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Session Wrap-Up

The 2008 Legislative Session came to a close on the 104th day of the legislative session at 2:36 a.m. on Saturday, April 26th. Legislators are only paid for 100 days, so they worked without pay during those final four days.

Legislators are now headed back to their districts to prepare for what is predicted to be a difficult campaign season leading up to the Election on November 4th, 2008. Half of the Iowa Senators and all of the Iowa Representatives are up for election this year. You can find out who is running in your area, and how to contact them by calling your county auditor's office or online at: www.infonetiowa.com/advocate/campaigns_and_voting.php.

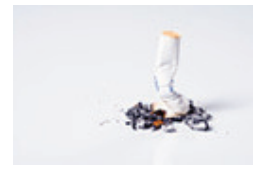
Most people want to know if the legislative session was a success – and each party has a different take on it. Ultimately, Iowans like you will judge whether the session was historic, forgettable, or somewhere in between. Here are some of the things that legislators accomplished this year – and some things that were left behind:

Accomplishments



Health Care Reform – Lawmakers passed a bill that dramatically increases the number of Iowans covered by health insurance, particularly children. Read the story in the next session to determine if legislators hit the mark on this.

Statewide Public Smoking Ban – Bans smoking in most public places, except casinos. Bars and restaurants will be smoke-free beginning in July.



Money for Roads & Bridges – Lawmakers struggled to find a way to pay for more than \$200 million per year in needed improvements to Iowa's transportation infrastructure, making roads and bridges safer. Through an increase in a number of registration and license fees, a "TIME-21" fund was created to generate about \$140 million.



Schools – Legislators turned the local option sales tax for education into a statewide tax, with the sixth cent still going to education. All Iowa counties had the local



option sales tax for education, so the only real difference is the loss of it being a local option, and the money goes out on a per student basis (so retail centers have to share with the rest of the state).

Healthy Kids Act – Concerned with obesity in children, lawmakers passed the Healthy Kids Act that requires schools to sell only nutritional foods and drinks, and requires all physically able children to participate in physical activity at least 30 minutes a day (for kids up to grade 5) and at least 120 minutes per week (for older kids). It also requires teens take a CPR course before graduating.



Collective Bargaining – This bill has been in the news a lot. It would greatly expand the list of items public employees could include in union negotiations. We give this a 50-50 shot at being signed.



Natural Resource Preservation – Legislators took the first step in dedicating money to outdoor recreation and conservation by with a constitutional amendment that dedicates future sales tax increases to the fund. Of course, next year's legislature and voters must pass the amendment in order for it to become law (and then lawmakers will have to pass the sales tax increase). In addition, legislators passed a \$12 million/year "River Enhancement Community Attractions & Tourism Program" to help improve water trails and recreation around lakes and rivers.

Works in Progress



Property Tax Reform – Legislators have been working for years to find a way (and muster the political will) to change Iowa's property tax system. No matter how they do it, someone will end up paying more in taxes, and someone less. That makes change hard. Iowa's system is extremely confusing and lawmakers want to simplify it and make it fairer to everyone. They started a two-year review of the system last year – with hopes of changes coming in the 2009 legislative session. Nothing happened this year, but maybe in 2009.

infoNET Schedule

With the session coming to a close, *infoNET* will return to its normal every-other-month schedule. One more issue will be published in about 30 days to let you know what the Governor did with bills being tracked – whether he signed them into law, or kept them from becoming law by vetoing them.

<u>May 26, 2008</u>	30 Day Veto Period Ends
<u>May 31, 2008</u>	Issue #8 (Final Session Report)
<u>June/July 2008</u>	Issue #9
<u>Aug./Sept. 2008</u>	Issue #10
<u>Oct./Nov. 2008</u>	Issue #11
<u>December 2008</u>	Issue #12 (Session Preview)

Director Approved, Director Retires



In the final days of session, the Iowa Senate confirmed Tom Newton as the Director of the Iowa Department of Public Health. He has been running the department as Interim Director since last year.

Republican Senators held up Director Newton's appointment this year because they disapproved of an anti-smoking campaign launched by the department in the months leading up to the smoking ban debate. Lawmakers finally got the votes needed (two-thirds is required) to confirm the popular director on April 24 after they reached a compromise on legislation to prohibit state agencies from running ads to influence legislation.

While Director Newton is at the beginning of his service, another director announced he is ending his soon. Kevin Concannon, the director of the Department of Human Services for the last five years, announced he is retiring in June.



Concannon took over an embattled agency and transformed it to the progressive and aggressive one that you know today. His strong but affable personality made him a well-known and well-liked figure at the Capitol.

In his letter to staff, Concannon noted he will be leaving the state to be closer to family in the Northeastern part of the United States, and said the Governor planned to conduct a national search for a replacement. You may send your thoughts for a happy retirement until the end of June to:

Kevin Concannon
Director, Iowa Department of Human Services
Hoover State Office Building
Des Moines, Iowa 50319

A Word of Thanks

You have probably heard the saying – "you catch more flies with honey." Legislators hear a lot about what they do wrong, but you would be surprised how little they hear "thanks." A quick "thank you" call or note to their home addresses this time of year can make a world of difference.

Take a few moments of the day to write your legislators a thank you note, even if it is a “*Thank you for looking out for our interests in Des Moines. Drop us a line when you have events or forums this summer – we’d love to keep in contact. Here is my contact information. Sincerely, Jane Doe*”

You can find your legislators home addresses and phone numbers at www.infonetiowa.com or by calling the legislative information office at 515-281-5129 or lioinfo@legis.state.ia.us.

Before we move on, we want to make sure we give a shout-out to all the staff that work so hard during the session to make sure the trains run on time at the Capitol. They are the unsung heroes of the legislative process - from the House and Senate caucus staffs to the fiscal and legal experts at the Legislative Services Agency. They work long hours and get little sleep - all to make sure bills get written correctly, and legislators get their work done on time and with the right information. They also make sure we get things right by giving us the tools we need to accurately report the activity at the Capitol.

While we owe all of them thanks – we want to thank a few in particular: Sue Lerdal, Jess Benson, John Pollack, and Patty Funaro of the Legislative Services Agency, and Zeke Furlong, Brad Trow, Kris Bell, and Peter Matthes of the House and Senate caucus staffs.

The Capitol (According to George)

The following article was written by George Barr, one of the 2008 lobbyist apprentices.

Being a lobbyist apprentice wasn’t easy – but it was worth it.

I had my share of frustrations in trying to fulfill my duties as a lobbyist apprentice. First, I do not own a car and I live in Cedar Falls, so I had to arrange transportation with other people to come to Des Moines. This was harder than I thought it would be given this year’s weather. My trips to Des Moines were cancelled three times because of snow. It was aggravating to be unable to live up to my obligations as an apprentice and this winter’s snowy weather made it challenging.

