

**3/29/18, Week 12****In this Issue:**

Budget Stalls.....	P. 1
Bill Movement.....	P.1
Mental Health.....	P. 2
District 25 Race.....	P.3
TIF Bill.....	P. 3
Forums.....	P. 3
In the News.....	P. 3

**Budget Progress Stalls**

Budget targets have not been agreed to by the House and Senate, most likely due to different ideas on the tax reform and a lack of consensus on next year's revenue amount. Without joint budget targets, each chamber could release their own budgets, which amounts to a fruitless budget that must be negotiated to reflect each chambers priorities. Legislators remain hopeful that targets and tax reform can be agreed-upon by next week, which could still allow for an on-time adjournment.

**Bills Continue to Move**

Several bills completed their journey through the House and Senate this week making their way to the Governor. Below is a list of a few bills that made progress.

- The Governor signed the “deappropriations” bill this week. The bill makes about \$25.5 million in cuts in the current budget. Brenna Smith, the press secretary for Governor Reynolds, said that Governor Reynolds is “pleased to balance the state’s budget.” The bill increases cuts to the University of Iowa and Iowa State by \$2 million, for a total of \$10.933 million. Representative Grassley, who managed the bill in the House, said that the decision to cut the UI and ISU was in part due to those schools not collecting sales taxes on the sale of some educational materials to students.
- The House and Senate have both approved [SF 2349](#), a bill that allows for employers to form associations for the sole reason to provide health insurance to its employees, former employees, family members, etc. Additionally, the bill allows Farm Bureau to partner with Wellmark to offer insurance to its members. The bill now goes to the Governor.
- The Governor’s Future Ready Iowa priority, [HF 2458](#), is on its way to the Governor as both the Senate and House passed the bill. A priority of the Governor’s, it is a bill that provides a mechanism to ensure Iowans are educated and/or skilled for high-demand jobs throughout the state.
- The Governor signed [HF 2305](#), a bill that provides telehealth coverage parity bill for commercial payers. The bill requires health insurance plans to provide telehealth coverage parity, meaning they have to consistently provide similar plans the same coverage.
- The governor signed [HF 2309](#), a bill that requires the Department of Human Services to consult with stakeholders and look at options for the paying nursing home expenses for a Medicaid/Medicare member who is receiving the hospice benefit to allow the Medicaid MCOs to reimburse the nursing homes directly. Both chambers have passed the bill and it now goes to the governor.
- The Governor signed [HF 2356](#), a bill that provides clarity for direct care agreements for primary care services. Physicians would be able to contract with

their patients to provide for primary care services, outside of a traditional insurance contract. The patient would pay a predetermined fee for this arrangement and would have increased access to their physician.

- The House and Senate have passed, [SF 2347](#), a bill that deals with the importation of alcohol by increasing the limits individuals can bring into the state of Iowa. The House amended the bill to take the charge for a person violating the law to a simple misdemeanor. The bill now goes to the Governor.
- The Governor signed [HF 2253](#), a bill that requires competitive bidding on private property to be lease-purchased by governmental entities.

## **Governor Signs Mental Health Legislation**

Gov. Kim Reynolds signed [House File 2456](#), a comprehensive mental health bill. In her Condition of the State address in January, the governor called for legislation that identifies and addresses the gaps in Iowa's mental health system. The mental health bill began as a roadmap, created by the Complex Service Needs Workgroup to develop a more complete mental health system in Iowa. It involved stakeholders from across the state including providers, law enforcement, advocates and state and county officials. "This legislation was pushed over the finish line by individuals and families who knew firsthand the importance of having a robust mental health system and the pain caused when services they or a loved one needed weren't there," Gov. Reynolds said. "I know we can do better, and with this legislation, we will do better!"



House File 2456 continues the modernization of Iowa's mental health system that began in 2013. It ensures expanded services are available for Iowans in their own communities. Access centers will provide short-term care for those in crisis and will have the resources needed to get Iowans back home to their families. Assertive community treatment (ACT) teams will provide individualized treatment and support to individuals with mental illness in their homes, 365 days a year. Comprehensive crisis services will include a 24-hour crisis hotline, mobile response and crisis stabilization services. Intensive residential service homes will provide individuals with severe and persistent mental illness with the chance to live with dignity in their own homes. The Complex Service Needs Workgroup will also continue to assess the involuntary commitment process, the need for tertiary care hospitals and sustainable funding structures for the mental health system.

## **Senate District 25 Race**

Republicans have nominated Annette Sweeney to run for the open seat in Senate District 25; Democrats have nominated Tracy Freese. The special election for the seat, which opened up when Senator Dix resigned, is April 10. The winner will serve until the start of the next General Assembly in 2019. Both candidates are on the ballot for the November election. Freese is unopposed in her primary for the Democratic nomination. Sweeney will face Chad Buss in a primary in June. Senate 25 includes all of Hardin and Grundy counties, and southern and eastern Story County and southeastern Butler. Registration numbers in the district favor Republicans (8,258

Democrats to 16,275 Republicans).

### **TIF Bill Advances**

The House held a subcommittee on [HSB 681](#). The bill removes county and school foundation levy dollars from TIF districts, this minimizes the total dollars cities and other entities can use from TIF projects. It excludes the school district foundation property tax imposed under Code section 257.3 and taxes for county basic levies imposed under Code section 331.423 from the division of revenue under Code section 403.19 (tax increment financing). Under the bill, such taxes are not divided and paid into the municipality's special fund for the payment of urban renewal indebtedness but instead are required to be levied, collected, and paid to the school district or county in the same manner as all other property taxes.

The bill also authorizes a school district board of directors to voluntarily transfer to the municipality all or a portion of the foundation property taxes that would otherwise have been deposited into the municipality's urban renewal special fund but for the exclusion in the bill. However, amounts voluntarily transferred by a school district are not to be considered a reduction in the amount of foundation property tax received by the school district and do not result in an increase in the amount of school foundation aid received by the school district. The two Republicans, Reps. Deyoe and Taylor voted in approval, while the Democrat, Rep. Winckler, voted against the bill. The bill now goes to full committee.

### **Forums**

Below are links to calendars containing information for legislative forums. As more forums are published, more links will be available.

<a href="#">House Democrat Legislative Forums</a>
<a href="#">Senate Democrat Legislative Forums</a>
<a href="#">Senate Republican Legislative Forums</a>

### **In the News**

1. [Utilities Legislation Faces Criticism](#)
2. [Medical Marijuana Sale in Iowa Advances](#)
3. [Corbett Booted from the Ballot](#)
4. [Greenfield rejected from the ballot](#)