



Iowa House of Representatives Statehouse News

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Governor's Budget Reductions

The Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) held their quarterly meeting on December 12th and lowered their revenue estimate for FY 2009 from 1.1% to -0.5%. This brings the current estimate below FY 2008 levels by \$32.5 million.

The REC estimates that the State will collect \$6.052 billion in net general fund receipts for FY 2009, which is \$99.5 million lower than its previous estimate. The REC continues to be concerned the national economic downturn is a drag on Iowa's economy. Iowa's economy typically lags behind the national economy, and these current national events are unprecedented.

Across the Board Cuts

After the dire forecast of the REC, the Governor announced an across-the-board cut to the general fund budget of 1.5%, which is estimated to reduce general fund spending by \$92 million. This reduction is in addition to the \$77 million proposed earlier by the Governor. This will result in a total reduction of \$132 million to the general fund and approximately \$37 million in infrastructure funds.

When the Legislature convenes in January, they will likely review the cuts and make

any adjustments. This may involve additional cuts to get through the current fiscal year.

The changes in the revenue estimates have no impact on the \$620 million balance that is currently available in Iowa's rainy day funds.

FY 2010 Forecast Wanes

The REC also lowered their estimate for FY 2010, from an increase of 0.1% to -0.4% below the new FY 2009 revenue estimate. This means a continued erosion of Iowa's tax receipts by \$26.2 million in FY 2010. The Governor and the Legislature will be building the FY 2010 budget assuming net revenues start at \$6.025 billion.

The REC will meet again in April, 2009, to review both the FY 2009 and FY 2010 revenue estimates. If that estimate is lower, further reductions will be necessary.

The REC is a statutory three person committee established to estimate state revenues. The Governor and Legislature are required by law to construct the general fund budget using the revenue estimate provided by the REC.

Vehicle Registration Fees Change in 2009

Motor vehicle registration fees will change for some Iowans in 2009. Depending on when a vehicle was registered and titled, the vehicle age and type, the registration due date, and whether a vehicle's tonnage or usage changed after January 1, 2009, registration fee schedules may change.

The Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has produced a Frequently Asked Questions document to address Iowan's con-

cerns. The document can be found on the Iowa DOT website at <http://www.iowadot.gov/> under the "Hot Topics" section.

Tina Hargis, director of the DOT's Office of Vehicle Services, said, "Generally speaking, if your car, pickup truck or sport utility vehicle was titled and registered in Iowa prior to Jan. 1, 2009, your vehicle's registration fee will not increase."

Disaster Aid Tops \$1.3 Million

The Rebuild Iowa Office announced that more than \$1.3 billion has been approved for residents and governments in Iowa. This money includes both federal funds and state dollars. The Executive Council allocated \$37 million in state funding almost immediately. Another \$40 million in state money was dedicated to the Jumpstart Initiative while the state was waiting for federal funds to arrive.

Iowa has received more than \$157 million in federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funds including \$85 million in September, which has already been distributed out to the Council of Governments and several entitlement cities. An additional \$72 million was announced in early Novem-

ber. In December, another \$125 million in federal CDBG money was also allotted to Iowa.

The State of Iowa has submitted their action plan for the \$72 million and is waiting for federal approval on that plan. The State is still working on the action plan for the \$125 million just recently announced.

Almost 40,000 Iowans have registered with FEMA for disaster assistance and more than 35,000 Iowans have visited FEMA Disaster Recovery Centers around the state.

Jumpstart Program

Of the \$1.3 billion in funding, \$85 million will go to the Jumpstart program. So far, 3,663 applications have been made to the Jumpstart

Housing program, requesting \$45 million. As of December 11, 879 applicants have been approved for \$16.7 million in assistance. The average award is \$19,000. Eight percent of the applicants were ineligible for the program.

Some 736 applicants requested help from the Jumpstart Small Business program, seeking \$96 million. So far, 481 applications have been approved, obligating \$16 million. The average award has been \$34,000. Fifteen percent of the applicants have been ineligible.

Persons seeking help can go to the Jumpstart website at www.jumpstart.iowa.org or by calling 1-866-849-0323 toll free.

Federal Tax Changes for Victims of 2008 Disasters

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has made several changes in federal income tax law to benefit those affected by disasters in 2008, including:

1. The federal tax return will allow an itemized deduction for disaster losses. A standard disaster deduction will be provided for those who do not use Schedule A.
2. Rules for distributions from IRAs, 401(k), and other retirement plans will be relaxed.
3. For businesses, there will be disaster options for depreciation, Section 179 expensing, and bonus depreciation.
4. Also, additional charitable contribution incentives for disaster relief are available.

These changes do not impact Iowa tax law or Iowa tax returns. The Iowa Legislature will decide during the 2009 session whether these changes will also be allowed for Iowa income tax purposes.

However, some disaster relief provisions are already in effect for Iowa income taxes, including:

- Payments from the Iowa "Jumpstart" small business assistance and housing assistance programs are exempt from both federal and Iowa income tax.
- In presidentially-declared disaster areas, disaster losses may be claimed on either the 2007 or 2008 federal tax return. The option chosen for federal purposes is automatically allowed for Iowa

tax purposes. Taxpayers may amend their 2007 Iowa income tax returns to take advantage of this provision.

