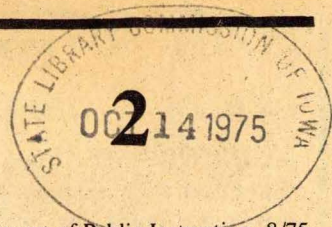


KNOW YOUR IOWA LAWMAKER.



Iowa House of Representatives Public Information Office in cooperation with the Iowa Department of Public Instruction. 8/75

YOUR OFFICE

If you were an Iowa legislator, you might be very surprised on your first day at work in the General Assembly.

You will not find separate offices for the senators and representatives! Each member has a desk on the floor of the House or Senate chamber. Next to the members is a small filing cabinet and chair, for the secretaries. The desk is your office!

If you are one of the fifteen committee chairpersons, you will have a small office. The Speaker and the Lieutenant Governor have offices.

But most of your work as a legislator is done at your desk in the House or Senate chamber, or around a large table in a committee meeting room.

IF YOU WERE AN IOWA LEGISLATOR . . .

- If you were an Iowa representative or senator . . .
- . . . where would your office be?
- . . . would you be paid a salary?
- . . . what would your working hours be?
- . . . how would you vote?
- . . . what laws would you write?
- . . . on which three committees would you like to work?

YOUR WORKING DAY

You would probably arrive at the Capitol by eight o'clock in the morning, to be on time for your first committee meeting.

Then, the full House and Senate will convene at about 9:00 a.m. on most mornings. If there is a lot of committee work to do, the full Assembly may not meet until 10:00 a.m.

There is a lunch break at noon. The Assembly works from 1:00 p.m. until about 5:00 p.m. on most afternoons. But there are exceptions. Toward the end of a General Assembly, in April or May, the House and Senate have been known to work right through the supper hour, until late in the evening.

They have even worked all night! But those occasions are rare, and only happen when the Assembly wishes to adjourn for the year.

Legislators very often have official meetings in the evening, or very early in the morning. It is not unusual to see a legislator working as early as 7:00 a.m., or as late as 9:00 p.m.

You would have homework. Legislators must understand the bills they will debate and vote upon each day. They have been busy in their own committee meetings. In order to know all about the bills, they often study large books of bills the night before a debate.

Each week-end, the legislator returns to his or her home district to talk to the people who elected him. He exchanges ideas with the people, and hears their complaints, praise, and suggestions for the work of the legislature.



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FIFTEEN STANDING COMMITTEES IN THE IOWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AGRICULTURE Considers bills which concern the activity or business of cultivating the soil, producing crops, or raising livestock useful to man.

APPROPRIATIONS Considers all money bills which finance state government.

CITIES AND TOWNS Considers bills which concern incorporated cities and towns.

COMMERCE Considers bills which deal with the buying and selling of goods, insurance, and warehousing.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT Considers bills which concern the operation of counties.

EDUCATION Considers bills which concern the system of education provided by the State of Iowa—including elementary schools.

ENERGY Considers bills which concern the production and delivery of power or fuel for power to the citizens of Iowa.

HUMAN RESOURCES Considers bills which concern the physical and mental health and prosperity of the citizens of Iowa.

JUDICIARY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT Considers bills which concern the criminal and civil laws of Iowa.

LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS Considers bills which concern work for wages, workers collectively, employment security, and fringe benefits.

NATURAL RESOURCES Considers bills which concern the physical resources of the State and its system of recreation.

RULES Handles all matters pertaining to the House or Senate Rules.

STATE GOVERNMENT Considers bills which concern the operation of Iowa government, including the state's voting laws.

TRANSPORTATION Considers bills which concern the moving of people or goods within the state of Iowa.

WAYS AND MEANS Considers all bills pertaining to taxes.

CHOOSING YOUR COMMITTEES



Sometimes you and your classmates divide into groups or committees. You make projects for social studies or for language arts. You study together and work together.

The Iowa legislature divides itself into 15 committees to do its work, too. Here is a list of the committees. If you were an Iowa legislator, on which three committees would you like to serve? Choose three that fit your interests.

FACT TO REMEMBER:

A legislative rule says committees may not meet while the Iowa House or Senate are in session.

Let us say you have an idea for a new law. Read the list. Can you tell which committee would be the logical one to study the idea and write the bill for the law?

An experiment with energy from the sun
A money bill for a new building at the
University of Iowa

A law to lower the voting age to 17
A law to make the school year shorter
A law to change the speed limit
A law about bicycle safety
A new tax law

In the Iowa legislature, the presiding officers of the House and the Senate assign the bills to the logical committees for study. The presiding officer in the House is the Speaker of the House. The presiding officer in the Senate is the Lieutenant Governor, who is called the President of the Senate.

WHAT ARE YOUR IDEAS FOR CHANGES IN THE IOWA LAW?

If you were a legislator, what bills would you write? Write three ideas on a sheet of paper. Exchange papers with another classmate. Now, if you were the presiding officer, to which committee would you send your classmate's ideas for new laws?



WHERE WOULD YOU LIVE?

During the months the legislature is in session, from January until about June 1, you would probably rent an apartment in Des Moines. You would then have two homes—the one in your district home town, and your apartment in Des Moines.

Members whose home town is Des Moines or a town near-by drive back and forth to their own homes each day.

