



State Representative Andrew Wenthe

Statehouse News

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For additional information, check our web site at: www.iowahouse.org

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Long-Term-Care Insurance Hearing

The Insurance Division has scheduled a second public hearing regarding its continuing review of long-term-care insurance in Iowa. The initial hearing, held on July 11th, was designed to get background information on long-term-care insurance, so insurance industry representatives took up most of the time.

The second public hearing is intended to get additional comments from the public. It will be on Thursday, August 9, 2007, at 1:00 P.M. in the Supreme Court Chamber Room in the State Capitol building (Room 102).

Governor Chet Culver had asked the Iowa Insurance Division to review the sale of long-term-care insurance in Iowa and report to him this fall regarding:

- The rate of claim denials and whether they are justifiable.
- The number of policies bought by Iowans and the percentage of Iowans who have purchased them.
- Types of policies bought, including the percent with no inflation adjustment and allowing later purchase of additional coverage.

- The amount and frequency of premium increases, average policy lapse rates and how lapse rates relate to premium increases.

- Whether agents have adequate training to assure potential buyers are fully informed as to the risks and benefits of these policies.

- The extent that these policies are marketed to people without substantial assets to protect who are likely to qualify for Medicaid.

- Whether some policies have premium schedules structured so as to become unaffordable when the buyer is most in need of benefits.

- Whether Iowa needs new legislation or regulation to minimize injury to Iowans due to wrongful long-term-care insurance practices.

Persons who are unable to attend but wish to comment may send their comments to the attention of Jolene Schurman, Iowa Insurance Division, 330 Maple Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319. Questions may also be directed to Ms. Schurman at 515-281-5575 or Jolene.Schurman@iid.state.ia.us.

CASA Program Goes Statewide

The Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program will expand to an additional 31 counties during the next few months because of action taken by the Legislature during the 2007 General Assembly. This additional funding will bring the program to all 99 Iowa counties.

The CASA program is made up of trained community volunteers who represent the best interests of a child who has been abused or neglected. The volunteer gets to know the child the court has assigned them. Not only do they get to know the child, they also get to know the other people in the child's life, such as the child's parents,

teachers, service providers and others in the child welfare system who have had contact with the child. They advocate for the child in the court system by regularly informing the judge on the child's needs and if they are being met.

When Chief Justice Marsha Ternus spoke to members of the General Assembly last January, she asked that additional funds be provided for this very important program so that it could expand and serve children throughout the state. The Legislature responded by providing \$411,000 to allow the program to advocate for abused or

neglected children in all 99 counties in Iowa.

Chief Justice Ternus recently remarked, "CASA volunteers, who are themselves extraordinary public servants, provide the court with in-depth information about a child. They serve as an extra set of eyes and ears for the judge."

The CASA program is under the direction of the Iowa Child Advocacy Board within the Department of Inspections and Appeals. This board is a nine-member board appointed by the Governor to oversee the program.

The additional funding will take the program into the following 31 counties: Adams, Audubon, Boone, Calhoun, Carroll, Clayton, Dickinson, Emmet, Fayette, Franklin, Greene, Guthrie, Howard, Humboldt, Iowa, Jasper, Kossuth, Montgomery, Monroe, O'Brien, Osceola, Page, Palo Alto, Pocahontas, Ringgold, Sac, Taylor, Wayne, Webster, Winneshiek, and Wright.

For more information about the CASA program, or to find out how to become a CASA volunteer, contact the Iowa Child Advocacy Board at 866-448-4608 or email the board at cab@dia.iowa.gov.

Workers' Memorial to Be Completed

Iowa Workforce Development officials have unveiled the Iowa Workers' Memorial Monument. Lt. Governor Judge presented a \$200,000 check from the people of Iowa, and a donation of \$50,000 from Iowa Community Colleges.



According to Workforce Development interim director Dave Neil, Iowa is one of just thirteen states that do not have a workers' monument. With the additional \$250,000 in gifts, the total contributions for the project are now over \$525,000. The funding will complete the project and provide for the ongoing perpetual maintenance of the monument.