A list of presidentially-declared disaster areas is on the State of Iowa Flood 2008 Web site at www.flood2008.iowa.gov.

The Iowa Department of Revenue (IDR) has information on the federal changes on its Web site at www.state.ia.us/tax. In addition, see the Internal Revenue Services Web site at www.irs.gov.

For more information on the Iowa disaster relief provisions, contact the Taxpayer Services Section of the Iowa Department of Revenue at 800-367-3388 or 515-281-3114 or e-mail at idr@iowa.gov.

Condition of Education in Iowa

In November, the Iowa Department of Education released their annual *Condition of Education* report. In the 2007-2008 school year,

Iowa had 364 school districts and 184 non-public schools serving 514,747 students. Over the last eleven years, enrollments have de-

clined 6 percent. Of the 364 school districts, almost 15 percent had fewer than 300 students.

Iowa schools are becoming more diverse. The percent of minority students has increased, making up 14.4% of student enrollment last school year compared to 13.6% in the year before and 7.7% in 1998. The percent of low-income students has increased from 26.7% in 2001 to 33.4% in 2008. Special education students made up 12.9% of total enrollment last year, which is a 2.4% decrease in the past three years. There were almost 20,000 English Language Learners last year, double the number reported in 1997-1998.

In 2007-2008, 357 public school districts (98%) offered all-day, every-day kindergarten while 279 districts (76.6%) offered preschool programs. Average class size in the early grades (K-3) have decreased over the past tens years, but has not decreased to the state-set goal of 17. In the 2007-2008 school year, kindergarten classes had an average of 19.2 students, first grade had an average of 19.1 students, second grade had 20 students and third grade had 20.8 students.

The report also says that Iowa ranks 41st among all states for the average total amount spent per pupil, spending \$8,141.

Student Performance

The number of students taking Advanced Placement exams increased again last school year, as did the average ACT score. Iowa students had a composite score of 22.4 (up 0.1) on the ACT and ranked second in the nation for states where more than 50% of seniors take the exam. The average Advanced Placement score in Iowa was 3.1, compared to the national score of 2.85 out of a possible 5 points.

On the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), 80.5% of all fourth graders were proficient in math in the 2006-2008 school years, compared to 80.6% in 2005-2007 and 75% in the 2001-2003 school years. On ITBS reading test, 78.9% of all fourth grade students were proficient in 2006-2008, compared to 79% in 2005-2007 and 75.9% in 2001-2003.

On the ITBS, 72.5% of all eighth grade students were proficient on reading compared to 72.3% in 2005-2007 and 69.3% in 2001-2003. The percent of students in eighth grade proficient on math increased to 75.9% in 2006-2008, compared to 75.5% in 2005-207 and 71.6% in 2001-2003.

On the Iowa Tests of Educational Development (ITED), 76.8%

of eleventh grade students were proficient in reading in 2006-2008, compared to 77% in 2005-2006 and 77% in 2001-2003. Proficiency in math decreased in 2006-2008 to 78%, from 78.4% in 2005-2007 and 79.2 percent in 2001-2003.

Drop out rates were higher in the 2006-2007 school year, with 1.57% of student in grades 7-12 dropping out, compared to 1.46% the year before. It was lower, however, than the high of 1.98% in the 1997-1998 school year.

Salaries

The average full time teacher's regular salary was up almost 6 percent in 2007-2008 to \$45,463, which does not include extra duty pay. With extra duty pay, the total average salary was \$46,626. Those districts with enrollments of 7,500 students or more have the highest average total salary, \$49,881.

The average total salary for full time public school principals was \$80,673, up 3.7 percent from the last year. The average superintendent salary was \$106,161, an increase of 4.1 percent.

The entire report can be found at <http://www.iowa.gov/educate>.

Universities Develop New Sexual Assault Policies

The Legislature's Oversight Committee met with members of the Iowa Board of Regents to discuss the new sexual assault policies for the three state universities and the two state schools for the Blind and the Deaf. The Oversight Committee members were generally pleased with the polices.

In addressing the Oversight Committee, Board of Regents Chair David Miles said that significant progress had been made and that the new policies make the safety and

well-being of students paramount and make clear that the universities and schools will not tolerate sexual misconduct. He said that the new policies could become a national model for other schools across the country.

University officials have received a grant from the Department of Justice that was used to help develop the policies and will provide funding for training of staff and orientation of students. Magnets will be created so that students will have

information in each room on where to call for help. In addition, a "campus safety button" will be installed on all computers to allow students to go directly to information on services if they are the victims of sexual misconduct.

The need for new policies became apparent after an incident at the University of Iowa in 2007 led to an outside review of the steps taken by the university. The report by a St. Louis firm indicated that, although university officials did not attempt to

conceal the incident, some of the steps taken were mishandled.

