



It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like... Session

The New Year brings another new beginning - the start of Iowa's legislative session. Twenty-four new legislators will arrive at the Capitol to be sworn in when the session starts on January 11, 2021. The first week of the Iowa Legislative Session will be somewhat "normal" with the swearing in of legislators, the picking of the seats (those that have served longer get first pick of where they sit), and the welcoming speeches (and budget releases) from the Governor and Chief Justice of the Iowa Supreme Court. It's the traditional launch of the 110-day Iowa legislative session.

How legislators plan to proceed with committee and subcommittee meetings is still unknown, and their priorities for the year are only beginning to trickle out. What we do know is there are only two things that legislators must do before they finish their work at the end of April.

- 1. Legislators must pass a budget for the next fiscal year (Fiscal Year 2022, which begins on July 1, 2021).** By law legislators are only allowed to spend 99% of the money the state expects to collect. The Legislature must use the lowest revenue estimate - either the one from December or the upcoming one in March. Right now, the state's revenues look okay but only because of the federal funding that has helped the state pay for COVID-related expenses. If things stay the same in March, it is likely that legislators will try to keep budgets the same, meaning there isn't a lot of room for new programs or increases. We expect any extra funds to be used to help with the economy and jobs.
- 2. The second thing legislators must do is redistricting.** After the US Census is completed, each state must redraw

continued on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3** Think Online vs. In-Person This Year
- 4** ID Action Town Halls: Let's Partner!
- 4** Join Us for Monthly Capitol Chats
- 5** 2021 Budgets: Show Me the Money
- 5** Committee Hears Managed Care and Medicaid Reports
- 6** Congress Passes and President Signs COVID Relief
- 8** New Faces in DC, Special Election in Iowa
- 8** New Committees in 2021
- 10** Changes Coming in 2021

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like... Session *(continued from page 1)*

its city, county, state, and federal elected official district lines. We do this to make sure each congressional and legislative district has about the same number of people living in them. Each state decides how to do this, and some have been accused of "gerrymandering," a fancy word for drawing districts in such a way to help one political party keep power. Fortunately, Iowa has a model redistricting process that uses a non-partisan legislative staff to draw lines without consideration of political party membership or who currently represents the area. The staff present the first plan (sometime in March or April), which the Iowa Legislature can not amend. Legislators either approve of it, or send it back to staff. If they reject the first plan, the staff develops a second unamendable plan. Again, legislators can only vote for or against the plan. By the third plan, legislators can mess with the lines and amend the plan, but no one has done this since the process was put in place in the 1970s.

There are several other issues you may see come up this session:

- **COVID Relief.** Legislators may want to have a say in how any new or remaining federal COVID relief funds are spent. To date, the Governor has been able to make decisions on how \$1.2 billion in state aid has been spent.
- **Economic Recovery.** Legislators are very interested in what the Governor's Economic Recovery Work Group will recommend to jump start Iowa's economy and get Iowa workers back into good-paying jobs. You can read more about what they are considering here. Legislators will probably also have some of their own ideas, like cutting taxes. We've heard some legislators want to eliminate income taxes, and others want to cut property taxes. We think there will be a lot of debate over this topic.
- **Telehealth.** Access to health care was an issue before COVID-19; since the pandemic Iowans have realized that accessing health care using their computers, tablets, and phones has literally been a life-saver. But this isn't just an issue for times of pandemics; Iowa is known to have a blizzard or two during the winter. Legislators will be looking at legislation that requires all insurance plans to pay the same rate to providers, regardless of whether the service is delivered in person or virtually (telehealth). In addition, they will consider whether this should be for all services, or just those deemed "behavioral health." Legislators will also consider whether to require insurers and Medicaid pay equally regardless of the technology used, including situations when only telephone (audio only) is available, and whether payment should be made no matter where the patient or provider are located. We will talk more about this as the session begins.
- **Childcare.** Essential workers did not have a choice to stay home and work virtually. They had to go to work, so they needed childcare at a time that childcare providers were struggling to survive with most families staying home. In addition, state childcare assistance did not phase-out as a person earned more. Instead, it immediately shut off, something advocates called "the cliff." Parents who were given a \$1/hour raise faced losing 100% of their childcare assistance if they took the raise, but the \$1/hour more wasn't enough to cover that loss of assistance. Instead, lawmakers were considering some type of phase-out of assistance so the cliff becomes more of a stairstep. But this takes money, so its future could be tied to resources available.
- **Education funding.** There are many things that may be addressed when it comes to education - tuition increases at schools, deferred maintenance, how to get kids back on track, addressing the technology gap, and more. Likely it will come down to funding, and small increases in school funding can quickly add up.
- **Bottle Bill.** Yeah, it's an oddball to add here, but grocery and convenience stores have been using COVID as a reason to put a final end to the state's 5-cent bottle and can deposit. They want to see it become part of curbside recycling or create an alternative to get it out of their stores. They would prefer to end the deposit, but have been willing in the past to consider options. Many community organizations collect and redeem cans for fundraising, so the impact of this may be felt beyond grocery stores and city/county recycling programs. With bigger Republican margins in the House, the votes may very well be there to eliminate or amend the state's 42-year-old bottle deposit law.