When completed, the monument will be a striking eleven foot tall by eleven foot wide balanced square form. Upon closer interaction, the sculpture is revealed as four interlocking arms and hands, a powerful universal image, dedicated to the energy and integrity of the workers of Iowa. Each arm supports the other, in the same way a diverse blend of people, from many back-grounds, come together to work and create the cultural and business base of Iowa. The monument will be placed at the northeast corner of Grand Avenue and East Ninth Street.

The memorial is scheduled for completion in April 2008. During the session, the Legislature provided \$200,000 to the Iowa Workers' Memorial Monument.

"The monument will be an ever-lasting tribute to Iowa's work ethic and the contributions of Iowa's workforce to our great state," stated Lt. Governor Patty Judge.

Hours of Operation for Gasoline Tank Drivers Lifted

On July 12, Governor Chet Culver signed a proclamation that temporarily waives the provisions that limit the number of consecutive hours that an operator of a gasoline tanker can drive. Governor Culver cited the low supply of gasoline and diesel in the Midwest due to heavy demands and refinery outages.

Normally, the drivers can drive a maximum of 12 hours per day,

and must take a break of at least 10 hours after each shift. This proclamation will waive these rules for 30 days, but will prohibit trucking companies from allowing or requiring a driver to work while fatigued or ill. The Governors of Minnesota, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, and Kansas have also issued waivers.

The Iowa Department of Transportation reports that Iowans

consume an average of 4.5 million gallons of gasoline per day. If the diesel can't make it to the smaller gas stations where truckers want to fill up, then they'll have to by-pass those stations and travel to stations in places like Des Moines, where they may still have to wait to fill their tanks.

Oversight Committee Reviews Broadband Access

Is Iowa falling behind other states in having broadband high-speed internet access? The Government Oversight Committee heard from experts in the field on that question. Broadband access is a service that is primarily received by Iowans from private telephone or cable companies in Iowa.

The State of Iowa has the Iowa Communication Network (ICN), which provides broadband access to Iowa's K-12 schools, community colleges, public and private universities, libraries, and National Guard armories. The ICN owns more than 3,100 miles of fiber-optic lines and leases 3,500 miles of fiber, which in the end provide an access point within 15 miles of every Iowan in the state. The State has invested over \$227 million in providing the network, which was originally envisioned as an education tool to provide two-way video classrooms to schools and colleges around the state.

While the ICN offers high speed internet, broadcast quality two-video, and phone service, state law limits access to the network. This prevents the state from competing with local telephone and

cable companies who provide similar services.

The Committee members made it clear there is not legislative interest in taking business away from the local telephone and cable companies. However, some members expressed concern that Iowa may be falling behind other states and other nations when it comes to internet download speeds. Iowa currently ranks 47th nationally with an average download speed of approximately 2 mega-bytes per second. The top state in download speed was Rhode Island with 5 mega-bytes per second. That compares with Japan, which has download speeds of over 50 mega-bytes per second.

When the Committee asked for comments from private industry representatives, only one representative from the telephone industry came forward. Craig Shoenfeld, representing Iowa Network Services, spoke on behalf of the telecommunication industry. He expressed a willingness to discuss possible public-private partnerships to expand access, but raised concerns. He said if the state tries to provide the service, the industry

would see it as unfair competition. When asked if Iowans are paying too much for access to broadband services, he asks the committee to allow him time to prepare data that will compare what Iowans are paying to other states. Mr. Shoenfeld felt that the industry was meeting the needs of the consumers.



The Committee heard comments from experts from other states, who are trying to expand access to internet services to disadvantaged neighborhoods. These experts emphasized the value is not in just having the connection, but in the richness of the content that is available now on-line. The Committee heard from the Area Education Agencies and the state universities on how much more material for classrooms is available on-line. More students are taking on-line courses.

The Government Oversight Committee will hold their next meeting on September 17th and 18th.

