Highlights include allowing small businesses, non-profit organizations, and local governments/schools to buy the state employees' health insurance plans for their employees, with the same premiums given to state employees. Requires a minimum of three years participation in the program and requires the insurance plans offered to meet minimum standards of quality and affordability established by the Iowa Choice Insurance Exchange. Allows parents whose insurance includes coverage of an adult child up to age 25 or enrolled in school to deduct the value of that coverage from

their state taxes. Requires parents to declare on their taxes whether their children are insured (beginning 2010). Requires the Department of Revenue to send information about public programs if they find a person's income meets Medicaid/hawki guidelines and they have uninsured children. Requires the taxpayer who qualifies for these health care programs to enroll their child within 90 days of receiving the information. Allows Medicaid to average three years of income for self-employed families to establish eligibility. Allows private providers giving free care to be covered under the state's liability insurance, and establishes a health care workforce shortage initiative to support a medical residency training grant program, health care professional loan repayment program, and nurse educator forgivable loan and nursing faculty fellowship program (no money appropriated). Mandates all non-ERISA insurance plans cover medication therapy management. Prohibits drug manufacturers from giving health care providers gifts, with some exceptions. Protects the privacy of patients receiving prescription drugs (bans data mining by pharmaceutical companies). Notes: Sen. Hatch (Floor Manager); Successor to SF 48

SF 396 - Health Care Mandate Review (Status: Senate Floor) - Requires the Legislative Services Agency (LSA) to determine if a bill being requested includes an insurance mandate. If a mandate is included, LSA is to forward the bill on to the Insurance Commissioner for a "complete and timely analysis" of all ramifications of the proposed health care mandate, and issue a final report. The review does not prevent legislators from acting on the bill while the report is being developed. Outlines 17 items to be included in the review, including social impact, level of public demand, and extent insurance coverage is available and utilized. Also requires the Insurance Commissioner to annually conduct an evaluation of mandated health care benefits currently required by law, including their financial impact. Also requires a comparison with benefits in neighboring states. Allows the Commissioner to contract with an actuarial firm. Effective upon enactment. Sponsored by Sen. Rielly; Successor to SF 317. Notes: Sen. Rielly (Floor Manager)

SSB 1179 - Nursing Home Quality Assurance (Status: Senate Floor) - Charges a "quality assurance assessment" fee to nursing homes that is used to draw down and match additional federal dollars. The fee is paid quarterly into a state fund,

which is matched with federal dollars and used as a supplemental reimbursement to nursing homes. No less than 85% of the assessments must be used to reimburse nursing homes (the rest helps offset Medicaid shortfalls). Effective upon enactment (or upon approval by the federal government). Successor to SSB 1179. Notes: Sen. Schmitz (Floor Manager); bill will be renumbered yet

SSB 1206 - Dependent Adult Abuse (Status: Senate Floor) - Make changes in Iowa law related to dependent adult abuse and care of nursing facility residents. Changes the definition of "dependent adult abuse." Excludes the element of sexual arousal or desire from the definition of sexual exploitation, adds harassment of a dependent adult to the definition of a dependent adult and amends the definition of sexual exploitation of a dependent adult to include the transmission, display, taking of electronic images of the unclothed genitalia, buttocks, or breasts of a dependent adult by a caretaker for a purpose not related to treatment or diagnosis or as part of an ongoing investigation. **REPORTING CHANGES:** Requires bank and financial institution employees to report any suspected financial exploitation of a dependent adult to DHS. Requires oral reports be given to law enforcement on the first working day following the report. Allows county attorney staff to access all dependent adult abuse information relevant to a case (unless unfounded). **CARETAKER ABUSE:** If a dependent adult's caretaker refuses to allow protective services, the courts are allowed to require protective services (issue a protective order). Changes the term "physical injury" to "bodily injury." Changes penalties for dependent adult abuse by a caretaker - a caretaker who intentionally commits dependent adult abuse resulting in either serious injury or bodily injury is guilty of a class "D" felony (lowered from "C" felony) and adds another level of penalty (serious misdemeanor) for a caretaker who intentionally, recklessly, or knowingly commits dependent adult abuse in the absence of any injury. **FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF A DEPENDENT ADULT BY A CARETAKER:** Requires employees of banks and financial institutions to report any suspected financial exploitation of a dependent adult to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Current law lists two levels of financial exploitation - a class "D" felony if the value is more than \$100; an aggravated misdemeanor if the value is less than \$100. This bill creates six levels of financial exploitation ranging from a simple misdemeanor (less than \$100) to a class "B" felony if the value is

