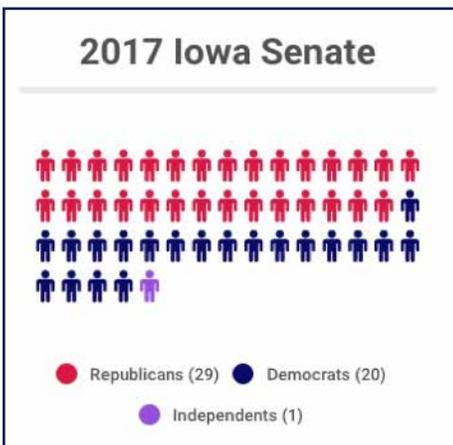




## Change is Here & Legislators Back to Work

Iowa's 150 newly elected state legislators returned to the Iowa Capitol to begin the 110-day legislative session. But not everything is the same; there is a new sheriff in town.

For the first time since 1998, Republicans control the Iowa House of Representatives, Iowa Senate, and the Governor's office. There are new leaders, new committee chairs, and new faces at the Capitol, and they are all ready to get to work.



However, the first two weeks were like any other session – speeches and applause, handshakes and hugs, signing papers and picking seats, and trying to get used to chaotic schedules and the constant sound of voices around them. But it was clear as bills started coming out that this was not going to be a quiet session.

Legislators have already introduced some controversial bills – including defunding Planned Parenthood, expanding gun rights, cutting the power of unions, and changing voting laws.

The first big controversy legislators face is cutting the state budget. As you'll read in the next article, legislators need to cut \$120 million out of the current state budget with only five months left in the fiscal year. Many legislators are unhappy about this, but the state does not have enough money to go around, and tough decisions need to be made.

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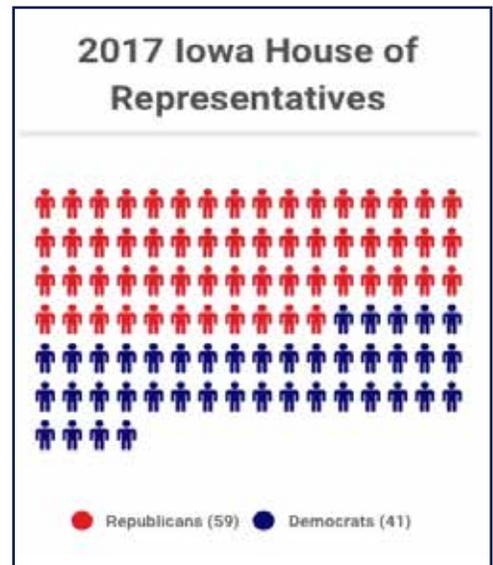
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## Change is Here *(continued from page 1)*

So the first bill new legislators will need to vote on is a \$120 million “deappropriation bill” – which cuts money that programs had planned to spend this year. The Governor recommended cuts to Medicaid (\$13.9 million), other human services (\$20.3 million), and public health programs (\$2.5 million), but every state agency was hit with an average of 4.5% cuts. Some of those cuts may be permanent – others may be restored when legislators start preparing the budget for next year.

While the House and Senate leaders and Governor Branstad are all Republicans, they are not in agreement on the budget cuts. We do not have much detail on these proposed cuts, as each agency was given the ability to decide how best to make the cuts. We do know there will be some action on this in the next two weeks, so stay tuned to our social media feeds and website ([www.infonetiowa.org](http://www.infonetiowa.org)).



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## Voter ID Bill Likely in 2017

Iowa’s Secretary of State (SOS) Paul Pate will ask to change state laws this year to require Iowans show identification when voting at the polls or absentee.

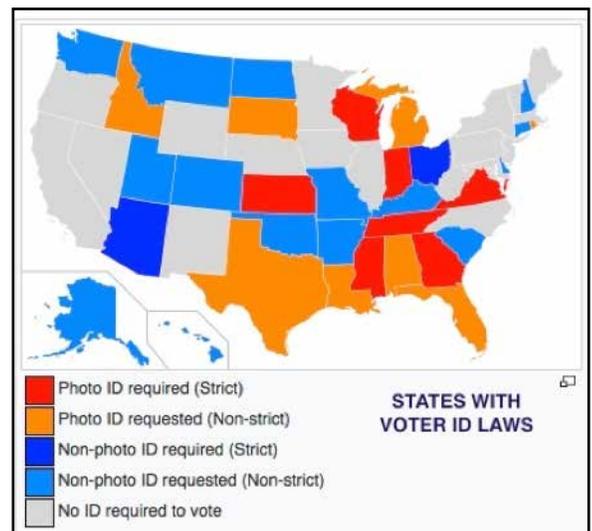
Secretary Pate discussed his plans with legislators this week, but told them he would not be requiring a photo ID. Secretary Pate said his plan will “make it easy to vote, but tough to cheat.” The plan will:

- **Require all voters to show their ID when voting at the polls.** Driver’s licenses, state IDs, military cards can be used. Free voter registration cards (no photo) will automatically be given to those without other IDs.
- **Iowans voting by absentee ballot will have to include the number on their voter registration card or ID when sending in their absentee ballot requests.** They will not have to show the ID to anyone.
- **Anyone without an ID can still vote.** “No one will be turned away,” said Secretary Pate. Voters can cast a “provisional ballot” or can have another voter verify who they are.