Taxpayers Association on Sound Budgeting Principles

The Iowa Taxpayers Association released their review of the Legislature's Fiscal Year 2008 budget, which began on July 1. The Iowa Taxpayers Association represents a broad spectrum of business taxpayers in Iowa. Its mission has been to educate and inform Iowans about sound fiscal policy; provide state policymakers with objective, nonpartisan research about the impact of specific tax and spending policies; and advocate for the adoption of rational public fiscal policy as it relates to business and corporate taxes.

The Association identified eight principles of sound budgeting and gave the Legislature pluses or minuses for meeting or not part of the principle in its budget.

1. Avoid the use of one-time or time-limited sources for ongoing expenses.

The Legislature made progress by funding more of Medicaid costs from the general fund, rather than relying on the Senior Living Trust Fund. The Association would still like to see less reliance on one-time funding sources used to fund on-

going expenses and stop using other funds to fund areas that should be funded from the general fund.

2. Avoid implementing new programs for a partial fiscal year.

No programs were implemented for a partial year.

3. Avoid multi-year accelerating commitments.

The additional funding provided by the Legislature for the Student Achievement and Teacher Quality Program, and funding for

teacher market factor, failed to meet this principle.

4. Avoid new automatic or standing appropriations.

Establishing a standing appropriation for the Iowa Power Fund, \$25 million through FY 2011, did not meet this principle.

5. Accurately determine revenue and expenses.

This principle is being followed.

6. Align expenses and revenue in the same fiscal year.

The Legislature received a plus for continuing the performance based budgeting process. However work is still needed on funding property tax credits in the proper fiscal year.

7. Avoid shifting program funding to property taxes or fees.

The Legislature needs to make progress on funding property tax credits at the level established by

law. The Homestead and Ag land tax credits are not fully funded.

8. Avoid diversion of funds statutorily authorized for a specific objective to other purposes.

The Legislature receives credit for creating the Technology Reinvestment Fund to avoid diversions from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund for that purpose. However, the Legislature still needs to work on using the infrastructure funds for infrastructure purposes.

Boating Safety Reminders

With summer in full season, the Department of Natural Resources wants to remind boat operators of a few laws to be safe and legal on the State's water. Iowa currently has over 240,000 registered boaters.

Most violations on the water can be avoided by:

- having a properly fitting personal flotation device (a lifejacket for each passenger),
- having a throwable personal flotation device on boats of over 16 feet,

- having a charged fire extinguisher, and
- having a working horn, whistle or some other noise-making device.



Boat operators should also maintain the proper speed and distance. It is illegal to operate your boat:

- at greater than no wake speed in any posted 'no wake' zone,
- at greater than 5 miles an hour (mph) within 100 feet of another vessel moving slowly (at 5 mph or less), and

- at greater than 5 mph within 50 feet of another vessel underway at greater than 5 mph.

While alcohol may be consumed on board by a legal age passenger or the boat operator, it is illegal to operate while intoxicated. In Iowa, this happens when that person is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs; has a blood, breath or urine alcohol concentration of .10% or more; and has any amount of a controlled substance present in his/her system.

Sexual Health Education Curriculum

Starting this fall, school districts must review and update their curriculum on sexual health education. The move toward scientifically accurate and research based human growth and development curriculum was part of House File 611 that passed this session.

During the legislative session, concerns were brought to the attention of lawmakers that many school districts in Iowa have not updated their sexual health education curriculum. This prompted action from Legislators to look into the

matter and recommend the appropriate course of action.

School districts will be able to utilize reference materials developed by the Department of Education to assist them in the process of ensuring accuracy of content. Included in the materials will be information about the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and the vaccination to prevent HPV.

The Human Papilloma Virus causes most cases of cervical cancer, which is the number two killer of women worldwide. Several

other states are including provisions in their education laws to teach kids about the risks and prevention of HPV. The materials are to be used as reference only for districts, not as sample curriculum.