more than \$10,000. **ABUSE IN NURSING FACILITIES:** Adds harassment of a dependent adult to the definition of dependent adult abuse. Adds "conduct that is injurious to the emotional welfare" to a nursing facility resident to the crime of wanton neglect of a nursing facility resident. Adds a new level of "wanton neglect" that results in bodily injury, punishable as a "D" felony (currently wanton neglect that results in serious injury is a "C" felony and does not result in serious injury is an aggravated misdemeanor). Also clarifies that the wanton neglect not resulting in either bodily or serious injury is an aggravated misdemeanor. **NON-SUPPORT OF DEPENDENT ADULT:** Under current law, a caretaker who commits wanton neglect of a dependent adult commits a serious misdemeanor. This bill makes wanton neglect of a dependent adult by any person a serious misdemeanor. Revises penalties for wanton neglect depending on the injuries suffered by the dependent adult. Requested by the Attorney General's Office Notes: Sen. Jochum (Floor Manager); bill will be renumbered soon

SSB 1303 - MH/DS Property Tax Relief (Status: Senate Ways & Means Committee) - Allows counties to change their levy rates (the amount they tax local property) if the State cuts the amount of money going into "mental health property tax relief". The state provides \$90 million each year to counties in "mental health property tax relief" - a key part of the local mental health/disability services (MH/DS) system. This bill allows counties to continue to get the same amount of money for the system, they just will get any shortfall from local property taxpayers than the state Notes: Subcommittee: Seng (Chair), Hamerlinck & Quirmbach

Resolutions

HR 6 - Disability-Friendly Health Care Coverage (Status: House Floor) - Urges the adoption of disability-friendly principles for Iowa's health care coverage system. States that a higher proportion of working adults with disabilities do not have health care coverage, and it is difficult for people with disabilities to take their health insurance from job to job. These principles include: 1) health insurance is not based on job and does not limit the ability of the person to save money or have assets; 2) health insurance is affordable; 3) individual cost sharing is based on the ability to pay; 4) health insurance is made both physically and cognitively accessible for

all Iowans and the use of preexisting condition exclusions is limited; 5) health insurance covers a broad range of benefits including mental health treatment, medications, preventive services, personal health items and special equipment; 6) public health care programs no longer require a person to remain in poverty in order to keep their benefits (buy-in offered with sliding fee scale); and 7) transitions between health care for children with disabilities and adults with disabilities is coordinated to prevent gaps in care. Sponsored by Rep. Whitehead, Smith, Whitaker, Bukta, Lykam, Ford, Frevert, Reichert, Thede, Cohoon, Berry & Heddens Notes: Rep. Whitehead (Floor Manager)

SCR 3 - Multigenerational & Sustainable Housing Task Force (Status: Senate Rules & Administration Committee) - Requests a legislative multigenerational and sustainable housing task force to address the barriers citizens aging in place and to facilitate multigenerational or sustainable living arrangements in communities across the state. Members are to include older Iowans, persons with disabilities, architects, community developers, universal design experts, certified aging in place specialists, trade or professional organizations involved in housing development, contractors with experience renovating existing homes to facilitate aging in place, representatives of the department of economic development, Iowa finance authority, and the University of Iowa clinical law program. Notes: Sen. Bolkcom (Floor Manager)