Although the policies for the three state universities are not identical, they are similar. All three use the term “sexual misconduct” to mean all nonconsensual sexual behavior. The policies provide for a formal process that the institutions must follow. There will no longer be any informal process.

All policies will include information near the top, in what is called

a hot box, indicating where students can get help. In addition, a section in all three policies will explain what types of assistance is available including help from an advocate, changes in housing or class schedules, and help filing a report.

The sexual assault policies do strongly encourage students to report sexual assaults to local law enforcement but it is not a requirement in order to get help from the university. The policies also will protect victims

and witnesses from discipline for illegal drug or alcohol use if they report the incident. This “good Samaritan” policy will protect students from university discipline, but will not be a guarantee that criminal charges could not be filed.

In concluding the presentation, Regent Bonnie Campbell thanked Legislators for their interest and support in seeing that a clear policy be put in place at all the regent institutions.

Tuition and Fees Go Up at State Universities

The Iowa Board of Regents approved a 4.2% *tuition* hike at the three state universities for the 2009-2010 school year. The increase is slightly higher than the 3.2% increase approved in 2007 for the current school year. The 4.2% average increase, amounting to \$232 per student, applies to resident undergraduates.

Under the proposal approved by the Board of Regents on December 10, the tuition *and* fees for in-state students at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University will go up 4.6% and students at the University of Northern Iowa will see a 4.1% increase.

As a result, University of Iowa students will pay \$6,824 in tuition and fees; Iowa State University students will pay \$6,650 and University of Northern Iowa students will pay \$6,636 for the next academic year.

Out-of-State Tuition

Nonresident students at the University of Iowa will see tuition and fees jump 7.6%. This is a \$1,560 per year increase, raising costs to \$22,198.

The nonresident increase in tuition and fees at Iowa State University goes up 3% to just under \$17,870. The University of Northern Iowa nonresident tuition and fees goes up 2.1%, to \$14,900.

Decision Not Unanimous

Not all Board of Regent members supported the increases. Some argued that it would be easier for the universities to make greater budget cuts than for families to find the additional funds. Other members attempted to reduce the size of the increase. In the end, the proposal passed with two of the nine board members voting against the proposal.

Budget Cuts

Board President David Mills said the regent schools will reduce overall spending by \$7 million for the current fiscal year as part of the State of Iowa’s overall budget realignment. Governor Chet Culver has asked all state departments, agencies and branches to reduce spending to insure that the current fiscal year budget, which ends June 30, 2009, will remain balanced.

The University of Iowa will cut \$3 million, of which \$2.8 million is money set aside to match FEMA flood recovery grants. Iowa State will cut \$2.9 million by delaying renovations of classrooms and labs. The University of Northern Iowa will cut \$1.02 million by holding off on some technology and library purchases. The Board of Regents will cut some of their administrative budget.

Health Care Council Makes Final Recommendations

The Iowa Choice Health Care Coverage Advisory Council issued their final report to the Legislature and the Governor earlier this week. The advisory council was established to assist the Iowa Comprehensive Health Insurance Association

develop a comprehensive health care coverage plan to cover all uninsured children. In addition, the association will develop options to provide access to private, unsubsidized, affordable, qualified health care coverage to all children, adults, and families

who are not otherwise eligible for health care coverage through public programs.

The advisory council broke into small work groups to address the larger issues in children’s coverage:

- Benefit review
- Definition of ‘all kids’
- Coordination of the current programs
- Maximization of funding for *hawk-i* and Medicaid
- Covering children who are not currently eligible for *hawk-i* and Medicaid
- Adult coverage

Regarding children’s coverage, the advisory council made the broad recommendation that all children in Iowa should be covered under a satisfactory and affordable form of public or private health insurance and have access to appropriate health care. In addition, a general philosophy of the council was that children should not be disadvantaged in regards to health care due to the actions or inactions of their parents.

Recognizing the ambitious nature of their recommendations relative to available state dollars, the advisory council offered the following prioritization of their recommendations starting with the highest priority.

1. Covering all kids currently eligible for *hawk-i* or Medicaid.
2. Eliminate five year waiting period for immigrant children.
3. Cover non-documented immigrant children.

4. Expand *hawk-i* to 300% FPL (hopefully with federal support) on July 1, 2009.
5. Make *hawk-i* plan available as a buy-in for any child above 300% FPL with higher deductibles and co-pays. Design a sliding fee scale for families between 300-400% FPL.
6. Provide premium assistance to families below 300% FPL who access private insurance instead of *hawk-i*.
7. Provide premium assistance to those between 300% to 400% FPL with private insurance at a level that is equivalent to the sliding fee schedule to buy-in to *hawk-i*.
8. Expand *hawk-i* coverage to age 21.

Specifically, the advisory council stated that the State of Iowa should immediately implement points 1-4. In addition, point 5 is also critical to full coverage of children and should be implemented and funded immediately. Points 6-8 should be funded if and when funds can be made available.