MR. SPEAKER, AM I IN ORDER?

If you were a state representative and you wanted to speak for or against a bill on the floor of the House, how do you suppose you would get the Speaker to call on you?

One-hundred men and women all yelling, “*Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker!*” would be quite a sight, and quite a noise!

Each member has a microphone on his or her desk. When he wants to speak, he raises the microphone. The Speaker looks about the chamber at all times. He calls on the members in the order the microphones have been raised.

If you were a member, you would begin your remarks like this: “*Mr. Speaker, am I in order to speak upon the bill before the House?*”

The Speaker would reply, “*You are in order.*”

Perhaps you ask to speak on a subject that has already been settled by a vote of the House. In that case, the Speaker might say, “*Mr. Jones, your remarks would not be in order, since the House has already decided on that subject.*”

In which case—you would sit down!

The same process is followed in the Senate, where members address the presiding officer by saying, “*Mr. President, am I in order?*”

FACT TO REMEMBER:

Your legislator's action is in the public eye! All committee meetings and floor sessions are open to the public. Your legislator's votes are open to the public.

HOW WOULD YOU VOTE?

After all the members who wish to speak on a certain bill have had the chance to do so, the Speaker (or, the President) says, “*The question now is whether the bill shall pass.*”

He says, “*All those in favor of the bill shall vote aye, and those opposed shall vote nay.*”

On your desk in the House or Senate there is a green button for an “Aye” vote, and a red button for a “Nay” vote. When you press the button, a green or a red light is turned on next to your name on a large electronic voting board that hangs high in the chamber, so that you and everyone else can see how the votes are cast.

The computerized machine also counts. Observers can see immediately whether a bill has been passed or has been defeated. The machine



immediately prints a record of the vote. This information is published every day in a **Journal of the House** or a **Journal of the Senate**.

That way, all votes are public record. Any Iowan may easily learn how his representative or senator voted on a certain law. All votes on final passage of a bill are called “record roll call votes.”

HOW MANY VOTES?

If a majority of both the House and the Senate pass a bill in exactly the same form, the bill has passed the Iowa General Assembly.

It is then sent to the governor. He may sign the bill, thus making it a law. Or, he may disagree with it ("veto" it), and return it unsigned to the house in which the bill started.

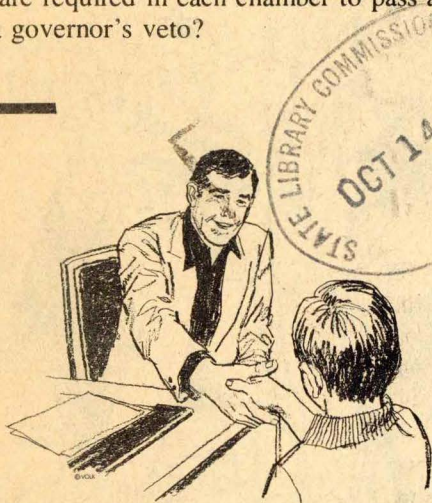
The legislature may override the veto if two-thirds of its members again vote for the bill. It becomes law "over" the governor's veto. If the legislature does not take it up for a vote, or if it fails to muster the necessary two-thirds vote, the veto is "upheld," and the bill does not become law.

FACT TO REMEMBER:

In 1975 the Iowa legislature passed 256 bills which were signed into law by the governor. He vetoed four bills, and he vetoed sections of six money bills.

HOW MANY?

One vote over one-half of the House and the Senate is a "majority." How many House members must vote "aye" to pass a bill? How many Senate members make a majority? How many votes are required in each chamber to pass a bill over a governor's veto?



WHEN YOU VISIT THE IOWA LEGISLATURE

If your class visits the state legislature in Des Moines, you will see the beautiful Capitol.

You will see the electronic voting machine, and you may even see the members vote on a bill.

You will hear the Speaker or the President say, "You are in order."

You will see members at their desks, or offices."

You will hear senators and representatives



YOUR SALARY AS A LEGISLATOR

Back in 1857, the people of Iowa approved a state Constitution that set legislators' salaries at \$3 per day! In those days, the General Assembly met every other year, instead of every year as they do now. They were only paid for the days they were in session. They also received traveling expenses—three dollars for every 20 miles they traveled to and from the Capitol—which at that time, was located in Iowa City.

FACT TO REMEMBER:

The Iowa Constitution prohibits the General Assembly from increasing the salaries of its own members. When the legislature does approve a salary increase, it applies to future General Assembly members, and not to the members who are voting on the increase.

You won't be surprised to learn that legislative salaries and expenses have increased since 1857. In fact, the 65th General Assembly approved an increase for Iowa legislators which applies to the members of the current 66th General Assembly.

If you were an Iowa legislator today, your salary would be \$8,000 per year. You would receive a \$20 per day expense account, plus a travel allowance to pay for one round trip to your home district each week.

The Speaker and the Lt. Governor receive salaries of \$12,000 each year. Each chamber has a Democratic and a Republican floor leader who earn salaries of \$9,500 each year. They all receive the expenses and the travel allowance, too.

You will see news reporters at work in the chambers.

You will see the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, and the secretary of the Senate and the chief clerk of the House, all working together to keep the session running in an orderly fashion.

You will see your own state senator and your own state representative.

You will see your state government at work for you!

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