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Contact Information

David Adelman
 515-491-1015 (m)
dadelman@cgagroup.com

Matt Hinch
 202-365-9449 (m)
mhinch@cgagroup.com

Frank Chiodo
 515-778-5245 (m)
fchiod@cgagroup.com

Sara Allen
 515-778-9516 (m)
sallen@cgagroup.com

Week in Review

Week 6 of the General Assembly was busy with subcommittee and committee meetings. Legislators are trying to get their business done before the first funnel of the session. The pace will continue to move at a fast pace as we approach the March 5 funnel date.

Discussions on broadband expansion continue at the Capitol. The focus is now on the speed requirements for businesses to qualify for the state grants. The Governor’s proposal requires 100 megabytes/second upload and download speeds to be eligible for the grants. Various development groups are in favor of the increased speeds to ensure stability for the future of broadband in Iowa. Several providers expressed concerns about having the technology bring those speeds to areas in Iowa with their current capabilities. The Senate Commerce committee passed the Governor’s proposal out of committee on Tuesday. Read more [here](#).

A Senate subcommittee moved [SF 193](#) to the full Human Resources committee for consideration this week. This bill would prohibit hospitals and other health care facilities from discriminating against employees or terminating employees for refusing vaccinations and would prohibit the facilities from turning away patients based on vaccination refusals. This bill also expands childhood vaccination exemptions to include “conscientiously held beliefs” with the religious and medical exemptions already in place. Moreover, SF193 would amend the Iowa Civil Rights Act to protect against discrimination based on vaccination status and prevents health insurance companies from denying coverage based on vaccination status. All healthcare professionals and public health organizations voiced concerns as well as various prominent businesses and their associations. More information on the bill can be found [here](#).

The House Human Resource held a subcommittee for [HF 517](#), non-economic damages caps in medical malpractice claims, on Tuesday. The bill sets a hard cap of \$1 million dollars for non-economic damages in medical malpractice claims after the Legislature enrolled language establishing a soft cap in 2017. The bill passed out of subcommittee earlier this week on a 2-1 partisan vote. The full Human Resources committee voted on the bill Thursday (13-7) and advanced the legislation to the full House debate calendar. It is unclear when the House will debate the bill on the floor.

The Governor held a press conference on Wednesday discussing the state’s continued response to the COVID pandemic and vaccine distribution. The CDC currently has Iowa at 22nd in vaccination distribution. Vaccine allocation across the nation is set to increase in the coming weeks with Iowa seeing a 24% increase in weekly allocations. The state will continue to distribute the vaccine to all 99 counties. The White House encouraged states to increase weekend vaccination clinics and hours to speed up the distribution process. The Governor recently announced that the state would be working with Microsoft to develop a centralized vaccination sign-up site. In her press conference this week, Governor Reynolds said that the state would not be moving forward with this plan, instead working to increase the efficiency of the current system. Read more about the Governor’s press conference [here](#).



A recent study found that Iowa is below the national average for reliance on sales tax revenue. Sales tax revenue accounted for 22.2% of total tax revenue in the state as compared to the national average of 23.3%. Iowa ranked 27th for reliance on sales tax.

Read more about the findings [here](#).

Redistricting

Iowa's Constitution requires the legislature to approve the new district maps by September 1 but US Census Bureau officials have said that because of the delays caused by COVID, states won't have the data they need until September 30. Leaders in both chambers have discussed potential plans for approving the maps with Speaker Grassley saying there may have to be a special session in October. Read more [here](#).

Leaders of the caucuses have begun to appoint members to the temporary board that will hold public hearings for the process. Each party caucus in both chambers get to appoint one person to the Temporary Redistricting Advisory Commission with those four members together selecting a fifth member. Senate Democrats named Deidre DeJear, a small business owner and Democrat candidate for Secretary of State in 2018. House Democrats have named Ian Russell, an attorney from Bettendorf. Read more [here](#).

Bills on the Move

Below are bills of interest. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.

- [SF 129](#). *Rural Primary Care Loans*. Adds OB-GYNs to eligibility for loan repayment in the Rural Primary Care Loan Repayment program and strikes the exceptional circumstances requirement for a participant to have a part-time practice. Passed Senate 47-0. Passed House 91-1. Now goes to Governor.
- [HF 390](#). *Fluoridation Notice*. Requires public water suppliers to give notice to DPH and local board of health 90 days before discontinuing fluoridation and requires notice to customers on water bills. Passed the House 91-1. Now goes to Senate.
- [HF 431](#). *Telehealth Phone Calls*. Requires health licensing boards to adopt rules that allow telehealth services to be delivered over phone calls. Passed the House 92-0. Now goes to Senate.
- [HSB 53](#). *Expanding Broadband Access*. Requires IEDA to develop programs for encouraging local governments to develop broadband and telecommuter programs. Moves fiberoptic installation program to DOT. Passed House Economic Growth Committee 19-0. Floor manager Thompson.
- [HF 468](#). *Dental & Medical School Admissions*. Requires the Regents to adopt a policy that at least 75% of admissions to University of Iowa medical and dental schools be from Iowa or went to college in Iowa. Passed the House 61-35. Now goes to the Senate.