I was also surprised at how busy members of the General Assembly are during session. As a volunteer for the Democratic Party in Black Hawk County, there are a few legislators who know me and

were always available to talk to me. Even so, their busy schedules meant my time with them was limited and I had to get right to the point.

I had decided for my third trip, I would try to make better use of time, so I could talk to members who were assigned to the proper committees for my interests. Unfortunately, this visit was to happen during funnel week (a deadline that keeps legislators busy), and only a couple people would have been available to meet with me. As a result, my third individual visit to lobby was cancelled.

Despite these frustrations, I am told it is all the way things are at the Capitol. I was given the opportunity to go to Des Moines, and talk to members of the General Assembly with some credibility. I wish I could have felt more effective, but was assured by the fact that I’d done the best I could with the challenges to my time.

Are you interested in being our next lobbyist apprentice? Send in an application now – we’ll be selecting our 2009 class this summer!

Call: 866/432-2846 (866/432-2847 TTY/TDD)

Email: info@idaction.org

Download the application here:
www.infonetiowa.com

BUDGET NEWS

The \$6 billion-plus state budget came together in the final week of session. Legislators decided to wait until April to see how the state was doing and if the national recession had hit home yet. What they found was Iowa’s economy was booming, and Iowans were earning more money (and paying more taxes).

Based on these numbers, legislators decided it was okay to spend more money. In the end, legislators spent about \$40 million more than they had planned, while still putting money into the “rainy day” fund to help make sure Iowa has money in reserve should the economy start to slow down.

So where did they spend that money? Some of it went to health care reform and fully funding Medicaid and all of its associated services, a lot went to filling holes in the budget created by federal funding cuts, and still more went to education and building a new prison. Yet more went to encouraging energy

efficiency and expanding outdoor recreational opportunities around the state.

Take a look at the budgets in the Bill Tracker at the end of this report to see details. Here are some highlights that may be of interest to you:

- **Individual Development Accounts received \$150,000** to jump-start the program, which helps low-income individuals, including persons with disabilities, save money to increase opportunities for self-sufficiency. The program matches money saved that a person can turn around and use to pay for educational expenses, buying a home or car, starting a business, or purchasing assistive technology.
- **\$2 million was appropriated to make sure kids have continuous eligibility on Medicaid.** This means incomes will only need to be verified once a year – so kids have more stability in their health insurance coverage.
- **\$4.8 million will be used to expand the children's health insurance program (*hawk-i*)** to kids living in families with incomes up to 300% of the federal poverty level. Currently the cut-off is 200%.
- **Doubles spending on the I-SMILE dental program for kids**, including dental care for children with disabilities (\$1 million total now).
- **Moves the Brain Injury Waiver program from the Department of Public Health to the Department of Human Services**, but continues the \$500,000 earmark for resource navigators to help identify resources for persons with brain injury and their families. Language was added to make sure the entire \$2.5 million shifted will be used for the brain injury waiver.
- **Likewise, the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities program was moved** from the Iowa Finance Authority to the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Education. No change in spending (\$200,000). Vocational Rehabilitation had been running the program through a subcontract.
- **Gave counties a 3% increase for MH/MR/DD allowed growth next year (FY09), and another 3% bump in the following fiscal year (FY10).** Actual growth in services and consumers is more like 6%, so this growth rate will not be sufficient to meet need and curb the growing waiting lists in some counties. There was no significant changes in distribution, but legislators did establish a task force to work over the summer to look at one proposed solution to the mental health/disability services (MH/DS) funding crisis – having the state pick up the non-federal share of funding for all persons with mental retardation. This is estimated to give some \$30 million in relief to counties, but the state would also likely adjust growth dollars downward, so counties may not have the costs, but they would also not have the funds. What would be saved is the growth in costs associated with those consumers. The task force will be asked to review this proposal and figure out a way that might make it beneficial to all parties, and ultimately serve people better.
- **\$1 million was added to the MH/MR/DD Risk Pool**, to help counties that do not get enough money through the allowed growth formula.
- **Allows counties to experiment with a regional (multi-county) delivery system** to provide MH/MR/DD/BI services. Counties would be able to pool their resources and decategorize funding, and use average levies and ending fund balances to access state allowed growth funding.
- **The \$624,000 generated from the sale of the Dwayne Arnold Nuclear Power Plant in Linn County will be used for Medicaid** – not mental health funding as originally intended. Lawmakers could not work out the details of using this money for MH/MR/DD allowed growth, so they instead decided to use this year's money for Medicaid.
- **Gives all Medicaid providers a 1% increase in reimbursement rates.**
- **Leaves mental health and behavioral health drugs OFF the preferred drug list**, allowing doctors to continue to prescribe the medications they think are best for their patients (rather than the cheapest).
- **Spends \$2 million to reduce the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver waiting lists** (used equally across all waivers) and uses \$750,000 to reduce the Children's Mental Health waiver waiting list. Legislators also asked DHS to review all HCBS waivers to compare services provided and reimbursements made (report due to legislators on 12/15/2008).

- **Gives money to DHS to start two new proposals** to create a regional mental health crisis services system that covers the entire state (\$1.5 million) and begin to create a better school-based children's mental health system (\$500,000), both beginning January 2009.
- **Makes sure people living in ICF/MRs and ICF/MIs have \$50 in spending money each month.** Currently people receiving Medicaid and living in nursing homes, ICF/MRs and ICF/MIs are allowed to keep \$50/month of any personal income as a "personal needs allowance." Nursing home residents that have no income or an income less than \$50/month get a supplement to bring them up to that amount. Lawmakers made sure that ICF/MR and ICF/MI residents also get that supplement.
- **Polk County parents of children with disability will breath another sigh of relief** – lawmakers agreed to give Day Care for Exceptional Children \$350,000 to continue providing daycare service for medically fragile children with disabilities. However, this will be a temporary respite, as the bill stated it would be a "one-time grant."
- **Parents of children with autism did a good job lobbying their legislators this year and making the case for a system of care and early detection for children with autism.** Lawmakers added a new \$25,000 grant to a Linn County provider for support services for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families. In addition, lawmakers approved a new Iowa Autism Council to advise the state in developing and implementing a comprehensive, coordinated system to provide appropriate diagnostic, intervention, and support services for children with autism and to meet the unique needs of adults with autism.
- **Lawmakers also freed up funds for a brand new one-time appropriation of \$250,000 for a competitive grant for a Center for Independent Living** (the recipient is required to submit a written report detailing the use of the money by October 1, 2009). Sen. Bob Dvorsky worked hard to identify the resources needed to do this.
- **A community college in Northern Iowa was given kudos for their innovative approach to attracting a qualified workforce to meet the needs of people with disabilities in their area.** Impressed with their program, lawmakers freed up \$500,000 to give grants to community colleges that

award tuition assistance to students enrolled in a health care workforce training course and working part-time at a health care facility that provides services to adults with mental illness or mental retardation.