We are hearing about several issues that advocates with disabilities will be asking their legislators to address this year:

- **Support for Caregivers** – Iowa has always had a shortage of direct caregivers and direct support professionals, but COVID has really shined a light on this issue. This essential workforce has been hit hard by the virus, so advocates want the state to invest time and resources into keeping existing workers in these jobs, and getting more people to choose this profession.

continued on page 3

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like... Session *(continued from page 2)*

- **Changing Tables** – Last year, Rep. Ann Meyer (R-Fort Dodge) and Rep. Kristen Sunde (D-West Des Moines) co-sponsored a bill that passed the Iowa House of Representatives (100-0) requiring Interstate rest areas to include adult changing tables in restrooms. The bill was likely to have passed the Iowa Senate had session not shut down in March. Advocates hope to make another run at this "first step" in making these changing tables available in most if not all public places
- **Accessible Gas Pumps** – While some gas stations have made accessible gas pumps a priority, others have not made this a priority. One advocate recently showed videos demonstrating the difficulty he faces when staff is not available or willing to help. Some have said it will only cost about \$1,600 to put in an accessible pump (although staffing availability is another issue). Drivers with disabilities are able to find adaptive technology that allows them to operate a vehicle, but still face barriers to filling up their car, and in some cases, reaching the pump's help button.
- **Home Modifications** – The Accessible Homes Coalition is again setting its policy sights on a program that would give small grants to individuals with disabilities or chronic conditions to make their homes more accessible. Advocates continue to make progress on this and have worked with the Iowa Department on Aging to develop options that may leverage federal funds to make this a reality. Look for them to make another push in 2021.
- **Medicaid Managed Care Changes** - Providers want to see more accuracy in payments, less paperwork to get authorizations, and more transparency overall in MCO decision making. Medicaid members want more consistency and reliability; one infoNET reader told us they had the same case manager for thirty years, and has had nine since the start of managed care. The Iowa Association of Community Providers is asking legislators to consider following Kansas' lead in establishing an Independent Appeals Board to "investigate habitually delayed Medicaid claim payments."
- **Mental Health & Disability Services Region Funding** - Since the redesign of 2015, no state funding has been dedicated to helping pay for the new services regions are required to develop for adults and children. While some regions have enough money to do it now, others are struggling, and at least one is facing serious cuts if sustainable funding is not identified and made available soon. More on this will be coming after the first of the year.

Think Online vs. In-Person This Year

Many Iowans with disabilities have other health conditions that put them at higher risk of complications from COVID-19. We know many of you have been careful and limited your activities over the last nine months. While vaccines are coming, we continue to ask everyone to stay vigilant, wear masks in public, and practice social distancing to help those who are waiting to be vaccinated.

The legislative session will be held during a time when most of Iowa will not yet be fully protected from the illness, since most vaccines will take two doses. With the Iowa session lasting only 16 weeks, we know that many will be getting their second dose close to the end of the session. That's why we encourage all Iowans, including those with disabilities, to consider virtual advocacy this year.

Many of you have asked what the next legislative session will be like. Our answer continues to be - who knows! At this point, we believe the Iowa Legislature will meet in person but leaders have been asking lobbyists to avoid traditional big Capitol Days and instead consider virtual advocacy or smaller one-on-one meetings at the Capitol or back in legislators' districts.

