

Legislative Update

The 2018 Iowa Legislative Session

Week of February 19, 2018

Last week in the Iowa Legislature

With the first funnel behind them, legislators focused on debating and passing bills through their respective chambers. The House and Senate debated and passed mostly non-controversial legislation all four days last week. Wednesday night was an exception as Senate Republicans brought up a few bills that generated partisan tensions. Committees, which just a week ago had been the Legislature's main attraction, were either cancelled or performed perfunctory business.

Tax Reform

Senate Republicans introduced their reform legislation last week, held a subcommittee on Thursday morning and passed it through Ways & Means Thursday afternoon. The bill, labored over since probably December, cuts corporate and individual income taxes, sunsets tax credit programs and broadens the applicability of the sales tax. Democrats have opposed the bill on fiscal responsibility grounds, arguing the state cannot afford such deep cuts when revenues have been so low and unpredictable.

The Senate Republicans' bill differs from the governor's—which has yet to receive a hearing in the Senate. The House Republicans are close to releasing their tax bill, which is expected to be less ambitious than the Senate's and more closely resemble the governor's plan. Nevertheless, it may contain important differences from the other two. Among the three Republican-controlled institutions, the fault lines on tax policy appear to be whether: (1) corporate income taxes are addressed (2) tax credit programs are addressed and (3) tax cuts are conditioned on revenue “triggers” or cut without regard to state revenues.

Deappropriation

The intraparty acrimony over the deappropriation has dragged into the session's seventh week, with the House and Senate still unable to agree on a budget package for this fiscal year. It appears, at this point, that the Republicans will wait until the March 9 Revenue Estimating Conference meeting to decide how much to cut FY 2018 spending or, perhaps, whether to cut it at all. The effects of the federal tax reform law are likely enhancing state revenues. Even though Republican leaders said they wouldn't rely on the federal tax reform's windfall as a crutch for this year's budget, it appears they may do exactly that.

Looking Ahead

This week will be similar to last week, but committees will begin to meet and pass bills again as legislation from the opposite chamber gets passed over and referred to committee. Budget

subcommittees, which sat completely idle last week, are scheduled to meet too for their final week. Committee work will increase again especially after this week; the next funnel deadline is March 16.

Key Initiatives

The E911 legislation (SF 2307 & HF 2254) received no legislative attention last week. A fiscal note was published, however, which you can find here:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/FN/924271.pdf>

The AS team will follow up with Sen. Dawson this week about the status of talks with IPERS about a study on protected status for dispatchers. The senator told us he was engaging IPERS on that, but he stressed it will be important of dispatchers to engage and participate in that discussion when it begins.

Bills of Interest

Like sessions past, Advocacy Strategies will be tracking all bills pertaining to you. Along with this document, please find an attached excel spreadsheet with the bills you have registered for or we are waiting for a declaration. Please review this and confirm your declarations are correct. Please let us know if there are any changes that need to be made.

Housekeeping

Our ability to best represent you is based on quick and open communication. Once the legislative session progresses further, our requests for bill declarations will increase substantially. **We would ask that you let us know your organization's position on each bill within 24 hours of our notification to you so we can respond accordingly.** Each bill we send your organization automatically generates a registration of "undecided" on that bill. This allows us to lobby on the bill or to attend a subcommittee on your behalf. But whatever your organization's stance may be, please communicate it to us (even if the stance is "undecided") so we can register properly and most effectively represent your interests.

Dates to Note

- March 16: Second funnel deadline (10th week)
- April 17th: 100th calendar day of the session; legislators' per diem expires.

Please feel free to contact the Advocacy Strategies Team with any questions, comments, or concerns. We are pleased to be representing your interests during the 2018 legislative session and throughout the year. Contact information for your lobbying team follows. We look forward to a successful session and working with you in the days ahead.

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