- **Lawmakers put money into the Family Opportunity Act**, so that the effort could get started. Last year, lawmakers asked DHS to go after federal authorization to do the program, which allows the families of persons with disabilities to purchase Medicaid coverage. This year, they put up \$250,000 to get the ball rolling.
- **Transportation is always raised as a top concern to people with disabilities.** Rep. Geri Huser insisted lawmakers take another look at public transportation in the wake of high gas prices. Lawmakers approved an interim committee to conduct a comprehensive study on the ways in which mass transit may be used to provide public transportation services among Iowa communities, including availability and benefits to the poor, elderly, and persons with disabilities.

Looking Ahead At the 2009 Session

Most people say that next year's budget will be difficult and spending will be tight. A recent report announced today shows that 31 states are facing a budget shortfall – meaning they do not have enough money coming in to meet current needs without major cuts in services and spending.

According to the Center for Budget & Policy Priorities, 25 states plus the District of Columbia are facing an estimated \$40 billion in combined shortfalls, another three states are facing shortfalls but do not know how much, and another three states say they will face a budget crunch in 2010.

Only three states had economies that were looking good (Iowa was one of them) – but that could all change. Lawmakers are saying that built-in spending could spell trouble in the 2009 session. Built in spending are things like school funding, state employee raises, and Medicaid – things the state has to do.

What does this mean to you? If you have things you want to see funded, either increased or funded at least at the same level, you will want to be talking to your legislators over the summer. Here are some things we would suggest doing:



Talk to your legislators. Ask them what their priorities are. Ask them what they have done to help with your issues/funding priorities. Ask them what they plan to do, and what you can do to help them.



Talk to the candidates for legislative office. Ask them the same questions.

Volunteer on the campaigns of the people that will best address your issues. Elected officials remember the people that took the time out of their busy schedules to help them get elected. They will return that favor and take time out of their busy schedules to help them!



Vote. It's the best way to make sure you get people elected that will work on your issues. There is a primary election on Tuesday, June 3 and a general election this fall on Tuesday, November 4.

Iowans can now register to vote at the polls – so just show up at the right polling site on election day and vote! You can find out loads of information on Secretary of State Michael Mauro's website: www.sos.state.ia.us/elections/index.html.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

After a year of meetings and thousands of volunteer and staff hours, the Legislature passed a massive Health Care Reform bill to help make health insurance more available, and more affordable, to those that are underinsured or uninsured. The first goal is making sure every child in Iowa has health care coverage.

The bill ([HF2539](#)) passed the Iowa Senate 37-6, and the Iowa House 93-3. It is now waiting for the Governor's signature. Only nine of the 150 legislators voted against the bill:

Sen. Jerry Behn (R-Boone)
 Sen. Nancy Boettger (R-Harlan)
 Sen. David Harsuch (R-Bettendorf)
 Sen. Steve Kettering (R-Lake View)
 Sen. Paul McKinley (R-Chariton)
 Sen. Brad Zaun (R-Urbandale)
 Rep. Dwayne Alons (R-Hull)
 Rep. Betty DeBoef (R-What Cheer)
 Rep. Scott Raecker (R-Urbandale)

A detailed chart prepared by the Iowa Department of Public Health is attached to this report.

CONTACTING THE GOVERNOR

The fate of the bills passed by the Legislature this year is now in the hands of Governor Culver. The Governor may sign these bills into law or keep them from becoming law by vetoing them.

The Governor also has a third option with budget bills – he can choose to sign any bill that spends money, while vetoing out sections of it (called a "line item" veto).

If you see a bill pending, you may want to let the Governor know how you feel about it. Here is how to reach Governor Culver now, and later this summer when you want to start encouraging the Governor to support your policy priorities in his 2009 budget recommendations:

You can call, write, or email Governor Culver here:

(515) 281-5211

www.governor.iowa.gov/administration/contact/

Governor Culver (or Lt. Governor Judge)
 Office of the Governor & Lt. Governor
 State Capitol
 Des Moines, Iowa 50319

BILL TRACKER

Bills Signed Into Law

[HF 2393](#) - Minority Impact Statements - Requires all applications for state grants to include a minority impact statement (written by the applicants) describing the proposal's unique impact on minority persons, reason for the proposal if there is an impact and evidence the applicant has consulted with representatives of the minority persons if there is an impact. Also requires that correctional impact statements on bills include information on the specific impact on minorities. Persons with disabilities are included in the definition of "minority." Effective for grant applications beginning 1/1/2009.

[HF 2423](#) - County MH/MR/DD Risk Pool - Changes the date for counties to apply for risk pool funds from January 25 to October 31, and requires the Risk Pool Board make its decisions by December 15 (instead of February 25). Requires payment to counties be by

January 1, instead of June 30. These changes help struggling counties get their money faster - which may help avoid cuts in services to people with disabilities. Effective 7/1/2008.

HF 2555 - Insurance Commissioner Bill - Makes a number of technical and policy changes to the work of the Insurance Commissioner, including the creation of an Insurance Consumer Advocate with the responsibility to ensure consumers receive fair treatment from the insurance industry and that unfair/deceptive practices are prevented. Requires annual reporting and makes information submitted confidential. States the information the Consumer Advocate is to report and gives it the authority to hold public hearings, take complaints, and conduct investigations. It does not grant any powers beyond investigation (so there are no teeth in the bill). Effective 7/1/2008.

HF 2591 - Dependent Adult Abuse - Expands protections for dependent adults and older Iowans who live in assisted living facilities, nursing homes and other care facilities, or are served by various supported community living programs. Requires the departments involved to communicate to each other to make sure things don't fall through the cracks. Expands the definitions of dependent adult abuse to include things like exploitation (including financial exploitation). Also gives some caretakers protections for accidental incidents that occur only once or twice in a five-year period (giving DHS the opportunity to determine if the injuries would be likely to reoccur, minor and/or isolated). Also requires police officers responding to domestic abuse calls be prepared to inform the dependent adult of their rights, services available to help them, and make reasonable efforts to prevent any further abuse (like remaining on the scene until the dependent adult is safe). Requires abuse investigators get special training. Effective 7/1/2008.

HF 2620 - Elections/Voter Registration - Requires all polling places be accessible to persons with disabilities and requires all polling places have voting equipment for use by voters with disabilities in counties where paper ballots are not used. Prohibits the use of cell phones, cameras, pagers, and other electronic communications while voting. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2054 - MH/MR/DD Funding (Late-Filing Counties) - Counties are required by law to report on how they spent their MH/MR/DD funds by December 1 each year. This bill allows a county (Clayton County) that filed their reports by March 15, 2008 to

still be eligible for MH/MR/DD allowed growth. Effective 2/4/2008.