We expect there will be a mix of safety measures: masks will be encouraged, there will be no cafeteria and the law library will be closed, committees and subcommittees will be scheduled in ways to promote social distancing or may be held virtually, and the Capitol will be "fogged" with disinfectant each night. As with everything in 2020, we will have to take it day by day and be flexible.

To stay up to date, follow us on Twitter & Facebook (@infonetowa). If you are ready to advocate now:

- You can plan a virtual town hall (<https://bit.ly/38FZkjm>).

continued on page 4

Think Online vs. In-Person This Year *(continued from page 3)*

- Attend a community forum (<http://www.infonetiowa.org/calendar/events/>).
- Contact your legislators through email, phone, or social media (<http://www.infonetiowa.org/take-action/>).
- Consider a virtual site tour.
- Plan a telephone town hall with those representing you in the county courthouse, State Legislature, or Congress.
- Use your smartphone to make a video testimonial to send to your legislator. Get tips on telling your story at <https://bit.ly/2MI14QZ>.
- Alternatively, make an Insta-Story using Instagram to share with your elected officials.
- Check out our resource page for more ideas at <http://www.infonetiowa.org/toolkit/>.

ID Action Town Halls: Let's Partner!

The Iowa DD Council wants to hold a virtual townhall meeting in your area!

This legislative session, Iowans with Disabilities in Action is looking for local partners to host and participate in virtual townhall meetings across the state to discuss your local advocacy topics and share their legislative priorities with your local legislators. These local forums can be held as a town hall meeting (where you ask questions) or listening post (where legislators are there to listen to your concerns and learn more about your issues) - or a combination of the two. It's format, design, and focus are up to you - the local advocate.



More details will be coming soon! Email us at contactus@idaction.org for additional information or to let us know you'd like to participate. These town hall meetings will replace our typical "Local Capitol Days," which will be suspended this year in lieu of this virtual advocacy opportunity. Added bonus - you don't need to worry about rescheduling these because of snow days!

Join Us for Monthly Capitol Chats



We don't know what session will look like this year, or what will happen if there is an outbreak of COVID-19 at our State Capitol. We do know that it's hard to stay informed in a "normal" year, let alone a "COVID year." Last year we tried out a monthly call during session to give advocates an extra opportunity to find out what's going on, and get advice from lobbyists watching issues of interest to Iowans with disabilities.

This year you can join Iowa DD Council Public Policy Manager Bill Kallestad and multi-client lobbyist Amy Campbell for another round of monthly "Capitol Chats" to talk about the issues you care about, get advice from the experts, listen to special guests, or just check in to see what is happening at the Capitol. You can join via computer or smart device, or just by phone. Details coming soon.

Monthly Capitol Chats @ 11 a.m. on following dates:

Friday, January 29, 2021

Friday, February 26, 2021

Friday, March 26, 2021

Friday, April 23, 2021

_____ **For first "Chat" on January 29** _____

Join by computer/tablet: [capture.zoom.us/j/95192143136](https://zoom.us/j/95192143136)

Or iPhone one-tap : +13126266799,,95192143136# or +16465588656,,95192143136#

Or Telephone: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 558 8656 or +1 301 715 8592

Webinar ID: 951 9214 3136

2021 Budgets: Show Me the Money

Fans of *Jerry Maguire* will know the reference. Advocates this year looking for increases or funding for new programs may very well hear a version of "show me the money" from legislators. In other words, if you want an increase or new funding, legislators will probably want to know where they can find the money to pay for it, since the state budget is still not back to where it was pre-COVID.

That's not because legislators do not want to increase spending (although for some, that is a mission). To most, it goes back to how Iowa budgets.

The Governor and legislators are only allowed to spend 99% of the money collected each year; the rest goes into a savings account to help in tough times (like COVID and the Derecho Storm). This is tough because money comes in at the same time that it's being spent. Iowa uses a group of economic experts to guess how much money will come in during the year, and develop an estimate that legislators and the Governor use to develop budgets. These guesses have been really accurate, but as one expert cautioned, "there is no playbook for a pandemic."