Parents may review the curriculum prior to a child being enrolled in a class. The district allows the parent to opt their child out of the curriculum.

The new requirements do not interfere with religious based or abstinence curriculum either. As long as the curriculum is scientifi-

cally accurate, research based, and age appropriate, a school may teach the material.

House File 611 provides the avenue for the Department of Education and school districts to work together to provide students with

age-appropriate and research-based sexual health education. Right now the department is in the process of putting together the materials.

Iowans Can Use eJuror if Summoned for Jury Duty

The Iowa Judicial Branch reports that more than 60,000 Iowans are summoned for jury duty each year. If you happen to be one of those people, you know that you must fill out a standard juror questionnaire and send it back to the clerk of the court. Now, if you are summoned, you have the option of filling out the questionnaire online, thanks to eJuror. eJuror is an online service provided by the judi-

cial branch that also allows potential jurors to ask to reschedule jury duty and obtain information about serving on a jury.

Chief Justice Marsha Ternus said that “everyone’s time is valuable, and this service makes reporting for jury duty a little easier.” If you receive a summons in the mail and want to respond at the eJuror site, simply log onto <https://ejuror.iowa.gov/ejuror/>.

You will be asked to log in with the jury number given to you on the summons. Once inside the system, you will be able to complete the questionnaire and have it electronically sent to the clerk of court. If you have not been summoned for jury duty, but would like to see sample pages, go to www.judicial.state.ia.us.

Beware of the Gypsy Moth

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is telling Iowans to be on the lookout for the Gypsy Moth. State officials with the agency are also taking steps to prevent the moth from coming into the state.

The gypsy moth lays eggs that turn into caterpillars that strip all the leaves off a tree. According to the DNR, the caterpillars eat the leaves of oaks, apples, basswood, poplars, and willows. During major infestations, they eat more than 500 different species of trees and shrubs.

Infestations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey have caused state officials to warn people about

bringing firewood into the state from the areas that are affected. The closest the gypsy moth has been detected is Madison, Wisconsin.

After one year of a major infestation, there can be an increase in dead trees and decrease of nut and seed production. After only two years, production of wood could be significantly reduced. Native moth and butterfly species could also die out due to starvation. Other wildlife can suffer if their natural habit is destroyed as well.

There can be health effects on an individual if an infestation occurs. After being exposed to the caterpillar, skin, eye, and respira-

tory irritations and rashes may occur. A drastic effect may be increased individual stress levels.

The DNR has over 5,000 gypsy moth traps spread around the state. They are taking extra precaution at the State’s borders, where the moth could come in naturally. Traps are baited with the female moth’s pheromones to draw in the male moth.



1-800-BETS-OFF Volume Grew with Revenue Growth

For Fiscal Year 2007, the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission reported record high revenues of \$1.32 billion. During that same time, the **1-800-BETS-OFF** helpline received over 7,300 phone calls, an increase of over 15% from the previous year.

The calls to the helpline increased throughout the year, with calls in the second half of the fiscal year up 29 percent over the first half. The highest single volume month was January, with 792 total calls. A third of the callers (32%) specifically asked about gambling

treatment programs available in their immediate area.

Over the past two years, four brand new gaming facilities have opened in Iowa, while several others completed expansion projects. Currently, Iowa has a total of 20 casino facilities, along with other

gaming opportunities such as pari-mutuel betting, charitable gaming (bingo), and the state lottery.

The Iowa Gambling Treatment Program contracts with agencies state-wide to provide outpatient

counseling for gamblers, their families and concerned persons. Other available resources include problem gambling information, referral, education and transitional housing. Iowans can call 1-800-BETS OFF (1-800-238-7633), a

24-hour telephone help line, for information on problem gambling, including a gambling treatment agency nearest to them. In addition, anyone can access the program's web site at www.1800betsoff.org.