SF 2089 - Absentee Ballot Applications - If this bill passes, people will be able to request an absentee ballot on any sheet of paper or on any form (right now you must use the "official" form). Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2101 - Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program Transfer - Moves the Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program from the Iowa Finance Authority to the Iowa Department of Education. Two years ago it was moved from the Department of Economic Development to the Iowa Finance Authority. This program helps people with disabilities start, maintain, and expand their own business. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2111 - Lead Blood Testing/Dental Screening Requirements - Last year, the Legislature required all parents have their children screened for lead poisoning and been seen by a dentist before enrolling in school. Lead poisoning can result in mental retardation and developmental delays and poor dental care can lead to serious health problems. This bill cleans up this requirement and allows children to be enrolled in school even if requirements are not met. Also requires schools to give the parents information about dental screening and lead screening resources in the community, including the free I-SMILE dental screening program. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2154 - Vertical Wheelchair Lift Definition - Updates the definition of "inclined or vertical wheelchair lift" to reflect the current American Society of Mechanical Engineers safety standards. Requires operating permits to be posted near these lifts. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2161 - Homelessness Council - Creates a 38-member council on homelessness, 26 of which shall be members of the general public appointed by the governor. The council is required to make annual recommendations to the governor regarding matters which impact homelessness, prepare and file with the governor and the general assembly a report on homelessness in Iowa, and assist in the completion of the state's continuum of care application to the United States department of housing and urban development. Requires a study of issues relating to low-income seniors and low-income persons with disabilities, including lack of affordable and dependable transportation and housing near work. The study is also to review issues related to low-income persons at risk of becoming homeless and

the availability of affordable rental housing and access to financing for low-income homebuyers. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2177 - Department of Public Health Program Revisions - Makes the brain injury diagnosis used for the Department of Public Health cost-share program the same as that for the Medicaid waiver for persons with brain injury. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2230 - Special Hunting Licenses/Persons with Disabilities & Terminally Ill - Allows the Natural Resources Commission to issue special nonresident turkey and deer hunting licenses to persons with a severe physical disability or a person who is terminally ill. Requires a physician to sign the application, and still requires the person to pay the license fee. Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2251 - Mandatory Eye Exams/School Enrollment - Directs AEAs to collaborate with local organizations to provide vision screenings to children ages 2 - 4. Requires a parent to get a student vision card when a child is registered for kindergarten or preschool, and requires that prior to being evaluated for special education services, a student must receive an eye exam by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist. Allows school districts to encourage a child to have an eye examination before receiving special education services (but it is not a requirement to receive special education). Makes it the parent's responsibility to get the child's eyes examined. Effective 7/1/2009. FISCAL IMPACT: Funding needed is \$298,300 to \$323,300 for FY09 and \$254,600 for FY10. Cost to insured parents or their third party payers is \$761,200 in FY09 and \$856,400 in FY10.

SF 2286 - Federal Block Grant Bill - Spends federal funds coming to the state for various purposes. Includes \$3,631,173 to community mental health centers and \$7,609,836 for MH/MR/DD/BI community service (local purchase of service). Effective 7/1/2008.

SF 2347 - Optical Scan Voting - Requires counties use accessible voting systems that are proven as reliable and have a paper record (optical scan voting systems that use electronic ballot marking devices that are ADA compatible). Gives counties \$4.9 million to help pay for these systems. Requires election personnel be trained on current laws and procedures in voting (continuing education program). Applies to elections starting November 4, 2008. Effective 4/1/2008.

SF 2430 - Individual Development Accounts & MicroEnterprise Development - Contains three components – expands the Community Attractions & Tourism (CAT) program to include river projects and extends the program for another two years; creates a micro-enterprise grant program to help communities grow by investing in very small businesses; and authorizes Individual Development Accounts to help low-income lowans save money for things that increase self-sufficiency (education, home ownership, business startups). Spends a total of \$2.875 million on these three components.
INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNTS:

Allocates \$150,000 for Individual Development Accounts, which are savings plans available to low income individuals, including persons with disabilities, to increase opportunities for self sufficiency by allowing them to save money for qualifying purchases, such as paying for educational expenses, buying a home or starting a small business. This bill adds cars and assistive technology to the list of things a person may buy with the money. Right now money in these accounts is tax-free, and they can be matched by the operating organizations (such as the credit unions participating). The organizations giving this match are given tax breaks for doing this. This bill makes a number of changes to these accounts - accounts may have only \$30,000 in them (lowered from \$50,000), administration of the program is moved from DHS to the Division of Community Action Agencies in the Department of Human Rights, and household income thresholds are to be determined by the Division with input from the Family Development & Self-Sufficiency (FADSS) Council. Also requires the Division to send out an RFP to select operating organizations, and gives organizations providing a match a full tax break (100% instead of 15-25%). Changes the current state match limit from \$2,000 per year to \$2,000 total. Requires the Division to work with Iowa's federal delegation to get a federal tax break on the money organizations give as match as well. **RIVER CAT:** Extends the CAT Program for another three years (\$12 million annually until June 30, 2013). Creates a new parallel program called the River Enhancement Community Attractions & Tourism Program (River CAT) and appropriates \$2 million to create and enhance community attractions and tourism opportunities along lakes, rivers, and river corridors in cities across the state. Projects may include (but are not limited to) pedestrian trails and walkways, amphitheatres, bike trails, water trails, whitewater courses, and modifications for safe mitigation of dams. **MICRO-ENTERPRISE GRANTS:** Earmarks \$475,000 to provide grants to organizations that assist micro-enterprises (businesses employing no

more than five people that generally lack collateral and have difficulty securing financing from conventional lending sources). Microenterprises include start-up, home-based, and self-employed businesses. Effective 7/1/2008 (except IDA section is effective 4/29/2008).

Bills Sent to Governor

HF 2407 - Accessible Parking Registration Fee - Currently, there is a \$60 annual registration fee for multi-purpose vehicles modified for persons with disabilities or used by persons in wheelchairs. This bill makes it apply to any vehicle or station wagon, not just multi-purpose vehicles (trucks, motor homes, ambulances, hearses, motorcycles, motorized bicycles are still not included).

HF 2539 - Health Care Reform - Declares the intent of the legislature to make progress toward all Iowans having health care insurance that meets certain criteria for quality and affordability, starting with children in 2011. Expands children's health insurance coverage up to 300% of the federal poverty level, and incorporates additional coverage strategies. Begins developing an alternative affordable health care plan offered to people above 300% of the federal poverty level on an unsubsidized basis through the Iowa Comprehensive Health Care Insurance Association, called the Iowa Choice Health Plan. Allows continued coverage of a dependent child up to age 25. Prohibits the use of pre-existing conditions when moving between plans, including to and from individual plans. Establishes groundwork for a medical home, electronic medical records, chronic care management, quality assurance through clinical outcomes and patient surveys, and greater transparency in health care. Works on strategies to improve direct care worker compensation and benefits, including a demonstration pilot on health care coverage for direct careworkers. Establishes new procedures and guidelines for end-of-life planning and care coordination. Includes community wellness grants to encourage healthier lifestyles. Requires the Insurance Commissioner to work with the industry to make health plans more uniform and provide better transparency to allow consumers to compare and manage costs. For more details, review the chart prepared by the IDPH and provided in the "End of Session Review."

