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Funnel Week Next Week

Next Friday marks the end of the first legislative funnel. This date is important because any non-appropriation or Ways and Means bill that hasn't been voted out of one chamber's full committee is considered dead and not considered, at least in that form, for remainder of the year. This week the Capitol was busy with many subcommittees meeting in an attempt to clear the, above described, legislative funnel. Next week, committees will meet to clear a large list of bills to ensure their priority bills survive the funnel. The second legislative funnel is scheduled for March 16 and is the inverse of the first funnel—bills coming out of one full chamber must be out of the other chambers full committee.

Deappropriations

On Thursday the Senate passed their deappropriations bill ([SF 2117](#)) on a party-line vote (29-21). The Senate Republican's original deappropriations package would have cut almost \$50 million from the state's current fiscal year; however, the bill passed today trims state spending by \$31.9 million. The deappropriations bill does not cut appropriations for K-12 schools, the Iowa State Patrol, Medicaid, or state aid to local governments related to property taxes. Significant cuts in the Senate bill include: \$14.6 million for the Board of Regents, reduced general aid to community colleges by \$3.6 million, Department of Education by \$1.2 million, Iowa judicial branch \$1.6 million, Department of Human Services by \$6.2 million, and \$3.4 million from the Department of Corrections.

The House released its deappropriations bill this week, [HSB 648](#), which cuts \$42.8 million from the current fiscal year. This bill parcels out its cuts much differently than the Senate bill. The House proposal would cut community colleges by only \$500,000, \$8.1 million from the Board of Regents, \$4.3 million from the Department of Human services, \$3.4 million from the Department of Corrections, \$10 million from the Economic Development High Quality Jobs Program, the judicial branch by \$2 million, and doesn't cut Medicaid or K-12 funding.

While negotiations continue between the chambers, consensus on the proposed cuts to the current fiscal year have yet to be reached. With both chambers proposals out, legislators will begin feeling the pinch from constituents effected by the cuts; all the more reason to pass the bill out as soon as possible.

House and Senate at Stalemate on School State Aid

This week, both chambers attempted to pass [HF 2230](#), a bill that sets school state aid (SSA) at 1%. This is legislatively required to be set within the first 30 days of session. However, the Senate amended the bill with an amendment that would add about \$14

million to the state's budget in transportation equity relief. The House refused to concur with the Senate amendment and the chambers are currently unable to find consensus.

The 1% SSA increase amounts to approximately \$32 million. Representative Dolecheck managed the bill on the House floor and said that the 1% increase would likely account for 40% of the new money available in the FY 19 budget. This is notable as a significant portion of any "new" money will be spent on K-12 education funding.

Bill to Bring Dave and Buster's to Iowa Advances

The legislature is considering two bills that would increase the value of prizes won in establishments like Dave and Buster's. The current state cap is at \$100, this bill would move that cap to \$950. The chain restaurant/arcade, Dave and Busters, has plans to move two of their chains into the state but believe the current state cap restricts their ability to enter into the Iowa market; current prizes available at these places in other state include items like iPads and PlayStations, these prizes would obviously fall well outside of the state's cap on prizes as currently defined. This establishment would bring 160 jobs per facility and a huge influx of sales and property taxes. Although the comparison is apples to oranges as none of the games at these facilities spit out cash and you cannot redeem cash with your tickets, some casinos are critical of these efforts. The House File, HF 2282 has advanced out of committee and SSB 3023 is awaiting a hearing in the full Senate State Government Committee.

Bill Requiring Stores to Sell Conventional Eggs Advances

The legislature is considering bills that would require grocery stores to continue selling conventional eggs. These bills, [SSB 3145](#) and [HSB 623](#), seek to address concerns around affordable access to eggs for Iowans. Several grocery chains have plans to stop selling conventional eggs and only sell specialty eggs (i.e. free-range eggs, cage-free eggs). These specialty eggs run approximately \$3-4 more per dozen than conventional eggs. Proponents of the legislation argue that when grocers refuse to sell conventional eggs, the overall price of eggs increases due to suppressed production of eggs (i.e. supply goes down, price goes up). Additionally, Iowans who utilize the WIC program are unable to buy specialty eggs due to Federal rules—creating an additional barrier to vulnerable Iowans. The bill passed out of the Senate committee this week and is awaiting a hearing in the House.

Majority of Iowans want to Maintain the Bottle Bill

Several ideas from various groups have floated through the General Assembly over the last two years regarding the way the State handles its can/bottle deposit law. Grocery stores would favor eliminating the current 5 cent deposit system, while conservation groups favor continuing the program. Recently, a bipartisan group of more than 40 House members co-sponsored [House File 2155](#), which would expand the beverage container law to include water, juice and sports drink bottles. The bill has not had a subcommittee, and would need to move through a subcommittee and full committee prior to next Friday (the first legislative funnel) to remain viable.

Notably, an Iowa poll recently conducted in Iowa shows 30% supports keeping the law the way it is, 27% support expanding the law to include juice and water bottles, 22% support eliminating the deposit program and replacing it with recycling programs, and 16% support moving it out of grocery stores and into community

Forums

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

House Democrat Legislative Forums
Senate Democrat Legislative Forums
Senate Republican Legislative Forums

In the News

1. [Wellmark to Sell ACA Insurance in 2019](#)
2. [Dave and Busters Says Iowa Law is Keeping them from the State](#)
3. [Fight Over Bus Money Delays School Aid Number Being Set](#)
4. [Bill Would Dictate Type of Eggs Sold in Stores](#)
5. [Reynolds Re-Election Vulnerable?](#)