SR 13 - Health Care for All (Encouraging Federal/State Collaboration) (Status: Senate Floor) - Encourages federal-state collaboration to achieve quality, affordable health care for all. States principles to follow in reforming our health care system - stabilize financing through payment reform; implement patient-centered medical home; prioritize payments for primary and preventive care; support value-based purchasing efforts; restructure national financing for long-term care; improve cost-containment policies; establish national electronic medical record standards and provide financial and technical assistance for compliance; facilitate confidential sharing of patient data within and across state borders; increase access to affordable health insurance coverage; expand coverage to everyone using private market and publicly-financed plans; allow greater flexibility in state regulation of federal ERISA plans; eliminate pre-existing condition

exemptions and require guaranteed issuance of insurance; strengthen the health care safety net by increasing investments to programs like Medicaid, community health centers and children's health insurance program; support state innovation; invest in increasing the number of primary care providers, midlevel practitioners, direct care workers, and laboratory and community health workers; monitor specialty supply; increase quality by developing evidence-based standards; require the use of informed and shared decision-making between provider and patient; eliminate disparities and inequities; invest in proven prevention programs and health promotion activities; reduce unwarranted variation of care; and demand effective public quality reporting by all providers. Sponsored by Sen. Hatch and all Senate Democrats (32 sponsors) Notes: Sen. Hatch (Floor Manager)

Signed by Governor/Sent to Governor

HF 64 - Rebuild Iowa Disaster Recovery (Status: Signed) - This bill contains disaster assistance through the rebuild Iowa office and makes appropriations. Division I of the bill requires the Iowa Finance Authority (IFA) to establish and administer a jumpstart housing assistance program to provide grants to local government participants for eligible residents for eligible purposes relating to disaster-affected homes. The bill includes eligibility requirements and appropriates \$24 million from the Iowa economic emergency fund for the program. Division II of the bill appropriates \$10 million from the Iowa economic emergency fund to the department of human services for providing disaster aid individual assistance grants. Division III of the bill appropriates from the Iowa economic emergency fund \$22 million for community disaster grants to cities and counties, awarded based on their pro rata share of the total statewide damage costs associated with natural disasters occurring after May 24, 2008, and before August 14, 2008, as calculated by the federal emergency management agency as of January 1, 2009. Division IV of the bill creates a Rebuild Iowa Office for purposes of coordinating the state activities associated with the rebuilding efforts. Effective 2/2/2009; Retroactive to 6/28/2009. Passed House, 98-0; Passed Senate 49-0

HF 414 - 2009 Budget Cuts & Restorations (Status: Sent to Governor) - Enacts the Governor's 1.5% across the board cut to the current year's budget (fiscal year 2009), but does it in a more

selected manner by increasing cuts in some areas and reinstating funding for "priority" programs. Codifies the Governor's flood recovery actions, including the creation of the Jumpstart Housing Initiative and the Small Business Disaster Recovery program. Transfers \$37 million of infrastructure funds to the general fund to balance the budget. Reduces state agency administrative funding by \$25.6 million for the current fiscal year. FY 2009 FUNDING RESTORATIONS: Restores the 1.5% across the board cut to various programs, including mental health and substance abuse treatment for persons in prisons and all county mental health and disability services funding (\$1,326,000 to county property tax relief, \$203,372 to state cases, \$272,318 to community services, and \$811,220 to county allowed growth). Fiscal year 2009 began on July 1, 2008 and runs until June 30, 2009. Passed House 55-43; Passed Senate 32-14

SF 82 - Iowa Workforce Development Board Expansion (Status: Signed) - Companion to HF 267. Adds four non-voting members to the Iowa Workforce Development Board - a representative from the vocational rehabilitation community (appointed by the State Rehabilitation Council of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), representatives from the Department of Education and the Department of Economic Development, and someone appointed by the US Department of Labor (Office of Apprenticeship). Requested by Iowa Workforce Development Notes: Passed Senate 49-0; Passed House 99-0.