- [HF 487. Medical Residency Interviews.](#) Requires University of Iowa Hospitals & Clinics to offer a medical residency interview to any applicant from an Iowa college. Passed House 58-38. Now goes to the Senate.
- [SF 354. Continuing Education Extension.](#) Allows a licensing board to extend the continuing education deadline by 90 days due to medical or financial hardship. Requires application 60 days before and must show enrollment in courses that will meet the requirements. Prohibits a licensing board from adopt rules to interpret this. Passed Senate 48-0. Now goes to the House.
- [SF 364. Paycheck Protection Deductions.](#) Establishes deductions for PPP. Effective upon enactment. Passed Senate 49-0. Now goes to the House.

In the News

Below are articles of interest from the week. Please reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

- [Gov. Reynolds signs proclamation that eases transport rules for heating fuels](#)
- [State Senator Carlin to announce run for Grassley's senate seat](#)
- [1-on-1 With House Speaker Pat Grassley on Iowa's COVID-19 Recovery](#)
- [Iowa Workforce Development says long-delayed payments on the way](#)
- [State's major utilities say they have enough electricity, natural gas to meet demand](#)
- [Vilsack Confirmation Hearing Set for Next Week](#)
- [U.S. House committee to meet to establish rules for reviewing contested Iowa race](#)



Next Week Capitol Schedules

IOWA SENATE - Schedule for Week 7, February 22-26, 2021

Subject to Change

Monday, February 22	Tuesday, February 23	Wednesday, February 24	Thursday, February 25	Friday, February 26
	9:00 SESSION 10:00 Local Government Senate Chamber 11:00 Transportation Senate Chamber	9:00 SESSION 10:00 Natural Resources and Environment Senate Chamber 11:00 Commerce Senate Chamber	9:00 SESSION 10:00 Agriculture Senate Chamber 11:00 Labor and Business Relations Senate Chamber	
Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon
1:00 SESSION 2:00 Veterans Affairs Senate Chamber 3:00 Judiciary Senate Chamber		1:00 Human Resources Senate Chamber 2:00 Education Senate Chamber 3:00 State Government Senate Chamber	1:00 Ways and Means Senate Chamber 2:00 Appropriations Senate Chamber	All committees on call

House of Representatives Schedule for *Week 7, February 22 - 26, 2021*
Prepared in the Office of House Speaker Pat Grassley

Monday, February 22	Tuesday, February 23	Wednesday, February 24	Thursday, February 25	Friday, February 26
11:00 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office	7:30 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 8:30 SESSION 9:30 State Government Law Library Economic Growth RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult Public Safety RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 10:30 Government Oversight Law Library Budget Subs Admin/Reg - Rm. 15 Education - Rm. 102 Justice Systems - Rm 19 Tran/Infra/Caps - Rm. 103	7:30 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 8:30 SESSION 9:00 Budget Subs Admin/Reg - Rm 102 Ag- Rm 15 Eco Devo- Rm 103 Justice Systems - Rm 19 10:30 Judiciary Law Library 11:30 Education Law Library Commerce RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber	7:30 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 8:30 SESSION 9:30 Ways and Means Law Library Appropriations RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 10:30 Human Resources Law Library Local Government RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult Agriculture RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 11:30 Transportation Law Library InfoTech RM 19 Environmental Protection RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult Veterans Affairs RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber	
Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon	Noon
1:00 SESSION Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 1:30 Judiciary Law Library Natural Resources RM 19 Labor RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 2:30 Education Law Library Commerce RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 5:00 Public Hearing RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber	12:00 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 1:00 Human Resources Law Library Local Government RM 102, Sup. Ct. Consult Agriculture RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber 2:00 Ways and Means Law Library Appropriations RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber		12:30 Subcommittee Block Reserve Subcommittee space with the clerk's office 1:30 State Government Law Library Public Safety RM 103, Sup. Ct. Chamber	

Key Dates for 2021 Session

The new Iowa Legislative Session Timetable has been published. Here is the [link](#) and included below is important dates as we approach the 2021 Iowa legislative session.

January 11	First Day of Legislative Session
January 12	Governor's Budget Released Governor gives her Condition of the State Address to Joint Session
February 12	Final day for individual Senator/Representative Bill Requests
March 5	First Funnel. All Senate and House bills must be out of one full committee
April 2	Second Legislative Funnel. Corresponding chamber must vote bills out of a full committee to remain "alive"
April 12	Amendments need not be filed on the day preceding floor debate
April 30	110 th Day of the session. Per diem expenses for legislators end.



Katelyn O'Hare | Frank Chiodo | David Adelman | Matt Paul | Matt Hinch | Jimmy Centers | Sara Allen