Though the advisory council focused most of their time on coverage of children, they did make the following options for implementation:

- Explore expansion of premium assistance through Medicaid to provide coverage for working parents.
- Fully fund Medicaid to help lower cost shifting to the private sector.
- Reinforce legislation that provides premium discounts or incentives for wellness, disease management, smoking cessation and other potential programs.
- Encourage greater transparency of health care quality and cost to assist informed consumer choices.
- Allow the marketplace the ability to offer a tiered insurance program for adults with greater variation in price and benefits.
- Consider subsidies or support for small (under 10) employers and non-profits to offer health insurance and contribute a qualifying percentage of the cost.

The recommendations in the report will be discussed by the Legislature in the upcoming 2009 session. To read the entire report, please use the following link, <http://www.insurealllowakids.org/IowaChoiceHealthCareAdvisory-CouncilReport.pdf>

Child Care Advisory Council Submits Report

This week, the Iowa State Child Care Advisory Council (SCCAC) submitted its report to the General Assembly as required by the Iowa Legislature. The advisory council was directed to form a workgroup and submit a report with its findings and recommendations to improve the regulatory system for home based-based child care providers.

The advisory council collaborated with Early Childhood Iowa, Community Empowerment, as well as other stakeholders to develop the

following recommendations. The recommendations are to be phased in over a three to ten year period.

- Iowa should move from a registration-based regulatory system to a licensure system for home-based child care. All persons providing child care on a regular basis in a home setting for more than one child unrelated to the provider should be subject to licensure. This would include implementation of annual inspections of home-based child care providers.

- A quality workforce should require a core set of pre-licensing training requirements as well as on-going professional development requirements that support the development of children.
- Adequate child care assistance reimbursement rates should be established to create greater access to quality child care for low income families, and reward providers who demonstrate higher quality of care.

- Build on and expand current efforts to educate parents, policy makers, private enterprises, and the general public about the importance of the first five years of a child's life and the benefits of

having a quality early care, health and education system.

The recommendations will be examined by the Iowa Legislature in the upcoming 2009 session. The following link connects to the com-

plete report: http://www.legis.state.ia.us/scripts/docmgr/doc_mgr_www.dll/ShowByDepartment?idt=false&type=df

Generation Iowa Releases Recommendations

Generation Iowa released its annual report to the Governor and the Legislature Wednesday, December 10th. The report offers recommendations on attracting and retaining young professionals in Iowa.

The commission is made up of thirteen young professionals from across Iowa that were selected by the governor to explore ways to keep Iowa's young generation from leaving the state to find employment.

The commission reported that Iowa leads the way in attracting young people to the state to attend school but had a "brain drain" of over 19,500 students leaving Iowa after receiving a college education.

The report concluded that many young professionals are leaving the state because of the states low wages. Iowa's wages are 20 percent lower than the national average causing Iowa's "brain drain" to be the fourth lowest in the nation.

The Commission also released four primary recommendations that could assist in helping keep the next generation of Iowans in the state. They include:

- Creating new voting seats for young people on boards and commissions that promote economic development and quality of life.

- Produce job creation programs available for more job opportunities for young professionals.
- Expand "Iowa Internship Program" that helps Iowa college students receive internships with small or medium sized businesses across Iowa.
- Attract service minded, educated young people through the Education Award as well as Iowa's AmeriCorp program.

The commission will continue to meet throughout the year all across Iowa.

Everything Worked Well in the 2008 Election

Secretary of State Michael Mauro updated the Government Oversight Committee on the 2008 General Election. He stated that in the 2008 election – everything worked well.

There were a record number of voters not only in Iowa but across the country. He stated he was proud of how Iowa's county auditors handled the election especially considering the number of changes in the election laws that affected how county auditors conducted the General Election.

Currently, there are three ways to participate in an election: early voting by absentee ballot; voting at a satellite voting station; or voting at the polls on Election Day.

Secretary Mauro provided some statistics for the committee regarding how Iowans voted:

- Twenty Iowa counties offered satellite voting. Over 589,000 people voted early, which is over 100,000 more than four years ago.
- There were a record number -- over 1,546,000 -- of people voting at the polls in 2008.
- Election Day Registration was passed by the General Assembly in 2007. The 2008 General Election was the first big election to allow individuals to register and vote at the polls on Election Day. Three percent of the voter turnout, 47,500 people, registered and voted under this new provision.

- Ninety-two percent of Iowans who are eligible to vote are registered to vote. Seventy-three percent of these individuals participated in this election.

Secretary Mauro indicated that a real plus for Iowa voters is the option for early voting. Allowing early voting puts less stress on poll workers and auditors as well as with fewer voters going to the polls, the lines are not as long.

Election Day Registration

Under Iowa's Election Day Registration law, county auditors are to send a card, which is not to be forwarded, to everyone who registered to vote at the polls. These cards are due to be mailed out on December

19. If the acknowledgment is returned as undeliverable, the auditor is required to attempt to contact the voter by forwardable mail.

If the voter does not respond, the commissioner will cancel the registration and will immediately notify the state registrar of voters

and the county attorney. This was one of several safeguards put in the legislation to maintain the integrity of our election system.