Other states may be in real budget trouble, but Iowa is looking pretty good. In December, the experts found that the current year budget (fiscal year 2021) has started to turn the corner and is improving slowly, a trend that they see continuing into the next budget year (fiscal year 2022, which begins on July 1, 2022). What this means is:

- The current year will finish without the need for mid-year budget cuts.
- The next year will have about \$296.4 million more to spend than the current year (about 3.7% growth).

That may seem like a lot of money, but it does not include any increases in Managed Care contracts, K-12 school funding increases, shortfalls in state university budgets since kids weren't on campus much of the year, and other demands for dollars. One area that is definitely increasing - alcohol and liquor sales were up 8% in the last fiscal year, and are on track to double to 16% in fiscal year 2022. That's even after the Governor deferred wine and beer taxes from March to November. That's generated more than \$19 million in new state revenues in first part of the pandemic.



Committee Hears Managed Care and Medicaid Reports

The Legislative Health Policy Oversight Committee met via Zoom last week to hear reports from Iowa Medicaid and its two managed care organizations (AmeriGroup & Iowa Total Care). Telehealth is shaping up to be a big issue in the 2021 session, as providers want to see Medicaid and private insurers continue to pay equally for online patient visits, regardless of the type of technology used (including audio-only options) and where the person or provider are located (site of service).

Iowa Department of Human Services staff reported that Medicaid telehealth claims has sky-rocketed: from 9,386 Medicaid-covered telehealth visits in the three months prior to pandemic to 157,524 in the three months following of the pandemic. Sen. Liz Mathis (D-Hiawatha) asked if Medicaid had looked at outcomes from these telehealth visits and other changes made to services, to see if some of the flexibilities allowed during the pandemic should be continued permanently. DHS continues to work on this with their Federal government partners, but has not yet done this analysis.

The committee also heard about the additional funding provided to nursing homes and other facilities to help offset COVID costs. Sen. Amanda Ragan (D-Mason City) asked if there were any requirements for the assistance, "Does it have to go to the frontline workers? They have really been pushed to the max." No specific requirements were attached to the aid discussed.

Legislators also got a quick view of the Medicaid budget for the upcoming year. As long as the federal public health emergency declaration lasts, the state will receive an enhanced Medicaid match. That means federal dollars will pay for an extra 6.2% of the costs, saving \$70-75 million every quarter in state funds.

For that reason, Iowa Medicaid is planning for two scenarios, both of which assume no new state funds and no extra money for increases in MCO contracts.

continued on page 6

Managed Care and Medicaid Reports *(continued from page 5)*

- Scenario 1: Public health emergency expires in January and the enhanced federal match (E-FMAP) ends March 2021.
 - State saves \$216.8 million from the 6.2% enhanced federal match.
 - Medicaid will end FY 2021 with an extra \$168.9 million balance that will carry into FY 2022.
 - Medicaid will end FY 2022 with \$61.1 million surplus balance at end of the year.
 - This means additional state dollars are not needed in FY 2022 to keep services at current levels.
- Scenario 2: Public health emergency is extended through March 2021, continuing the extra match through June 2021.
 - State saves \$288.1 million from the 6.2% enhanced federal match.
 - Medicaid will end FY 2021 with an extra \$234.6 million balance that will carry into FY 2022.
 - Medicaid will end FY 2022 with \$81.3 million surplus balance at end of the year.
 - This means additional state dollars are not needed in FY 2022 to keep services at current levels.

Rep. Joel Fry (R-Osceola), who chairs the committee overseeing Medicaid spending, asked what happens when enhanced federal matching funds are depleted in fiscal year 2023. Medicaid responded that they would be back to a normal curve where increases would be needed to maintain current service levels. Rep. Fry cautioned Iowans to be careful about spending these one-time funds now on ongoing service needs that will create a demand for new dollars in the future.

It's a sentiment you are likely to hear a lot this year. Legislators are confident that Iowa's budget ranking as the third best in the nation is because of this spending restraint. Not over-spending when times are good and putting money into savings means Iowa has been able to weather the COVID storm without having to cut into the vital services Iowans need.