HF 2660 - Justice Systems Budget - This budget funds Iowa's correctional system, as well as public safety programs and homeland security. It also gives money to pay for legal services to persons in poverty (\$2 million), the Office of the Consumer Advocate

(\$3.1 million) who helps provide consumer protection services, and the Civil Rights Commission (\$1.5 million) which gives people whose civil rights have been violated a place to be heard. All of these spending levels are the same as last year - no increase, but no decrease either.

HF 2663 - School Infrastructure Local Option (SILO) - This bill replaces the local option sales and services tax for school infrastructure purposes by increasing the state sales and use taxes from 5 percent to 6 percent, effective July 1, 2008. The increased use tax rate does not apply to the sale or lease of motor vehicles. The state sales and use tax rates are reduced from 6 percent to 5 percent on January 1, 2030. The increased state sales and use tax revenues are deposited into a new Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) fund to be distributed to all school districts. A statewide amount per pupil would be computed each fiscal year based upon the estimated amount that would have been generated by a 1 percent local sales and services tax divided by the combined enrollment of all school districts. Each district will receive an amount equal to the amount that it would have received under the formula if the local sales and services tax for school infrastructure was still imposed. The bill contains several related provisions.

HF 2679 - Education Budget - Spends \$988.9 million dollars on various education programs, an overall increase of \$5.5 million. No change in funding for the following: Department for the Blind (\$2.5 million); Vocational Rehabilitation (\$5.7 million); Entrepreneurs with Disabilities Program (\$200,000); IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act) funding (\$1.7 million); Center for Disabilities & Development at the University of Iowa (\$6.7 million); Employment Policy Group, used to be called Creative Employment Options (\$200,000); and Farmers with Disabilities Program initiated last year by Easter Seals (\$130,000). Gives the State School for the Deaf (\$10.1 million) and Braille & Sight Saving School (\$5.7 million) a 4% increase. Also makes a brand new appropriation of \$250,000 for a competitive grant for a single Center for Independent Living (the recipient is required to submit a written report detailing the use of the money by October 1, 2009). Includes new language stating the Legislature's intent to have community empowerment areas consider whether support services to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, prevent child injuries, develop health emergency protocols, help with medication, and care for children with special health needs are being provided to registered and licensed child care facilities.

HF 2694 - Long Term Care Insurance - Repeals existing regulatory requirements for long-term care insurance and replaces them with new policies going into affect on July 1, 2008. Includes new and additional definitions and expanded disclosure and performance standards for long-term care insurance. Allows consumers to return policies and receive a refund, requires written policy summaries to be provided to people buying long-term care insurance, requires written explanations for denials (within 60 days), requires prompt payment of claims, establishes a process for independent review of an insurer's benefit determination, establishes stiff penalties for long-term care insurance fraud, and appropriates \$60,000 for a Senior Health Insurance Information Program to get information about long-term health insurance out and raise public awareness of consumer choices when considering various insurance products designed to meet the health care needs of older Iowans. Effective 1/1/2009.

HF 2700 - Standings Budget - Spends \$289.5 million on various standing (automatic annual) appropriations, and makes dozens of corrections to bills already passed this session. This is also known as the "last train out of the station," so contains a number of statutory changes that didn't make it through the legislative process as stand-alone bills. Sets the FY10 mental health/developmental disabilities (MH/DD) allowed growth at 3%, or \$8.3 million more than FY09. The legislature decides on spending two years in advance for allowed growth, to give counties time to adjust their budgets and property taxes accordingly. Makes \$200,000 available to pay for deaf interpreters at the Iowa School for the Deaf and Iowa Western Community College. Allow legislators to use the April revenue estimates instead of the December estimates as required by law (which allows them to spend an extra \$48.6 million). Allows a legislator (and his/her family) to accept food and drink received as a part of an event to honor the legislator. Makes it illegal (consumer fraud) for a business to place an expiration date on a gift certificate or deduct money from the value of the gift certificate if not used by a certain time. Businesses will be required to send in unused gift certificate proceeds to the State under the Unclaimed Property statute, which will bring in an estimated \$3 million each year in unused gift certificates.

SF 2394 - Transportation Budget - To change in spending for transportation in next year's budget (which begins July 1, 2008), including the same level of spending on ADA improvements (\$120,000).

SF 2400 - Administration & Regulation Budget - Keeps funding the same for the next fiscal year (which begins on July 1, 2008) for the Department of Human Rights' Deaf Services Division (\$421,700) and Persons with Disabilities Division (\$217,221).

SF 2417 - Healthy Iowans Tobacco Trust Appropriations - Allocates \$35.4 million generated from Iowa's tobacco settlement (when states sued tobacco companies). No change in the spending levels from last year - State Supplementary Assistance (SSA) (\$182,381); tobacco use prevention (\$5.9 million); substance abuse treatment (\$13.8 million); substance abuse prevention for children (\$1.05 million); childhood lead poisoning prevention program (\$78,388); phenylketonuria (PKU) assistance to help parents pay for the costs of necessary special foods (\$100,000); MH/MR/DD Allowed Growth (\$146,750); and epilepsy association funding (\$100,000). Adds a new \$25,000 grant to a Linn County provider for support services for children with autism spectrum disorder and their families. Reaffirms that tobacco receipts are intended to be spent on health programs only, but eliminates the tobacco trust account as a separate pot of money and puts all tobacco settlement proceeds in the general fund beginning July 1, 2009.

SF 2418 - Voluntary/Free Income Tax Assistance Programs - Requires DHS to provide information about federal and state earned income tax credits to people receiving state assistance (hawk-i, Medicaid, family assistance program, food stamps, etc.). Requires services for volunteer/free income tax assistance programs be marketed to low-income persons. The earned income credit (EITC) is a tax credit for certain people who work and have low wages. A tax credit usually means more money in your pocket because it will either reduce the amount of tax you owe or mean you get a refund from the government. It is available to low-income working families and individuals, and many people filing their own taxes do not know about it.