Secretary Mauro also advised the committee of a need for additional funding for his office. Under the Help America Vote Act

(HAVA), the state is required to maintain a statewide voter registration data base. HAVA funds have been used to maintain the database; however, HAVA funding is running out. It costs approximately \$950,000 a year to maintain the database.

Supreme Court Hears Arguments in Same-Sex Case

The Iowa Supreme Court heard oral arguments in *Varnum v. Brienn* on December 9th. The case involves six same-sex Iowa couples that sued the Polk County Recorder for the denial of marriage licenses. The case was argued by the Polk County Attorney's office for upholding Iowa's law requiring a marriage to be between one man and one woman, and attorneys for the six couples.

The attorney for the same-sex couples, Dennis Johnson, argued that allowing gay marriage would not allow polygamous marriages in Iowa when questioned by the Supreme Court justices. Johnson said marriage has always been between two people and that polygamy would change that historic meaning.

Assistant Polk County Attorney Roger Kuhle, arguing to maintain Iowa's denial of same-sex marriages, said that allowing same-sex mar-

riages could harm future generations by creating a belief that marriage is unneeded. Kuhle argued that allowing same-sex marriages would lead marriage away from one of the institution's historic tenants, procreation. Kuhle said, "One could easily argue, and we do, that fostering same-sex marriage will harm the institution of marriage as we know it."

A decision is not expected from the Supreme Court in the case for several months.

Iowa Second in the Nation in Wind Power Production

By January, 2009, Iowa will be ranked 2nd in the nation, only behind Texas, in wind power production. In November, 2008, Iowa had 2,394 megawatts in wind energy production, triple the amount reported in 2003. In addition, Iowa continues to be one of only two states in the nation to manufacture three main components of windmills.

Iowa has invested heavily in becoming a national leader in the new energy economy and a critical part of that investment is the Iowa Power Fund. It is designed to leverage investments, support innovative research and development, and spur the economy to create more green jobs in Iowa.

In less than one year, the Office of Energy Independence (OEI) has

received more than 160 pre-applications. Those applications total more than \$308 million in requests and leveraging more than \$1 billion.

Energy Independence Plan

The OEI has released its second annual Energy Independence Plan, which makes recommendations for the upcoming year to strengthen policies on energy efficiency, renewable energy, and biofuels. This year the report highlighted many of the accomplishments Iowa achieved over the past year.

To remain competitive in a global economy, the OEI, in its Energy Independence plan, is recommending several proposals to help Iowa achieve energy independence

by 2025. They broke their recommendations into three categories: energy efficiency, renewable energy and biofuels.

- Enact an energy efficiency portfolio standard.
- Promote smart growth.
- Develop uniform utility energy efficiency programs.
- Make energy efficiency the highest priority in utilities' planning processes.
- Ensure long-term growth of large utility-scale wind.
- Promote small-scale wind generation.

- Promote environmentally sound and viable biomass industry in Iowa.
- Develop a biomass feedstock supply infrastructure for a second generation of biofuels.
- Support the deployment of integrated biorefineries.
- Improve the analysis used to develop greenhouse gas performance measurers.

CAFO Evaluation Sign-up for Counties

This week, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that counties interested in evaluating proposed locations of confinement facilities that need a construction permit must sign up by Jan. 31, 2009.

Counties that would like to participate must adopt and file a construction evaluation resolution before the board of supervisors submits the resolution to the DNR between Jan. 1 and 31, 2009. DNR states that this is an opportunity for counties to provide input to producers on site selection, the type of structures and facility management being proposed.

Producers in counties that file the resolutions must meet higher

standards than other permitted sites. They must earn points on the master matrix by choosing a site and using practices that reduce impacts on the environment and the community.

Counties that participate in the master matrix process may have staff accompany the DNR on site visits to proposed confinement operations. The county board of supervisors may also appeal the DNR's preliminary approval of a permit to the Environmental Protection Commission. On average eighty-six counties have filed resolutions each year since the master matrix went into effect in 2003.

Counties that have adopted a resolution should mail it to Jerah

Gallinger at the DNR, 502 East Ninth Street, Des Moines, IA 50319 or fax it to 515-281-6794. Sign-ups occur annually during the month of January.

Most confinement feeding operations that need to apply for a permit are subject to the matrix. For more information on which operations are affected, check the DNR Web site under animal feeding operations at www.iowadnr.gov/afo/matrix.html. Additional information for counties is available on the Iowa State Association of Counties Web site at www.iowacounties.org under news: topics of interest.

\$100,000 in Grants Available to Swine Industry

Attorney General Tom Miller announced that grant funds totaling \$100,000 next year are available for projects that advance and enhance swine production in Iowa. Proposals are due by January 30, 2009.

The \$100,000 in grants is for the third year of a program funded by Smithfield Foods, which is paying \$1 million over ten years for the program. Applications are for projects related to increasing profits, helping independent producers compete, making market information available, protecting the environment, and other goals.