Congress Passes & President Signs COVID Relief

Over the holiday weekend, the President signed a COVID-19 Relief bill that Congress had passed just days before wrapping up business for the year. The bill funds the federal government for another nine months and directs \$900 billion to give states more funding for COVID-19 response and relief. This includes:

- **Rental assistance**, with priority for those who have at least one person unemployed or whose income is less than 50% of their state's median income (\$25 billion total). Eviction protection is extended to January 31, 2021.
- **Direct payments to taxpayers**, up to \$600 per adult and child in a household. This phases out for individuals earning more than \$75,000 (those making over \$100,000 are not eligible for payment). This calculator will determine if and how much you can expect to receive.
- **Small business assistance**, by reopening the Paycheck Protection Program for second loans to small businesses (this program was closed to new applicants in August). This round is only for businesses and non-profits with less than 300 employees who have had at least 25% drop in revenues during 2020. The program is capped at \$2 million per business (the first round allowed up to \$10 million), but gives businesses more flexibility in how they can spend the money.
- **Additional weekly unemployment assistance**, \$300 more per week in unemployment through March 14, 2021 to help those who are still unemployed and continues programs meant to help gig workers (like Lyft/Uber drivers).
- **Food Assistance**, by raising SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits by 15% for six months but does not make more people eligible for help. Food banks will get another \$400 million and senior nutrition programs will get another \$188 million.

continued on page 7

COVID Relief *(continued from page 6)*

- **Public transportation**, including \$2 billion for buses that go between cities and funding for public transit agencies.
- **COVID-19 relief for states**, including \$20 billion to buy vaccines, another \$20 billion for COVID-19 testing, and adds \$3 billion for hospital/health care providers for lost revenue during pandemic.
- **Relief for education**, including \$10 billion for childcare providers and \$82 billion for K-12 schools and colleges to offset losses from COVID-19.
- **Extra time for states to use their original CARES funds**, giving states an extra year (until December 31, 2021) to use the first round of relief funds.

There are several things that were discussed but not included in this final bill, including funding for cities and counties, and does not include any funds to address the critical needs of individuals with disabilities. The following is from an American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD) press release:

After months of delays and months of coordinated advocacy from the disability community, this week Congress passed another coronavirus relief bill which does not address critical needs of disabled people, our families, and our service providers. Our community is hurting. Our community is dying. More than 40% of the nation's coronavirus related deaths have been people with disabilities in congregate settings, and yet the recent COVID-19 relief bill provides no dedicated funding to support people with disabilities living in their homes and prevent further admissions to congregate settings. The bill also did not provide funding to get disabled people out of dangerous congregate settings where the spread of COVID-19 has been so deadly.

While disabled people grieve the loss of our community due to this virus, we are also struggling to access much needed supports and programs. The COVID-19 relief bill also failed to provide funding for personal protective equipment for paid and unpaid direct support workers, who have provided essential services throughout this pandemic.

We applaud the dedicated support that Congress provided to increase broadband access and provide pandemic-related assistance to families for broadband. People with disabilities experience a significant digital divide, and these dollars will help keep people connected during a time of isolation. Congress did authorize some small stimulus payments, but these payments exclude adult dependents, which means that families of people with disabilities and multi-generational families will not receive adequate equitable relief. The bill included funding for health care providers and for mental health services, some of which could be used for people with disabilities, but these provisions do not say anything about ensuring that people with disabilities can transition out of or be diverted from congregate settings, and there is no guarantee that any funds will be used for this purpose. The extended increases for unemployment, rent, and SNAP assistance, as well as the support for transportation entities and the extension of the eviction moratorium until January 31, 2021 are necessary and should not have taken Congress months to agree upon, leaving millions uncertain of where they would live, how they would eat, how they would afford to care for themselves and their families, and how they themselves would get the care they need.

The significant delay of this COVID-19 relief package is a direct failure of our leaders in Congress to prioritize the American people. We are outraged at the way in which our representatives and leaders in Congress have failed to support the health and well-being of people with disabilities, and Americans at large. This pandemic and its far-reaching economic impacts are far from over, and the new Congress must take immediate action in January to secure increased funding of home and community based services, paid family leave, funding to support local, Tribal, and state governments, financial aid for back-paying rent and avoiding eviction, extensions of increased unemployment assistance, and more.

You can read more details about what is in this final signed package at <https://cnn.it/380fTAR>. Both chambers of Congress are meeting in the final week of the year to reconsider several issues - including a veto override on defense spending, and a measure that would increase taxpayer payments from \$600 to \$2,000, so there is still a chance for some of the gaps in this package to be filled. You can contact your congressional representatives at <http://www.infonetiowa.org/take-action/>.