There are other changes, and the laws will not be fully enforced until after the 2018 elections. That leaves plenty of time for educating the public about the new laws, and getting people used to the idea of showing an ID when voting.

Secretary Pate’s bill has not yet been introduced; they wanted to make sure it was written correctly before it became public. There is another, more strict voter ID bill that has been filed by Sen. Brad Zaun (SF 47). It is not the same.

You can see frequently asked questions & a fact sheet about Secretary Pate’s Voter ID bill on our website: [www.infonetiowa.org](http://www.infonetiowa.org).





The names of your State Senator, State Representative, and US Representative are on the back page, near your mailing address.

The deadline for your legislator to request a bill this year is February 10. After that, they can only amend other bills.

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## Federal Update: Repealing “ObamaCare”

On January 13, the US House of Representatives passed the 2017 Budget Resolution 227 to 198. All but one of Iowa’s US Representatives voted for the repeal (Loebsack did not). The budget resolution begins the process of repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA, also called “ObamaCare”).



Many people with disabilities have been watching this unfold at the federal level, and many national organizations have expressed concern about getting rid of the ACA without a plan to replace it. So far there is no replacement plan, and the budget resolution was “fast tracked” (which means it can be finalized in the US Senate with 51 votes, rather than the 60 currently required to avoid a filibuster). For those of you unfamiliar with a “filibuster”, it is when those against a bill talk for hours, days, and even weeks to stop a bill’s progress and force a compromise. ACA supporters

in Congress have said they will do that to make sure all Americans have access to affordable and comprehensive health care.

If you have an opinion about the ACA, or want to know more about the replacement plan and how it will impact you, contact your members of Congress in Washington DC. You can email them using our Grassroots Action Center ([www.infonetiowa.org/take-action/](http://www.infonetiowa.org/take-action/)).

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## Special Election News

A special election was held in December to find a new State Senator to represent Davenport. State Representative Jim Lykam won that election, so he is now a State Senator. **Now there is a special election scheduled for Tuesday, January 31, 2017 to pick a new State Representative to represent Davenport (House District 89).** Here are a few things to note if you live in this Davenport district:

- Monica Kurth, a Davenport community college teacher, is the Democratic candidate. Mike Gonzales, a Le Claire police officer, is the Republican candidate.
- You can find out if you are registered to vote and find out how to register at the polls on Election Day at [www.sos.iowa.gov](http://www.sos.iowa.gov).
- Polls will be open 7 am to 9 pm on Tuesday, January 31. If you want to vote by mail, you must request a ballot by Friday, January 27. You can also vote in-person absentee ballot at the Scott County Courthouse.

## Advocacy Opportunity

Still having issues with Medicaid managed care? Want to share something that is going really well? Need to talk to a managed care organization (MCO) or state Medicaid official? Monthly listening posts are being held around the state to get your input, which is shared with legislators. The next meeting will be:

**Wednesday, February 15, 2017 @ 5:00-7:00 p.m.**  
**Spirit Lake Public Library, Community Meeting Room**  
**702 16th Street, Spirit Lake**



Go to our calendar ([www.infonetiowa.org/calendar/events/](http://www.infonetiowa.org/calendar/events/)) to find more opportunities for advocacy, including Congressional town halls, legislative forums, and input sessions like the one above. Last year we posted more than 500 events!

## New This Year @infonetiowa

Our country has a new President, but our leaders are not the only things changing. You may notice some new things in *infoNET* too.

- **We changed our website to make it easier for you to find what you need.** Read social media posts, catch up on breaking news, find a local forums, email your elected officials (including President Trump), read our newsletters, research issues, and more. Check it out at [www.infonetiowa.org](http://www.infonetiowa.org).
- **The website is now more compatible with screen readers**, so everyone has access to the same great features. Let us know if you have any problems, and thank you Mike Hoenig!
- **We are using social media more** – so you can find out what's happening, as it happens. Make sure you follow us on Twitter (@INFONETiowa) and Facebook ([www.facebook.com/infonetiowa/](http://www.facebook.com/infonetiowa/)).
- **Our mailed newsletter will be shorter –but we'll provide more detail in the electronic and online versions.** We have readers that want less detail, and others that want more. To get a balance, we are writing a shorter mailed version, and ask you to visit our website (or sign up for our electronic version) if you want more detail.
- **Coming soon – more videos!** We know that many of you are visual learners and prefer to watch your news, not read it. We may do a few during session, but you will start to see short informational videos this summer. If you know of someone that would be great talking about an issue on camera, or giving good advocacy advice, let us know!