Attorney General Miller released a "[Request for Applications](#)" (RFA) to identify and support innovative Iowa projects eligible for the grants. Grant application forms,

instructions, and requirements are available with the RFA. Interested persons may call the Attorney General's Farm Division at 515-281-5351, or send an e-mail to FARM@ag.state.ia.us.

The Attorney General's Office, in collaboration with Smithfield Foods, Inc. and two Democratic and two Republican legislators, will evaluate proposals submitted under the RFA and award the \$100,000 for projects that demonstrate financial need and will promote hog production in Iowa in an innovative manner.

This grant program is part of a landmark settlement under which Smithfield made substantial financial commitments to Iowa's pork industry and agreed to provide a contrac-

tor growers' 'bill of rights' to their contract producers.

Background

The RFA encourages projects in the following areas to submit applications:

- **Environment.** Projects are encouraged that will address the environmental impact of swine production, including impact on air quality and water quality.
- **Profitability.** Projects are encouraged that will address the profitability of swine production, including projects that will lower the costs of swine production, address swine disease problems, increase efficiency in swine pro-

- duction, create new pork products, or create new markets for pork.
- **Contract Feeding.** Projects are encouraged that will address issues in contract feeding, including competition, fairness, and efficiency.
- **Independent Producers.** Projects are encouraged that will address the ability of independent hog producers to compete, including projects relating to market access, price transparency, niche marketing of pork, producer networking, and financing.
- **Market Information.** Projects are encouraged that will address the issue of price discovery and availability of market information in the hog industry.

Livestock Study Committee Makes Recommendations

The Legislature's committee studying the effects of flooding on the livestock industry met for two days this past November and adopted two recommendations. Their charge was to study the effects of the 2008 flooding on the Iowa livestock industry, including commodity prices, differential effects on small and large producers, financing issues, and effects on businesses associated with the livestock industry.

The Committee discussed the presentations received during the two days and made two recommendations:

1. In accordance with a declaration issued by the Governor, a state agency should be authorized to immediately enter onto private land during an emergency, if necessary, to rescue livestock or remove carcasses when it is impossible or impracticable to obtain permission from the landowner.

2. Establish an expedited process to give qualified persons authority to clean up the premises of a livestock operation, which has been impacted by a disaster before the resulting situation poses a hazard to human health.

Presentations

Committee members heard from numerous experts over their two-day meeting. Mr. Harold Hommes, from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, presented information from the Agriculture and Environment Task Force Report of the Rebuild Iowa Advisory Commission. He served as staff to the task force.

Mr. Hommes discussed a number of issues including the impact of the flood upon Oakville with direct losses to livestock and associated structures (affecting 21 confinement feeding operations inundated because of a levee breach), and limited

pollution caused by damage to manure storage structures that were less than one-third full.

Dr. David Schmitt, the State Veterinarian, and Dr. Kevin Petersburg, from the Veterinarian Animal and Plant Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, provided an overview of efforts to rescue or, where necessary, destroy livestock during the flood. They also discussed disposal of livestock carcasses left by the flood, emphasizing the losses incurred at Oakville.

The committee also heard from experts on corn and soybean crop planting harvests and forage availability, potential impacts caused by the flood on supplies of feed grain, short- and long-term effects of the floods on the livestock industry, state climate conditions, and federal assistance livestock producers received during and after the floods.

Council on Homelessness Releases Annual Report

The Iowa Council on Homelessness released its annual report, which is designed to give a snapshot of the homeless problem in Iowa and demonstrate the areas of need to a complex problem.

17,908 Homeless in 2007

In 2007, there were 17,908 Iowans that were homeless, and that were served by a homeless provider.

An additional 10,010 were at risk of becoming homeless, and were served by agencies to prevent homelessness. This at risk number was a 12% increase from 2006.

Of the people that were homeless, 13% were under the age of 18. Here are some other statistics about the people that were homeless that were highlighted in the report:

- 63% were homeless in the past.
- 58% of the adult individuals reported a long term disability.
- 12% of the adult individuals served in the armed forces.
- 64% completed high school or have a G.E.D.
- 21% were employed when they began services and 33% of the

homeless families were part of the working poor.

- 12% lived on the streets prior to receiving services.
- 40% of the families and 28% of the individuals became homeless for economic or housing issues.

Who are Missing?

The 17,908 total is a low estimate because there are several people missing from the report:

1. Families are under-reported. There are very few shelters for families and information is not

recorded for people who are turned away due to lack of space. Domestic violence shelters did not submit information for this report. Many people, particularly families, avoid shelters, living instead in cars or doubling up with another family.

2. Veterans are under-reported. Veterans often fail to report their status to providers. In addition, veteran-specific programs do not participate in this data effort.
3. Children are under-reported. Information on children in families is not always recorded by provid-

ers, and children are often left in another's care while a parent is in a shelter.

4. Individuals are under-reported. Approximately 75% of the emergency and transitional beds are included in this report. Many faith-based facilities do not receive government dollars and choose not to participate in the statewide data network. In some cases, these programs account for a significant number of beds in the community.

The entire report can be viewed at www.iowafinanceauthority.gov

Emails Make False Claims About Cell Phone Numbers

It's likely that you have, or will, receive one or more emails claiming that you will soon start getting unwanted telemarketing calls on your wireless phone.