SF 2425 - Health/Human Services Budget - Spends \$1.2 billion on various health and human services programs, an increase of \$31.1 million. **NEW APPROPRIATIONS:** Adds a new \$200,000 appropriation to replace lost federal funds for the Aging & Disability Resource Center. Makes a new appropriation of \$250,000 to implement the Family Opportunity Act to assist persons with disabilities and their family members achieve and maintain independence. Captures the \$6 million in interest from payments made to Magellan for the managed mental health contract and uses it to pay for:

Emergency Mental Health Crisis Services System (\$1.5 million, beginning 1/1/2009); School-Based Children's Mental Health System (\$500,000, beginning 1/1/2009); MH/MR/DD Risk Pool (\$1 million); reduce HCBS waiver waiting lists (\$2 million, allocated equally across all waiting lists); and reduction of the children's mental health waiting list (\$750,000). Prohibits Magellan from keeping the interest in the future and requires all future contracts to have this written into them. Spends the \$624,000 new MH/MR/DD property tax relief money generated from the sale of the Dwayne Arnold Nuclear Power Plant on Medicaid (instead of MH/MR/DD funding as proposed by the counties). Spends any money left over at the end of the year from MH/DD Community Services and the first \$300,000 left over at the end of the year from State Cases on substance abuse treatment (instead of reinvesting it in MH/MR/DD funding). ALLOWED GROWTH: Increases MH/MR/DD/BI services funding by \$8,119,862 (a total of \$54,081,310 - about 3%). Continues the \$12 million "leadership fund" for counties that have an ending fund balance below 10% and are levying the maximum (or levying 90% with a very high levy rate). Distribution formula remains the same. States that the Legislature intends to move back the year used for ending fund balances so that legislators may know exactly how much each county will receive before leaving the Capitol (because of the way budgeting works, legislators never know until the next legislative session how the formula turns out). Allows a two-year pilot project be implemented to allow a regional (multi-county) MH/MR/DD/BI service network administered through a risk-based contract with DHS. Counties in the pilot may pool their resources, waiver slots, and decategorize funding to the extent allowed. Allows counties to use the average of their levies and ending fund balances in order to access state allowed growth funding. MH/DS INTERIM: Requests an interim task force to consider county-state shared funding for mental health and disability services covered by the Medicaid program, consisting of legislators, DHS, counties, advocates (including a member of the Governor's DD Council), and providers. One person must be a consumer of county services. INCREASED SPENDING: Increases funding for State Supplementary Assistance by \$1.4 million (\$18.6 million total). Extends the personal needs allowance supplement to persons living in ICF/MIs or ICF/MRs (intermediate care facilities for mental retardation or mental illness). This allows persons with incomes to keep \$50/month, and those without an income to receive a \$50 allowance (or a supplement that brings up a person's income to \$50/month). This was previously only available to persons living in

nursing homes. MHIs are level funded but because of lost IowaCare funds, there is an increase of \$16.9 million in state funds. DECREASED SPENDING: Decreases funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (hawk-i) by \$1 million because of money expected to be left at the end of the year. Decreases funding to Glenwood by \$1.9 million (\$17.1 million total) and Woodward by \$1.77 million (\$11.3 million). SPENDING STAYS LEVEL: No change in spending on the Substitute Decision Maker program (\$250,000), Long Term Care Resident Advocate (\$130,000), dental services to indigent elderly and persons with disabilities (\$40,000), assistance to persons with phenylketonuria (PKU - \$100,000), brain injury resource facilitators (\$500,000), MH/DD Community Services (\$22,911,942), Day Care for Exceptional Children in Polk County (\$350,000 - but it was added this is a "one time grant"), Preparation for Adult Living (PALS) program (\$2.9 million), state cases (\$13.07 million), Iowa Compass (\$30,000), Prevention of Disabilities Council (\$57,000), rent reimbursement for persons who meet nursing facility level of care but instead wish to live in the community (\$700,000), child health specialty clinics (\$473,981), and the Family Support Subsidy (\$1.9 million - but does increase the amount dedicated to the Family Support Center component to \$433,212, an increase of \$100,000). Withholds family support subsidy payments to families who are appealing termination because a child has reached the age of 18, until the appeal is resolved. Uses the \$260,000 in community services money previously spent on the determination of a case rate to help offset the costs of the Iowa State Association of Counties' new MH/DD data management system. MEDICAID: Fully funds Medicaid by increasing spending by \$32,857,449 (total \$649.6 million), including an increase of 2% for consumer directed attendant care (\$121,285). Gives all Medicaid providers a 1% increase in reimbursement rates, including nursing facilities, home health providers, and remedial services providers. Leaves mental health and behavioral health drugs OFF the preferred drug list, allowing doctors to continue to prescribe the medications they think are best for their patients (rather than the cheapest). Requires DHS review all Medicaid Home & Community Based Services waivers to compare services provided and reimbursements made (report due to legislators on 12/15/2008). Transfers the Brain Injury program in the Department of Public Health to the Department of Human Services, by merging it with the BI Waiver. Requires all of the money previously expended on the separate program be spent on waiver slots for persons with Brain Injuries (\$2.5 million). MISCELLANEOUS CHANGES: Allows marriage and

family therapists and licensed master social workers to be reimbursed by Medicaid for services provided. Adds a member to the MH/MR/DD/BI Commission - someone from the Iowa Behavioral Health Association. Maintains charge to DPH to enhance workforce competencies of behavioral health staff in various areas, including treatment of persons with serious mental illness, veterans, children with mental health or substance abuse disorders, and persons with co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders. IOWA AUTISM COUNCIL: Creates a new 13-member Autism Council to advise the state in developing and implementing a comprehensive, coordinated system to provide appropriate diagnostic, intervention, and support services for children with autism and to meet the unique needs of adults with autism. Members are to include autism specialists, persons with expertise in best practices in diagnosing, treating and educating individuals with autism, residential service providers, mental health professionals with expertise in autism, private insurers, and teachers/AEA representatives. Also includes state agencies representatives, including the Governor's DD Council. TUITION ASSISTANCE FOR PEOPLE SERVING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES: Establishes a statewide pilot program to give grants to community colleges that award tuition assistance to students enrolled in a health care workforce training course and working part-time at a health care facility that provides services to adults with mental illness or mental retardation. Requires dollar-for-dollar match of state dollars. DEPENDENT ADULT ABUSE CHECKS: Requires hospitals do background checks on criminal, child abuse, and dependent adult abuse registries for all employees. Persons with a founded child or dependent adult abuse record may not be employed by the hospital unless they are cleared by a state investigation that considers the severity of the charge, circumstances, and time elapsed. Also requires these checks for homemaker home health aide, adult day services, home-care aides, other in-home services providers, elder group homes, assisted living programs, hospices, and providers of direct services to consumers under the Medicaid Home & Community Based Services waiver. DEATH INVESTIGATION: Requires the county medical examiner to conduct a preliminary investigation for all deaths at a state resource center or MHI, paid for by DHS. Currently this is only done when the death is sudden or mysterious. Allows a parent, guardian or other person responsible for a patient who dies at a private institution for persons with mental retardation to request preliminary investigation by the county medical examiner, even if it is not sudden or mysterious. The family or person requesting is

