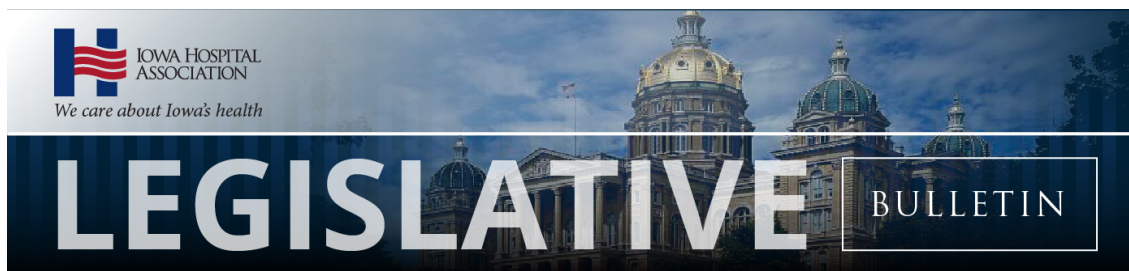


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### Week 16 of the Legislative Session ends with work yet to complete

This week marks the end of the 110<sup>th</sup> day of legislative session – the goal set for adjournment. But the Legislature has at least one to two weeks of work left to complete, including nearly all budget bills.

The House and Senate are at odds on several issues, including the budget and taxes. Unfortunately, most hospital priorities remain lodged in the discord. The Senate is still refusing to advance most hospital priorities passed by the House. A full list of outstanding priorities can be found below.

Both the House and Senate have officially introduced budget bills that are markedly different. The House has introduced [House File 891](#), which includes payment parity for telehealth mental health services. The Iowa Hospital Association is registered in support of this legislation. The Senate version does not include payment parity and the Senate continues to resist priorities like telehealth payment parity and EMS.

Please continue to urge your Senators to support hospital priorities like telehealth and EMS. The legislative session is in its final stretch, and advocacy is important now more than ever.

Stay tuned to Legislative Bulletin for outcomes of priorities over the next couple of weeks. Thank you for all you do.

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### Legislators are still working on EMS

This week, the Iowa Hospital Association has learned that legislators are continuing to negotiate legislation to ease the process for counties and city emergency medical service districts to declare

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legislation to ease the process for counties and city emergency medical service districts to declare EMS an essential service, allowing services to levy tax funds to support the service. An amendment to the bill, [House File 562](#), has not been formally introduced, but it could include:

- The ability for voters to choose levying local option sales taxes rather than, or in addition to, property taxes.
- Training center language from legislation reviewed in 2020.
- Private ambulance services having access to state grants.

The Iowa Hospital Association will continue to follow these developments and will provide updates as they occur.

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## COVID passports? Not in Iowa

Companion bills [House File 889](#) and [Senate File 610](#) were filed this week in both chambers. These bills prohibit the mandatory disclosure of whether a person has received a vaccination for COVID-19 and would disqualify certain entities from receiving state grants or contracts if they ask for this information. The bills also have a provision that specifically exempts health care facilities, including hospitals, from this prohibition.

Both versions of the bill moved swiftly out of committees with the urging of leadership in both chambers. The bill passed in the House as written, 58-35. The Iowa Hospital Association will keep hospitals updated with this bill as it progresses in the Senate.

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## There is still no tort reform

The tort reform bill, [House File 592](#), has been on the House debate calendar for several weeks, with no certainty it will be debated. This bill would place a \$1 million cap on noneconomic damages in medical malpractice cases. The Iowa Hospital Association encourages advocates to continue their grassroots efforts to let the House know how important tort reform is for hospitals.

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## Broadband expansion signed into law

Last week, both chambers approved [House File 848](#), the governor's priority broadband expansion bill for broadband connectivity and high-speed technology for rural communities. The governor signed the bill into law Monday. The funding for the grants has been agreed to by both chambers at \$100 million, less than the \$150 million requested by the governor.

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## Legislative forums scheduled

Meeting with legislators while they're in their home districts is a great way to advocate for issues you care about. Check the list below of upcoming legislative events for the next two weeks. Some of these events are virtual and others are in person. [Click here](#) for the full list of scheduled legislative forums.

### *Friday, April 30*

- Noon-1 pm, Council Bluffs Legislative Coffee with area legislators, [Virtual Link](#).
- 1-2 pm, Fort Dodge Eggs and Issues with area legislators, [Virtual Link](#).

**Saturday, May 8**

- 9-10 am, Altoona Coffee Chat with Sen. Nunn and Rep. Lohse, [Virtual Link](#).

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## How to stay in the know

Throughout legislative session, the Iowa Hospital Association has developed several ways to keep you informed. Stay tuned throughout session for weekly editions of Legislative Bulletin, biweekly Capitol Update, IHA's Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn account (web addresses are below). IHA also will mobilize hospital advocates through action alerts when legislators need to hear about hospital issues. **Advocates can sign up for email or text message VoterVoice Action Alerts at <https://www.ihaonline.org/advocacy/iha-hospital-action-network/>.**

Links to bookmark:

- [IHA's bill tracker](#)
- [Facebook page](#)
- [Twitter account](#)
- [LinkedIn account](#)
- [Legislator contact information](#)



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