New Faces in DC, Special Election in Iowa

The 2021 Congressional Session begins on Monday, January 4, 2021. Iowa will have three new faces at the US Capitol when the new Congress is seated - Ashley Hinston (R-Marion, who was elected to represent Iowa's First Congressional District), Randy Feenstra (R-Hull, who was elected to represent Iowa's Fourth Congressional District), and Mariannette Miller-Meeks, who was elected to represent Iowa's Second Congressional District.

State Senator Mariannette Miller-Meeks was certified the winner in her Congressional race, winning by only six votes. Former State Senator Rita Hart has asked a congressional panel to review and overturn the election results, and force state officials to count 22 excluded votes and conduct a uniform hand recount in all 24 counties. Speaker of the US House Nancy Pelosi announced she would "provisionally" seat Sen. Miller-Meeks.

This has been tricky because Miller-Meeks currently is in the middle of her four-year State Senate term. Hearing she would be seated and sworn into Congress, Miller-Meeks submitted her letter of resignation on December 30. Governor Kim Reynolds has set the special election for her Ottumwa-area seat (Senate District 41) for Tuesday, January 26. We have heard former State Senator Mark Chelgren is interested in running for the seat as a Republican, and potentially Mary Stewart, who lost to Miller-Meeks two years ago with 48.8% of the vote. Watch @infonetiowa or infonetiowa.org for breaking news

New Committees in 2021

The *2021-2022 Guide to the Iowa Legislature* will be in the mail soon, but we wanted to make sure you knew the legislators that have been assigned to the committees that will address some of the issues you care about. New this year is a House Information Technology Committee to address expanding access to broadband (high speed Internet) throughout the state.

Human Resources Committee: This committee deals with human services issues such as Medicaid, childcare, vaccinations, public health, health care, mental health and disability services, and other human needs issues. The following legislators serve on this committee in the House and Senate - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Jeff Edler (Chair), Mark Costello (Vice-Chair), Liz Mathis (Ranking Member), Joe Bolkcom, Jim Carlin, Julian Garrett, *Jesse Green, Pam Jochum, Craig Johnson, Mark Lofgren, Amanda Ragan, Annette Sweeney, and *Sarah Trone Garriott.

Representatives: Ann Meyer (Chair), *Steve Bradley (Vice Chair), Beth Wessel-Kroeschell (Ranking Member), Marti Anderson, *Eddie Andrews, Rob Bacon, Liz Bennett, Michael Bergan, *Brooke Boden, Timi Brown-Powers, *Dennis Bush, Cecil Dolecheck, Tracy Ehlert, John Forbes, Joel Fry, Tom Jeneary, Shannon Lundgren, Mary Mascher, Tom Moore, Anne Osmundson, and Kristin Sunde.

Education Committee: Like the name implies, anything dealing with schools and education, including special education, goes through this committee. The following legislators serve on this committee in the House and Senate - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Amy Sinclair (Chair), *Jeff Taylor (Vice-Chair), Herman Quirnbach (Ranking Member), Jim Carlin, Claire Celsi, Chris Cournoyer, Eric Giddens, *Tim Goodwin, Craig Johnson, Tim Kraayenbrink, Ken Rozenboom, Jackie Smith, Annette Sweeney, *Sarah Trone Garriott, and Brad Zaun.

Representatives: Dustin Hite (Chair), Skyler Wheeler (Vice Chair), Ras Smith (Ranking Member), Jacob Bossman, Holly Brink, *Sue Cahill, Cecil Dolecheck, Molly Donahue, Tracy Ehlert, Joel Fry, Ruth Ann Gaines, *Garrett Gobble, *Chad Ingels, David Kerr, Mary Mascher, Tom Moore, Sandy Salmon, Ray Sorensen, Sharon Steckman, *Henry Stone, Phil Thompson, John Wills, and Cindy Winckler.