responsible for costs associated with the request. MHIs are required to send (within three days of the date of death) the cause of ANY death to the nearest relative, clerk of court, and county sheriff. EMERGENCY CRISIS MENTAL HEALTH: Enacts the Emergency Mental Health Crisis Services System, but requires it be implemented by DHS in cooperation with the counties, providers and advocates. The intent is to create a statewide system to respond to persons with mental illness that are in crisis 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The program will start off as a pilot project. Community mental health centers (or providers identified by the county as providing services instead of a community mental health center), a county or city, or any other public/private provider who is approved by the Department of Human Services may apply for grants. The services system must at a minimum: be regional (serve more than one county); coordinate with other providers in the area, the county central point of coordination (CPC), community-based corrections, the courts, and law enforcement; include basic services such as face-to-face crisis intervention, stabilization, support, counseling, preadmission screening for persons requiring psychiatric hospitalization, transportation, and follow-up services; and include telephone hotlines, mobile crisis staff, collaboration protocols, follow-up with community services, information systems, and competency-based training. CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH: Requires DHS to create a mental health services system for children (0-18 years old) and youth (18-22 years old who met the criteria for "serious emotional disturbance" before they turned 18). Defines what is a "qualifying mental health disorder." The purpose of this new system of care is to improve access for children and youth with serious emotional disturbances and youth with other qualifying mental health disorders to mental health treatment, services, and other support in the least restrictive setting possible so the children and youth can live with their families and remain in their communities. Makes DHS the lead agency for the new system. Uses competitive block grants through existing community mental health centers and other local service providers to assist in the creation of this network. Directs DHS to analyze options for leveraging additional Medicaid options, and engaging local school, child welfare, juvenile justice, mental health, and health care professionals. Certain services, such as school-based mental health services and the development of mental health assessment capacity based in public schools and clinical settings, are required to be supported through the block grants. The services supported may also include other services such as mobile crisis

intervention services and prevention-oriented services. Requires regular reports to the MH/MR/DD/BI Commission. **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION INTERIM STUDY**: Requests an interim committee to conduct a comprehensive study on the ways in which mass transit may be used to provide public transportation services among Iowa communities, including availability and benefits to the poor, elderly, and persons with disabilities.

COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH LAW UPDATE: Requires the MH/MR/DD/BI Commission and the Division of Mental Health & Disability Services to appoint a stakeholder advisory committee to develop a proposal to update laws related to the Community Mental Health Centers, including laws related to establishment of centers, services offered, consumer and family involvement, capability of addressing co-occurring disorders, organization and powers, programs, populations served, evidence-based practices, and the use of functional assessments and outcomes measures. Allows DHS to defer on any requests for CMHC status until the group has completed its work.

SF 2432 - RIIF (Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund)

Budget - Spends \$484.1 million on various infrastructure projects, and authorizes \$130.7 million in bonds to build a new prison. Appropriates \$170,000 to continue the free Capitol bus shuttle service operated by the Des Moines Area Regional Transit (DART) system. This free service allows people to park in a free parking garage a few blocks from the Capitol and get a free ride to the Capitol (a good deal since all parking, including accessible parking, is limited). Spends \$10 million/year for four years on a new program to develop recreational opportunities around Iowa's rivers and lakes. Continues to spend \$1 million to improve technology in public libraries. Cuts the funding provided to nursing homes for facility improvements by \$400,000 (total \$600,000). Makes a new \$130,000 appropriation for a child and adult program dedicated to preserving sight and preventing blindness through education, vision screening and training, and community and patient service programs. This grant will go to a national affiliated volunteer eye organization. Makes new \$15,000 appropriate for a seven-county Community Family Resource Drug Center to provide combined drug and gambling treatment in Webster, Calhoun, Hamilton, Humboldt, Pocahontas, Wright and Story counties. Finally, spends \$869,748 to make renovations to dorms for the Department for the Blind/Sight-Saving School.

Adopted Resolutions

HR 119 - Insurance Consumer Protection

Resolution - Tells Congress that the Iowa Legislature is against any federal legislation that would limit the state's ability to regulate the insurance industry, as currently proposed in federal bills S.40 and [H.R. 3200](#). Says states are better at protecting their people from insurance fraud.

HR 144 - Special Olympics Global Messenger

Honored - Honors Tyler Joseph Steinke for becoming the youngest Global Messenger for Special Olympics Iowa (at the age of 10). Global messengers are athletes who help spread the message and vision of the Special Olympics, and talk about the benefits of participating in the event.

SR 101 - Employment of Persons with Disabilities

- States that it is a priority of the Legislature to make sure there is a stable and quality direct-support workforce for individuals with disabilities. This resolutions makes the following statements: There are more than 115,000 Iowans with developmental disabilities, many of whom depend on the support of their families, communities, providers, and caregivers. Turnover rates of direct-support workers are 40-75% and high job vacancy rates make it difficult for providers to ensure quality care. Iowans with disabilities that wish to work and live in their own homes, in their own communities, need a reliable and quality support system.

Dead Bills

A complete list of bills that did not pass the Legislature can be found here:

www.infonetiowa.com/current_issue/dead_bills.php

infoNET is a publication of the Iowa Governor's Developmental Disabilities Council, and is a part of the ID Action initiative. infoNET is written through a contract with Campbell/Patterson Consulting (info@campbell-patterson.com).

Find more resources online at www.infonetiowa.org.

Health Care Reform (HF 2539)

The full report is available online at www.infonetiowa.com/current_issue/issues_and_policy_briefs.php