They claim that: "someone" has made a decision to release cell phone numbers to telemarketers; that you will soon be getting calls from telemarketers; and that you need to immediately register your cell phone number with the federal Do-Not-Call List

The emails often point out that the wireless phone industry has discussed making a wireless phone directory, like the traditional (wired) phone directory.

Here Are the Facts

1. At present, a wireless directory is only in the idea stage.
2. Even if such a directory is established, most telemarketing calls to wireless phones would continue to be illegal.
3. It is already illegal for anyone to call (except for emergency purposes or with prior consent) using an automatic dialing system or artificial or prerecorded voice

message to any number of a paging service, mobile telephone service, or any service if the called party is charged for the call - regardless of whether the number is listed on the national Do-Not-Call list.

4. The federal government does not maintain and is not establishing a separate Do-Not-Call list for wireless phone numbers. You have always been able to put personal wireless numbers on the existing Do-Not-Call list, either online at www.donotcall.gov, or by calling toll-free 1-888-382-1222 from the number you want to register.
5. Contrary to claims, there is no deadline for registering a number on the federal Do-Not-Call list.
6. Contrary to claims, there is no longer any need to re-register a number - it stays on the Do-Not-Call list until you cancel your registration or discontinue service.

How to Complain

If you get a telemarketing call that you think violates Do-Not-Call rules, complain to the FCC:

- On-line at esupport.fcc.gov/complaints.htm.
- By emailing the FCC's Consumer Compliant Center at fccinfo@fcc.gov.
- By calling 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322) voice; 1-888-TELL-FCC 1-888-835-5322 TTY, or faxing 1-866-418-0232.
- By writing the FCC's Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division at 445 12th Street, SW Washington, DC 20554.

What to Include in Your Complaint

When you open the on-line complaint form, you will be asked questions that will take you to the particular section of the form you need to complete.

If you do not use the on-line complaint form, your complaint, at a minimum, should indicate:

- Your name, address, e-mail address, and phone number where you can be reached.

- The phone number where you received the call, and if this number is on the national Do-Not-Call list.
- The date and time of the call and whether it advertised or sold any property, goods, or services.
- Any information (including a caller ID number) to help identify the individual or company whose property, goods, or services were being advertised or sold, and whether any of this information was provided during the call.
- Whether you or any household member gave the caller permission to call.
- Whether you or any household member have an established business relationship with the caller – by buying property, goods, or services, or making any inquiry or filing an application with that individual or company before receiving the call.
- Whether you or any household member previously asked the caller or that individual or company NOT to call and when you asked.

For More Information

To learn more about the Do-Not-Call list, visit the FCC at www.fcc.gov/cgb/donotcall or at www.donotcall.gov. You can also contact the FCC’s Consumer Center using the contact information provided for filing a complaint.

New Residential Smoke Detector Requirements

The State Fire Marshal will require that all new residential construction be equipped with dual sensor smoke detectors, effective April 1, 2009. “Residential property” includes homes, apartment buildings, dormitories, hotels, motels, or a rooming house.

This requirement was originally meant to take effect last October, but the Fire Marshall agreed to delay the implementation date.

Most current detectors use ionization technology. A dual sensor

detector has both a photoelectric sensor that protects best against slow, smoldering fires and an ionization sensor that protects best against fast, flaming fires.

Although the mounting, maintenance, and testing are similar to existing detectors, you should read and follow the instructions that come with the dual sensor detector.

Properly installed and maintained smoke alarms are the key to improving the chances of you and your family surviving in a fire!

Replacement of Existing Detectors

You are not required to immediately replace existing smoke detectors, but when one needs to be replaced, it must be replaced with a dual sensor detector.

The new rules regarding dual sensor detectors are located under 661-210 of the Iowa Administrative Code and can be viewed at: http://search.legis.state.ia.us/NXT/gateway.dll/IowaState/iac_6/a661/iac_a661_c210v3.pdf

Lieutenant Governor Visits Postville

Lieutenant Governor Patty Judge visited Postville this month to address concerns at the Agriprocessors plant. Before and after the May 12th raid, the company was socked with two OSHA violations for unsafe working conditions and 57 child labor violations. In addition, the company has been charged with wage and hour violations for non-payment of work to workers and charging for the use of equipment.

Many workers have gone without health care benefits since the company, without the worker’s knowledge, was not paying their

health care premiums. They only found out after seeing a doctor.

Unfortunately, since the company has filed for Chapter 11, the status of some of these court cases are in doubt. In bankruptcy proceedings, creditors will have first access to any available cash that is liquidated.

With that as a backdrop, the Lieutenant Governor went to Postville to hear from citizens to see if anything could be done to address concerns.

“No matter what the future holds, the State of Iowa will be here to do all it can to meet the economic and humanitarian needs of this community,” the Lieutenant Governor told the community. “Iowans have always helped their neighbors during a time of need, and we will do so again in Postville,” she said.