New Committees in 2021 *(continued from page 8)*

Transportation Committee: Again, the committee's name says it all. Anything related to transportation, roads, drivers' licenses, etc. goes through this committee. The following legislators serve on this committee in the House and Senate - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Waylon Brown (Chair), Tom Shipley (Vice-Chair), Eric Giddens (Ranking Member), Tony Bisignano, *Dawn Driscoll, *Mike Klimesh, Carrie Koelker, Tim Kraayenbrink, Jim Lykam, Ken Rozenboom, Jackie Smith, Todd Taylor, and Dan Zumbach.

Representatives: Brian Best (Chair), Dave Maxwell (Vice Chair), Bob Kressig (Ranking Member), Jacob Bossman, *Steve Bradley, *Dennis Bush, *Mark Cisneros, Dennis Cohoon, John Forbes, Thomas Gerhold, *Steve Hansen, Jennifer Konfrst, John Landon, Ann Meyer, Brian Meyer, Norlin Mommsen, Kristen Running-Marquardt, *Brent Siegrist, Kristin Sunde, Jon Thorup, and Gary Worthan.

Health and Human Services Budget Subcommittee: This committee deals funding for human services programs including Medicaid, childcare, public health, mental health and disability services, and other human services. The following legislators serve on this committee, which meets jointly (House and Senate meet together) - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Mark Costello (Chair), Jeff Edler (Vice-Chair), Amanda Ragan (Ranking Member), Amanda Ragan, *Mike Klimesh, and *Sarah Trone Garriott.

Representatives: Joel Fry (Chair), *Eddie Andrews (Vice Chair), John Forbes (Ranking Member), *Steve Bradley, Timi Brown-Powers, Molly Donahue, Monica Kurth, Shannon Lundgren, and Ann Meyer.

Education Budget Subcommittee: This committee deals with funding for all levels of education, from early childhood to K-12 to community colleges and state universities. Also funded in this budget are libraries, vocational rehabilitation and state specialty schools (Braille and Sightsaving School, School for the Deaf). The following legislators serve on this joint committee - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Chris Cournoyer (Chair), *Jesse Green (Vice-Chair), Jackie Smith (Ranking Member), Herman Quirnbach, and Annette Sweeney.

Representatives: David Kerr (Chair), *Garrett Gobble (Vice Chair), Cindy Winckler (Ranking Member), *Sue Cahill, Cecil Dolecheck, Tom Moore, *Brent Siegrist, Art Staed, and Dave Williams.

Transportation/Capitals/Infrastructure Budget Subcommittee: This committee funds transportation (including public transportation and trails) and infrastructure projects that are funded by gambling dollars (like water quality, state parks, water trails, and more). The following legislators serve on this joint committee - *means they are new to the Legislature in 2021.

Senators: Craig Johnson (Chair), Zach Whiting (Vice-Chair), Janet Petersen (Ranking Member), *Dawn Driscoll, and Jim Lykam.

Representatives: Jacob Bossman (Chair), Anne Osmundson (Vice Chair), Dennis Cohoon (Ranking Member), Liz Bennett, *Brooke Boden, Bob Kressig, Mary Mascher, Joe Mitchell, and *Carter Nordman.

There are many other committees that may address issues you care about. Insurance (including health insurance) issues often go through the Commerce Committees. The Senate Commerce Committee will address high-speed Internet issues, but the House's new Information Technology Committee will deal with that in that chamber. Tax issues go through the Ways and Means Committees, including the Governor's proposal to increase the state sales tax to pay for water quality and mental health.

The Appropriations Committees will approve all budgets that go through the budget subcommittees, and set the "targets" for each budget subcommittee (that is, the total amount of money they have to spend). State Government Committees deal with voting and election law, as well as professional licensing issues. You can see the full list of committees at <https://bit.ly/38NgWTR>.

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Changes Coming in 2021

The new year seems like a good time for a refresh - so we're making changes to our website, action center, and resources. They will have a new look, but the information they contain will continue to be easy to find and use. Stay tuned for tools on using our new Action Center for your virtual advocacy, and watch your mailbox in mid-January for the updated and revised Guide to the Iowa Legislature. This Guide is mailed to all infoNET readers - as long as we have your address. If we don't, you'll get an email from us soon asking for it (or you can access it electronically).

If you have friends or family who want to get the Guide, just have them join ID Action and sign up for infoNET here or call 1-866-432-2846 (it's all free!).

c/o Iowans with Disabilities in Action

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