DOT Commission Approves Aviation Grants

At their July 17 meeting, the Department of Transportation's Commissioners approved grants for three aviation programs; General Aviation Vertical Infrastructure, Commercial Service Vertical Infrastructure, and Airport Improvement Program. The total amount approved is just under \$4 million. For more information about these grants and aviation in Iowa, go to www.iawings.com.

General Aviation

The Department of Transportation (DOT) estimates that 88% of

all Iowa aircraft operations are conducted by general aviation aircraft. The commission approved twelve grants totaling \$830,000 for infrastructure projects at terminal and maintenance buildings, hangars and fuel facilities.

Commercial Aviation

There are eight commercial service airports in Iowa. A total of \$1.5 million was awarded by the commission and will be used for infrastructure needs at terminal buildings, hangars, and maintenance facilities at all eight airports.

Airport Improvements

The Airport Improvement Program is used to provide funds for never-ending projects such as runway markings, pavement managements, windsocks, and airfield and security projects. This year, the commission approved a total of \$1.6 million for these projects at over fifteen airports.

Incentives Offered to Jasper County Companies

TPI Composites was awarded \$2 million from the Economic Development Set-Aside (EDSA) and Physical Infrastructure Assistance (PIAP) programs and tax benefits from High Quality Job Creation (HQJC) program to build a manufacturing plant in Newton. Operations at the new facility are expected to provide 723 jobs.

Wages for production jobs would range from \$12.25 to \$13.40 per hour, plus benefits. The company would bring a patented technology to Iowa for molding lighter, stronger composites. Newton is among the sites being considered for the new operation. This comes at a critical time for the area as Maytag will be fully shutting down in December, and according to the June unemployment numbers, Jasper County has the third highest unemployment rate in the state.

"These jobs, and the economic impact they create, will help secure our future and create new opportunities that will keep your kids and my kids in Iowa, where they belong," said Governor Chet Culver.

Midwest Manufacturing plans to expand distribution operations in Kellogg. The nearly \$700,000 project creates 20 jobs with 13 of the jobs paying an average wage of \$16.16 per hour. The Department of Economic Development (DED) Board awarded \$100,000 from the Community Economic Betterment Account (CEBA) for the expansion. Supplying engine manufacturing companies, Midwest Manufacturing is the primary source in North America for the ring gears used to start engines.

Cedar Falls Expansions

Target Corporation, which operates one of state's largest distribution centers in Cedar Falls, will construct another center nearby for distribution of fresh produce and frozen and refrigerated foods to Midwest stores. Target's \$86 million project was awarded tax benefits from the HQJC program to create 51 jobs with 37 of the jobs paying an average wage of \$23.62 per hour, plus benefits. Construction will start late this year and be completed by late 2009.

Family-owned Martin Brothers Distributing Company Inc. was awarded tax benefits from the HQJC program for a more than \$6 million expansion in Cedar Falls. The project creates 18 job with 12 of the jobs paying an average wage of \$20.34 per hour. Martin Brothers supplies food services to

healthcare facilities, schools, colleges, restaurants and convenience stores in Iowa and surrounding states.

Principal to Create 1,500 Jobs over Five Years

The Principal Financial Group was awarded tax benefits for a \$100 million expansion creating jobs in a downtown Des Moines Enterprise Zone. With plans to increase employment by 1,500 people in Des Moines over the next five years, the company will build a new 1,800 vehicle parking ramp and a child care center for 180 children.

Wages for 840 of the new jobs will pay an average wage of \$23.45 per hour. Construction of the childcare center is expected to be complete by the middle of next year. The parking ramp is expected to be complete in 2009. Headquartered in Des Moines, the Principal Financial Group is one of the largest employers in Iowa.

Janesville Fire Fighting Equipment Manufacturer

Although the DED board’s actions for July highlighted some large projects, just as significant was a \$2.6 million investment made by W.S. Darley Company in a facility to be located in Janesville,

in rural Bremer County. They plan to purchase and expand a facility to create 14 jobs and retain 10 jobs that pay \$17.02 per hour. The company will be assisted with \$150,000 from the CEBA account. Darley manufactures and sells fire-fighting pumps and compressed air foam systems and other fire fighting equipment. Headquartered in Illinois, they also have research facilities in Oregon and Wisconsin.