BILL TRACKER – DEAD BILLS

Below is a list of bills that did not survive the funnel deadline. A complete description of these bills is available at:

www.infonetiowa.com/current_issue/dead_bills.php.

HF 11 - Minimum Wage COLA Increase - House Labor Committee

HF 18 - Vehicle Registration Fee Exemption/Veterans with Disabilities - House Transportation Committee

HF 39 - Precinct Polling Place Closing Hours - House State Government Committee

HF 52 - HCBS Waiver/Specialized Medical Equipment - House Human Resources Committee

HF 56 - Early Childhood Immunizations/Mercury
- House Human Resources Committee

HF 68 - Veterans Mental Health Parity - *House Veterans Affairs Committee*

HF 236 - Anti-Epileptic Drug Substitutions -
House Human Resources Committee

HF 239 - Absentee Ballot Delivery/Health Care Facility Residents - *House State Government Committee*

HF 247 - State Health Insurance Mandates Commission - *House Commerce Committee*

HF 255 - Mandatory Infant Eye Exams - *House Human Resources Committee*

HF 286 - Public Transit Vehicle Fund - *House Transportation Committee*

HF 307 - Health Care Whistleblower Protection -
House Human Resources Committee

HF 316 - Disabled Veteran Homestead - *House Veterans Affairs Committee*

HF 337 - Experimental Treatment/Insurance Mandate - *House Commerce Committee*

HF 347 - Regional Transit Systems/Used Vehicles - *House State Government Committee*

HF 363 - Medicaid Copayments - *House Human Resources Committee*

HF 369 - Silver Alert - *House Public Safety Committee*

HF 454 - Special Education Services/Juvenile Detention, Shelter & Foster Care - *House Education Committee*

HF 534 - Lead Registry - *House Human Resources Committee*

HSB 116 - Iowa Railway Finance Authority Repeal - *House Transportation Committee*

HSB 223 - Audiological Services Mandate -
House Commerce Committee

HSB 226 - MHI Asset Correction - *House Human Resources Committee*

HSB 228 - MHI Admissions/CPC Process - *House Human Resources Committee*

SF 1 & HF 1 - Autism Insurance Coverage -
Senate Commerce Committee

SF 26 - Hospital Discounts to Uninsured - *Senate Human Resources Committee*

SF 58 & HF 355 - Long-Term Care Insurance Policy Standardization - *Senate Commerce Committee*

SF 100 - Juvenile Court/Children with MI and MR -
Senate Human Resources Committee

SF 132 - Medicaid Reimbursement/Interpreter Services - *Senate Human Resources Committee*

SF 134 - MH/MR/DD Redesign - *Senate Human Resources Committee*

SF 144 - MH/MR/DD Redesign II - *Senate Human Resources Committee*

SF 202 - ICF/MR Medicaid Reimbursement -
Senate Human Resources Committee

SF 213 & HF 448 - Lead Abatement & Testing -
Senate Human Resources Committee

SF 296 & HF 548 - Resources for Families with Premature Infants - *House Human Resources Committee*

SSB 1019 & SSB 1122 - See companion bill that is still alive - HF 311. - *Senate Commerce Committee*

SSB 1038 - Educational Grant for Children of Veterans with Service-Connected Disabilities -
Senate Veterans Affairs Committee

SSB 1136 & HSB 119 - Immediate Hospital Admission - *Senate Judiciary Committee*

SSB 1142 - Nursing Home Violations - *Senate Human Resources Committee*



c/o ID Action
P.O. Box 71369
Des Moines, IA 50325

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DES MOINES IA
PERMIT NO. 5746

[First Name] [Last Name] OR CURRENT RESIDENT
[ADDRESS]
[Address2]
[City], [State] [Zip]-[Zip4]

Your State Representative is: *[Representative]*
Your State Senator is: *[Senator]*