	HF 2539 Conference Committee Report	Appropriations
Health Care Coverage Intent	It is the intent of the General Assembly that all Iowans will have health care coverage. The first priority is covering all children eligible for Medicaid or <i>hawk-i</i> by Jan. 1, 2011. <i>hawk-i</i> is expanded to include children in families earning less than 300% of the federal poverty level (FPL) by July 1, 2009. An appropriate cost sharing will be established for families with incomes above 200% of the FPL.	
<i>hawk-i</i> and Medicaid Expansion	<p>Effective July 1, 2009, Medicaid is expanded to include infants whose families are at or below 300% FPL. In addition, gives all children 12-month continuous eligibility for Medicaid (so they only have their family incomes verified once/year).</p> <p>Beginning for tax year 2008, Iowans who file an individual or joint income tax return may state if their dependents have health care coverage. If the taxpayer indicates a lack of coverage and is below the financial limit for <i>hawk-i</i> eligibility, DHS let the taxpayer know that his/her child/children may be eligible for Medicaid or <i>hawk-i</i> and how the family can enroll.</p> <p>Requires DHS is to develop options and recommendations to allow children eligible for <i>hawk-i</i> or <i>hawk-i</i> Expansion to participate in qualified private insurance through a premium assistance program. Options and recommendations are due to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1, 2009 as part of the <i>hawk-i</i> Expansion programs.</p>	<p>Covering Children: Funding for FY09 and FY10 is dependent legislative action to cover all children:</p> <p>FY09: \$4.8M FY10: \$14.8M FY11: \$24.8M</p>
Iowa Choice Health Care Coverage and Advisory Council	<p>Establishes the Iowa Choice Health Care Coverage Advisory Council to assist the Iowa Comprehensive Health Insurance Association with developing a comprehensive health care coverage plan. This includes what a "qualified health care plan" might include, suggestions on designing health care options, and implementing the requirement that people report whether or not they have insurance. Membership includes former Governors Terry Branstad and Tom Vilsack, the Insurance Commissioner, two state agency directors (DHS & DPH), seven members appointed by DPH, and four legislators (who are non-voting members).</p> <p>Instructs the Iowa Comprehensive Health Insurance Association to work with the Iowa Health Care Coverage Advisory Council to develop a comprehensive plan to cover all children without health care coverage, looking for ways to provide private unsubsidized (no state assistance) coverage to any Iowan. Existing public programs could be used or modified to meet this goal, and is to be available for purchase starting January 1, 2010. The plan developed to cover kids by this group will consider and recommend options to provide access to private, unsubsidized coverage to children less than 19 years of age with family income greater than 300% FPL and to adults and families not otherwise eligible for coverage through public programs.</p>	
Health Insurance Oversight	Gives the Insurance Commissioner oversight on health plans to promote uniformity, cost efficiency, openness, and fairness for physicians and hospitals, and to improve administration of plans while minimizing costs to health care providers and insurers.	\$80,000 to Insurance Division
Iowa Health Information Technology System	Electronic Health Information Advisory Council is established under IDPH to direct a public and private collaborative to promote the use of health information technology in Iowa. The group will develop a statewide health information technology plan by July 1, 2009, which should include a way for health professionals to share a person's health records. Hospitals will be allowed to use the state-owned fiber optic network (Iowa Communications Network, or ICN) to collect, maintain, and send health and financial data. The Iowa Hospital Association will be responsible for all costs associated with becoming part of the ICN.	\$190,000 to Department of Public Health
Long-Term Living Planning and Patient	Directs the Department of Elder Affairs (DEA) to work with various organizations to develop end-of-life care decision-making materials for terminally ill patients and health care professionals. Also directs DEA to research existing long-term living planning tools and recommends a public education campaign strategy on long-term living by January 1, 2009. Requires DEA, to work with the	End of Life Care: \$10,000 to DEA

Patient Autonomy in Health Care	Insurance Commissioner to implement the public education campaign. DEA is also asked to work with other public and private agencies to identify resources that may be used to continue the work of the Aging and Disability Resource Center beyond the federal grant period ending September 30, 2008.	Long-Term Care Education: \$75,000 to DEA
Health Care Coverage	<p>Directs the Insurance Commissioner to help employers with 25 or fewer employees start up so-called “cafeteria plans” that provide medical expense reimbursement accounts and dependent care accounts to employees.</p> <p>Requires health insurance plans to continue covering a dependent child until s/he is 25 years old, unless the dependent child marries, ceases to be a resident of the state, or turns 25, whichever occurs first, or as long as the unmarried child maintains full-time status as student. This provision applies to group and individual insurance plans for public and private employees.</p> <p>Prohibits insurance companies from excluding pre-existing conditions when moving between plans, including individual plans. This only applies if a person has been insured within the last 63 days – if someone has not had insurance within 63 days, pre-existing conditions the person may still be denied coverage for pre-existing conditions. Applies to policies or contracts renewed or starting on or after July 1, 2008.</p>	
Medical Home	<p>Establishes the Medical Home System Advisory Council to assist in the development and implementation of a statewide patient-centered medical home system in Iowa, where a primary care physician manages a person’s care and is rewarded in some way for better outcomes. Defines a primary care provider as a family care or general practitioner, a pediatrician, an internist, an obstetrician, or a gynecologist, an advanced registered nurse practitioner, a physician assistant, or a chiropractor, all of whom must meet certification standards. The Governor’s DD Council has a representative on this Council.</p> <p>Phases the “medical home” concept in over time, starting with children eligible for Medicaid and moving to adults enrolled in IowaCare or Medicaid, and kids enrolled in <i>hawk-i</i> and privately insured and self-insured adults. State agencies will work together to find a way to extend the medical home concept to state employees. Changes date for implementation of the dental home initiative to December 31, 2010 and clarifies that EPSDT services are required.</p>	\$165,600 to Department of Public Health
Prevention & Chronic Care Mgt.	<p>Establishes Prevention and Chronic Care Management Advisory Council to develop a state initiative for chronic care management (ways to manage chronic diseases to improve health, such as controlling diabetes and heart disease).</p> <p>Requires a Clinicians Advisory Panel be appointed to advise and recommend clinically appropriate, evidence-based best practices regarding the implementation of the patient-centered medical home and the prevention and chronic care management initiative.</p>	\$190,500 to Department of Public Health
Family Opportunity Act	The Family Opportunity Act in DHS, which applies to persons with disabilities under the Medicaid program, was passed last year and is amended to say that this Act will be implemented on January 1, 2009.	\$250,000 in the HHS Budget (SF 2425)
Medicaid Quality Improve	Establishes the Medicaid Quality Improvement Council to evaluate clinical outcomes and consumer and provider satisfaction with Medicaid. The Council will advise the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise in establishing a quality assessment and improvement process beginning June 30, 2009.	
Health & Long-Term Care Access	Requires the development of a statewide health care delivery infrastructure and health care workforce resources strategic plan, to make sure there are people and resources available around the state to deliver health care services to people. The Department of Public Health is to gather information on an ongoing basis to help meet this requirement.	\$172,200 to Department of Public Health

Prevention & Wellness Initiatives	<p>Funds community wellness grants to be distributed by IDPH and the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition to assist in implementation of the Iowans Fit for Life plan, establishment of a best practices Web site, and oversight for the Governor's physical fitness challenge.</p> <p>Requires IDPH, in consultation with the Insurance Division and the Department of Revenue, to develop a plan for small business tax credits for qualified wellness programs. Plan due to the Governor and General Assembly by December 15, 2008.</p>	<p>Healthy Communities: \$900,000 to DPH</p> <p>Physical Fitness Council: \$112,100</p>
Health Care Openness	<p>Requires that each nonprofit hospital to report on the salaries and benefits paid to its officers, directors, trustees, and key employees, and highest compensated employees.</p> <p>A healthcare quality and cost transparency workgroup is established to develop recommendations for legislation and policies regarding health care quality and cost including measures to provide transparency to consumers. Those measures are to be endorsed by the National Quality Forum.</p>	
Direct Care Workforce	<p>Establishes the Direct Care Worker Advisory Council to advise on regulation and certification of direct care workers based on the work of the Direct Care Workers Task Force. Establishes a Compensation Advisory Committee to review wages and turnover rates of direct care workers in an institutional and home and community-based setting and requires the modification of the Nursing Facilities Turnover Report to include direct care workers. Requires the report to be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly annually, with an initial report due December 1, 2008.</p> <p>Requires DHS to establish an employer-sponsored health care coverage demonstration project for direct care workers.</p>	



A project of the Governor's DD Council & ID Action

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