Action Already Taken

At the meeting, the Lieutenant Governor outlined several steps that the state has already taken. This includes a temporary working group of several state agencies to monitor

the situation and ensure people were treated with dignity, and due process was upheld. State agencies have assisted with preventing short term utility shut-offs, finding alternative jobs, and the more long-term of either the sale or otherwise re-opening of the plant under different management.

Within 24 hours of the raid, key state workers, including from Department of Human Services (DHS), traveled to Postville to offer services from family assistance. Food stamp applications were completed along with a survey community needs to ensure the health and safety of minors. DHS social workers were on site on Monday, May 12th, to ensure that every child has proper supervision and care. The social worker participated in a door-to-door canvass to ensure that children were safe and supervised.

Workforce Development has also been working to determine possible job openings in Iowa for individual Iowans affected by the plant shutdown. Over 30 jobs have been located for displaced workers. New Iowan Centers have been providing staff for several weeks to assist displaced workers and with unemployment applications.

New Assistance Available

The Governor and Lieutenant Governor have now assigned three AmeriCorps VISTA members to Postville and the surrounding four-county area. The members will help secure food, shelter, health services, and light and water utilities for individuals impacted by the events at Agriprocessors.

AmeriCorps VISTA members will also help coordinate the search for employment, job interviews, and

transportation or relocation to permanent residences and jobs. In addition, VISTA members will help the approximately two dozen displaced families from the Waterloo floods coordinate services that are available to help return their lives to normal.

While in Postville, Lt. Governor Judge also brought a contract with the state to be signed by the Mayor and other local officials worth nearly \$700,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding. The emergency allocation of funds will be used to provide assistance payments for rent and utilities to families impacted by the closing of the plant.

Applications for the funds are currently being accepted at Turner Hall in Postville. Individuals who have been affected by the shutdown of the Agriprocessors facility are encouraged to apply.

DOT Details Winter Maintenance

The Department of Transportation (DOT) detailed winter maintenance issues in front of the Government Oversight Committee. The DOT reviewed current procedures, detailed winter weather trends, and discussed salt procurement.

The DOT maintains nearly 25,000 lane miles of roadway in the winter, including nearly 4,000 lane miles of Interstates. The DOT currently utilizes 901 snowplows with 1,200 operators, supervisors and mechanics in 110 maintenance facilities. The total budget for snow and ice removal is \$38 million annually.

Winter related fatalities and crashes in Iowa decreased steadily from approximately 1,000 in the winter of 1996-1997 to approximately 400 in recent years, save for a one year spike in the winter of 2000-

2001, one of the snowiest on record. The 2007-2008 winter was the 10th snowiest winter in 121 years of records and the first 4 months of 2008 were the coldest since 1982.

In 2007-2008, the DOT utilized over 303,000 tons of salt, which was a new yearly high. The previous record for salt usage in a winter was 248,000 tons during the winter of 2000-2001. The 10 year average annual use is 196,000 tons.

In April, DOT opened contracts for salt. Under the contract terms, the DOT must order at least 80% of the contract amount of salt and can order as much as 120%. Vendors are allowed 12 business days to complete deliveries. There is a fuel adjustment clause allowing prices to move weekly with the Midwest average diesel price.

The DOT ordered 248,887 tons of salt on contract. The DOT requested 310,000 tons of salt, but 31 DOT salt storage locations did not receive bids. In addition, a nationwide salt shortage has left the DOT approximately 105,000 tons short of capacity. The DOT is partially addressing the shortage by focusing on conservation efforts and on operational strategies, such as application of a liquid deicer prior to a winter storm and prewetting dry materials, to increase efficiency.

Commission Outlines 2010 Transportation Budget

The Iowa Transportation Commission discussed the 2010 budget request for the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT). The DOT budget is funded by the Road Use Tax Fund and the Primary Road Fund. The proposed budget for FY 2010 is \$352 million. The proposed budget includes an increase of \$9.2 million over the 2009 budget and an increase of 20 full time employees.

The most significant changes in the DOT budget request are in the operations budget unit. The DOT requested \$332 million for Fiscal Year 2010. The DOT proposes the creation of 20 full time employees

and approximately \$1.2 million in funding in the Motor Vehicle Division to comply with federal REAL ID requirements.

REAL ID is a federal requirement on states to assure certain security and procedures for issuing state licenses and IDs. The DOT proposes to have all license and ID requests be processed and sent out of a central location. Housing all license and ID requests reduces the potential for license fraud and identity theft because the number of locations that can produce state licenses and IDs is reduced. Centralized processing of license and ID requests additionally

allows the Iowa DOT to check for IDs in other states, assuring that individuals who should not be receiving an Iowa license due to suspension or revocation in other states are not able to obtain an Iowa license or ID.

The Operations Budget Division additionally includes \$7.25 million for increased salt costs and \$5.6 million for additional fuel costs. Budget increases are offset by a \$6.9 million carry-forward.

The Special Purpose budget request is \$16.5 million, an increase of \$1.1 million. The Capital budget request for FY 2010 is \$4.1 million, an increase of \$500,000.