Since it started in July of 2003, the Grow Iowa Values Fund has assisted 462 projects that are expected to create 35,874 jobs. These projects are projected to have a total capital investment of \$11.65 billion.

Toll-Free State Government Numbers

Every year, the Iowa State Ombudsman’s office provides a listing of the toll-free numbers for many state government agencies and department. These numbers can be found on page 8 of this newsletter.

In addition to the toll free numbers, the Ombudsman’s office provided a list of the Top Ten Government websites. They are as follows:

1. Official State of Iowa website www.iowa.gov/state/main/index.html

2. State agencies— www.iowa.gov/state/main/govagenciesfl.html

3. Legislative— www.legis.state.ia.us

4. Judicial— www.judicial.state.ia.us

5. Cities— www.iowa.gov/state/main/livingcitiesfl.html

6. Counties— www.iowa.gov/state/main/govcountiesfl.html

7. Public school districts and Area Education Agencies— www.ia-sb.org/Links.aspx

8. Iowa law— www.legis.state.ia.us/IowaLaw.html

9. “Sunshine advisories” — www.iowaattorneygeneral.org/sunshine_advisories/ (primers on the Open Meetings and Public Records laws)

10. Citizens’ Aide/Ombudsman — www.legis.state.ia.us/ombudsman

Toll –Free Government Numbers

State government

Blind (Department)	1-800-362-2587	Public Health (Department) Immunization Program	1-800-831-6293
Child Abuse/Dependent Adult Hotline	1-800-362-2178	Revenue and Finance (Department)	1-800-367-3388
Child Support Recovery Unit	1-888-229-9223	SHIIP (Senior Health Insurance Information Program)	1-800-351-4664
Child Advocacy Board	1-866-448-4608	Small Business License Information	1-800-532-1216
Citizens' Aide/Ombudsman	1-888-426-6283	State Fair	1-800-545-3247
Civil Rights Commission	1-800-457-4416	State Patrol Highway Emergency Help	1-800-525-5555
College Student Aid Commission	1-800-383-4222	Substance Abuse Information Center	1-866-242-4111
Commission on the Status of Women	1-800-558-4427	Tourism Information	1-800-345-4692
Consumer Protection Division	1-888-777-4590	Transportation (Department)	1-800-532-1121
Crime Victim Assistance Division	1-800-373-5044	Veterans Affairs Commission	1-800-838-4692
Economic Development (Department)	1-800-245-4692	Utilities Board Customer Service	1-877-565-4450
Elder Affairs (Department)	1-800-532-3213	Vocational Rehabilitation Division	1-800-532-1486
Gambling Treatment Hotline	1-800-238-7633	Welfare Fraud	1-800-831-1394
IAWK-I (insurance for low-income kids)	1-800-257-8563	Workforce Development Department	1-800-562-4692
Home Health Hotline	1-800-383-4920		
Human Services (Department)	1-800-972-2017	<u>Miscellaneous</u>	
Insurance Division	1-877-955-1212	ADA Project	1-800-949-4232
Iowa Client Assistance Program (advocacy for clients of Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Department)	1-800-652-4298	Better Business Bureau	1-800-222-1600
Iowa COMPASS (information and referral for Iowans with disabilities)	1-800-779-2001	Domestic abuse hotline	1-800-942-0333
Iowa Finance Authority	1-800-432-7230	Federal information hotline	1-800-688-9889
Iowa Waste Reduction Center	1-800-422-3109	Iowa Legal Aid	1-800-532-1275
Narcotics Division	1-800-532-0052	Iowa Protection and Advocacy	1-800-779-2502
Nursing Home Complaint Hotline	1-877-686-0027	Lawyer Referral Service	1-800-532-1108
		Legal Hotline for Older Iowans	1-800-992-8161
		Youth Law Center	1-800-728-1172