## Bill Tracker

Stay informed! Use our online Bill Tracker to follow bills introduced this legislative session ([www.infonetiowa.org/news/bill-tracker/](http://www.infonetiowa.org/news/bill-tracker/)). It's updated daily!

*We will only show you the bills introduced during the last two weeks. A full list is always available in the Bill Tracker. Check it often, as bills are always changing and there are dozens of new bills each day.*

**Child in Need of Assistance (HF 1):** Expands the definition of “child in need of assistance” to include a child whose parent/guardian is unwilling to provide mental health treatment. (Status: House Human Resources Committee)

**Brain Injury Prevention/Coaches (HF 17):** Requires school coaches to be certified in emergency medical procedures, including CPR and use of automated external defibrillator (AED). Requires football, soccer, and wrestling matches to have a health care professional on site, and requires them to remove players showing signs of concussion. Strongly encourages other contact sports to do the same. (Status: House Education Committee)

**Mental Health Advocate Reporting (HF 50):** Allows county-appointed mental health advocates to file reports as needed, or as required by the courts (instead of quarterly reports). (Status: House Human Resources Committee)

**Absentee Ballot Requests (HF 55):** Allows voters to request absentee ballots by email or online. (Status: House State Government Committee)

**Voter ID (SF 47):** Requires all voters show a photo ID when voting. This is not the Secretary of State's bill. (Status: Senate State Government Committee)

**MS Support Fund (SF 48):** Creates a lottery game to provide funding for research and services for individuals with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). (Status: Senate State Government Committee)

**Cytomegalovirus Public Health Initiative (SF 51):** Requires collaboration among state and local health agencies and other organizations to educate and raise awareness of cytomegalovirus. (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee)

**Social Security Benefits (SF 58):** Eliminates state tax on social security benefits. (Status: Senate Ways & Means Committee)

**Straight Party Voting (SF 60):** Eliminates the ability to vote a “straight party” ballot with one checkmark. (Status: Senate State Government Committee)

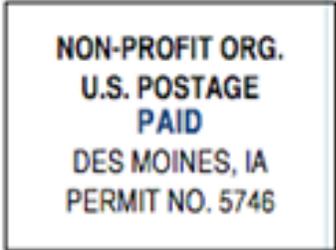
**Family and Medical Leave Program Study (SF 63):** Studies the possibility of creating a paid family and medical leave program to allow people to take time off work to care for loved ones without losing wages. (Status: Senate State Government Committee)

**Cytomegalovirus Public Health Initiative (SF 68):** Creates a cytomegalovirus public health initiative including congenital cytomegalovirus (CMV) screening requirements and a public education and awareness program. (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee)

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PO Box 737  
Des Moines, IA 50303



[FIRST] [LAST] OR CURRENT RESIDENT  
[ADDRESS]  
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP]-[ZIP4]

Representing you in Congress:  
Sen. Charles Grassley  
Sen. Joni Ernst  
Rep. [Representative]

Representing you @ State Capitol:  
Sen. [Name-Senate]  
Rep. [Name-House]

**infoNET** is a free policy resource published by ID Action, with support from the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council. You can contact us at 866/432-2846 • [www.idaction.org](http://www.idaction.org) • [www.infonetiowa.org](http://www.infonetiowa.org).

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## Bill Tracker *(continued from page 5)*

**Mental Health Information Disclosure (SF 75):** Allows mental health professionals to disclose mental health information to a law enforcement officers, jailors, county attorneys, and parole/probation officers to protect the person or others. (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee)

**Clinical Art Therapist Licensure (SF 85):** Requires clinical art therapists be licensed by the Behavioral Health Board. (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee)

**CARE Act (SF 90):** Requires hospitals allow each patient/guardian to designate a caregiver to provide after-care assistance when leaving the hospital and going home. Requires the hospital let the caregiver know the patient is being discharged, and explain the type of care needed (and offer to demonstrate). (Status: Senate Human Resources Committee)

**Brain Injury Prevention/Helmets (SF 96):** Requires kids (under 18) to wear helmets while riding motorcycles, motorized bicycles, and all-terrain vehicles. (Senate Transportation Committee)

**Governor’s FY17 Deappropriation/Reappropriation Bill (SSB 1018):** Cuts planned spending for the current year by \$120 million. This includes cuts to Medicaid (\$13.9 million), human services (\$20.3 million), education (\$5.5 million), vocational rehabilitation (\$265,036), and public health programs (\$2.5 million).

**Advocating Change Day 2017 is April 5, 2017**  
Details at [www.idaction.org](http://www.idaction.org)