



Capitol Dome to Home

Gary Carlson
State Representative

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January 18th Newsletter

Capitol Update

This week the Legislature and Legislative committees were quite active with many bills introduced covering a wide variety of topics. Similar to last year, I chair the Transportation Committee and serve on the committees for Commerce, Economic Growth, Local Government, and Transportation and Infrastructure Appropriations. These committees formally meet once or twice each week during the session and work on individual bills is done via assigned subcommittees. Additionally I serve on the Innovation Council, which is a committee in the Iowa Economic Development Authority, and on the Pension Committee. These committees meet during the year.

Several budget committees discussed the Governor’s proposed fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget and the adjustments needed for the current FY 2018 budget.

As we prepare the FY 2019 budget K-12 education funding is a critical component. An independent study recently released examined the funding changes made in K-12 education across the entire United States. Iowa is fourth in the nation in K-12 funding increases, clearly indicating the priority Iowan’s place on educating our youth. As you will see in the table below, since 2011 Iowa has invested an additional \$735 million. These investments have brought total annual spending on K-12 to nearly \$3.2 billion, accounting for 45% of the state’s entire budget.

While other areas of the state budget have seen reductions in recent years, House Republicans have protected schools from any cuts during this time. The Legislature will continue to make investments in K-12 education and will set school funding for the 2018-19 school year within the first 30 days of session.

Fiscal Year (school year)	Percent Growth	State Cost Per Pupil	State Spending Increase
FY12 (11/12)	0%	\$5883	\$178 million
FY13 (12/13)	2%	\$6001	\$29.2 million
FY14 (13/14)	2% + 2% one-time	\$6121	\$63.2 million + \$57 million
FY15 (14/15)	4%	\$6366	\$148.6 million
FY16 (15/16)	1.25%	\$6446	\$87.4 million
FY17 (16/17)	2.25%	\$6591	\$135.1 million
FY18 (17/18)	1.11%	\$6664	\$90.9 million
7-yr total increase			\$732.4 million

Last session, legislation passed giving schools unprecedented flexibility over their resources and home rule authority. This session Legislators will continue to look for opportunities to provide schools with even more funding flexibility so districts can better meet the specific needs of their students and teachers. Continuing to empower locally-elected school boards will continue to be a goal.



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Future Ready Iowa

Governor Reynolds has stated building a skilled and prepared workforce is a top priority this session and has proposed the Future Ready Iowa Act. She has set a goal for 70% of Iowa's workforce to earn some sort of postsecondary degree or certification by 2025.

The Governor and Legislators across the State are continuously hearing that while unemployment is low, many Iowans lack the training or experience needed for high-paying careers that employers are trying to fill. The House will be looking for opportunities this session to connect our K-12 schools with community colleges and local businesses to create a workforce pipeline across the entire state. The Future Ready Iowa Act will help reach this goal, ensuring future generations of Iowans are prepared for the careers and emerging industries of tomorrow.

Traffic Cameras

Legislation continuing from last year dealing with traffic cameras has surfaced early this year. One bill emerging from the Local Government committee calls for an outright ban on traffic cameras. Another bill in the Transportation Committee, which passed in the Senate last year, still allows cameras to be used by cities but puts several more restrictions on their use to address concerns raised by many Iowans. Revenue generation is a factor in the discussions. State control versus local control is also a factor.

This is one of those topics that truly piques the interest of many Iowans and emotion runs high on both sides of the issue. No matter the ultimate outcome of the final legislation, there will be people dissatisfied on one side of the issue. I have heard from many of you on both sides of the issue and welcome your continued comments.

Visitors

The City of Muscatine received a "best development award" from the 1000 Friends of Iowa organization this week. The 1000 Friends of Iowa organization was founded in 1998 and has been recognizing outstanding projects throughout the state through their best development awards since 2001. The awards celebrate sustainable development across Iowa and highlight communities that exemplify the pillars of sustainability, efficiency, and creativity in design. The City of Muscatine was highlighted for their work in connecting Deep Lakes Park to Kent-Stein Park with bike pathways.



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[Jim Edgmond, Randy Hill, Representative Carlson, Mike Fisher, and Senator Lofgren](#)

Forum Schedule

Muscatine Forum

9:00-10:30am, February 3rd, 2018

Muscatine Community College, 152 Colorado St, Muscatine, IA 52761

In the interim, if you would like to contact me regarding any matter, please email gary.carlson@legis.iowa.gov

If you know of anyone who would like to receive my newsletters, please feel free to contact me and I will add them to the distribution list.