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VoterVoice Action Alert – advocacy needed for telehealth and EMS

The Iowa Hospital Association has issued an action alert urging advocates to take immediate action to reach out to Senators about two priorities – reimbursement for mental health services provided via telehealth and funding for EMS. These bills passed the House on a bipartisan vote and without resistance but are not being advanced in the Senate. The second funnel is looming next week, and your advocacy is needed to keep these bills alive:

- [House File 294](#) would require health carriers to provide equal reimbursement for telehealth mental health services.
- [House File 562](#) would ease the process required to declare EMS an essential service and levy tax funds for support. This legislation would remove the lengthy petition process and the sunset provision that requires a vote every five years to retain the funding.

Click [HERE](#) to send an action alert to your Senator.

Attending a legislative forum is another great way to connect with your legislators on these issues. A full list of forums is included in this edition of the Legislative Bulletin.

The Iowa Hospital Association and hospital leaders have been meeting with Senate leadership to stress the importance of both bills and encourage them to move these issues forward. The Iowa Hospital Association thanks all the hospitals that have helped share their perspectives on these issues.

Please continue to advocate for these bills and watch for future alerts. For further questions or talking points, please reach out to the Iowa Hospital Association's Government Relations Team.

Week 11 focuses on floor debate with second funnel looming

This week, the House and Senate were busy with floor debate on several bills leading up to the second funnel. Controversial issues, like charter schools and gun permits, were debated this week and took much legislative energy.

A few bills debated this week included:

- On Tuesday, the House debated [House File 586](#), Broadband Access. This bill is a priority of Gov. Kim Reynolds' administration and aims to expand broadband statewide. The bill passed out of the House with an amendment and will now go to the Senate.
- On Wednesday, the House debated several bills. [House File 735](#), Ambulatory Centers ER Care, requires ambulatory surgical centers to have written emergency care policies and access to necessary equipment, staff and ambulance services. This bill unanimously passed out of the House and has moved to the Senate.
- [House File 736](#), Medicaid Overpayments, does not allow the state or a Medicaid managed care organization to seek repayment of an overpayment to a health care provider if the overpayment happened more than 24 months before. This bill passed out of the House with an amendment and now will go to the Senate.
- [House File 838](#), Insurance Omnibus, makes insurance changes. Of note is an amendment attached to the bill during debate that creates an interim study on health insurance mandates, including nonmedical switching and infertility treatments. The Iowa Hospital Association will carefully monitor this bill as it passes to the Senate to ensure that provider input is part of this study.

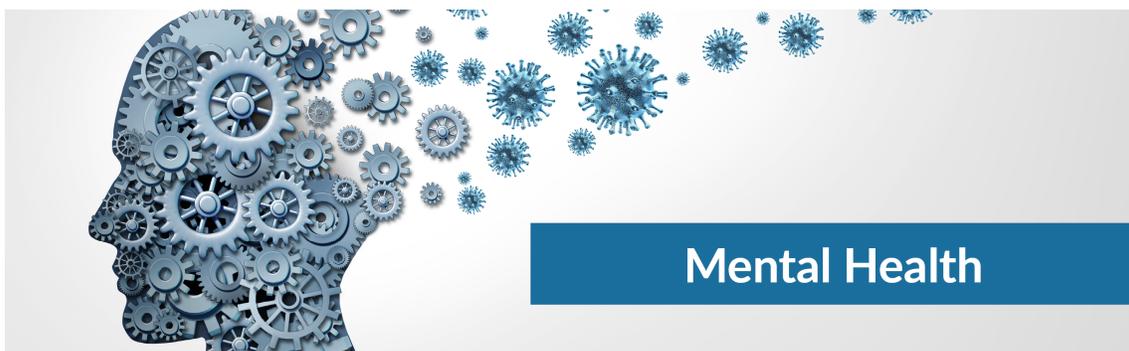
Signs of budget process beginning

The budget process is the final phase of legislative session, and there are signs that this process is beginning.

The Revenue Estimating Conference met Friday, March 19. The conference indicated that estimates are up from last year by 1.9% and projected \$8.07 billion in state revenue.

The conference's estimates typically kick off the release of legislative budget targets, and a budget target now has been released in the Senate. The Senate target for the state's budget is \$7.9 billion. Although specific targets for budget subcommittees have not been released, the Senate has provided some additional information about what will be included in their version of the budget. The target includes \$98 million for health care and \$60 million for mental health. Detail about funding for mental health is in the next article.

The Iowa Hospital Association is waiting for more details about this target and for House targets to be released. Continue to monitor the Legislative Bulletin and the Iowa Hospital Association's social media feeds for further information.



Mental health funding introduced in Senate

[Senate File 587](#), which provides tax changes including a shift in mental health funding, moved out of subcommittee and full committee this week. The bill is now eligible for debate in the Senate.

Senate File 587 is a large and complicated tax bill that the Iowa Hospital Association is still analyzing. The bill appears to shift funding for mental health and disability service regions from property taxes to state appropriations using a formula and methodology. Senate Republicans say this bill will shift \$60 million in funding from county property taxes to state appropriations and create a government risk pool to supplement funding to the regions. Senate Democrats are concerned the bill will eliminate a historically stable funding source for mental health spending and end the property tax backfill.

The Iowa Hospital Association is thankful the conversation on mental health funding continues at the Capitol. The association's goal is stable and consistent funding for mental health in Iowa. We will continue to provide more updates to you as this legislation moves forward.

Governor signs primary loan repayment program bill

On Monday, Gov. Reynolds signed a number of bills into law, including [Senate File 129](#), which makes changes to the Primary Care Loan Repayment Program. This bill expands the rural primary care loan repayment programs to other areas, including OB-GYN, and changes some of the mileage requirements. This bill will ease some of the burden on rural physicians for their loan repayment and expand access to the program. The Iowa Hospital Association was registered in support of this legislation.



Listen to IHA's Capitol Update

The Iowa Hospital Association knows the importance of updates coming from the Capitol and works to provide easy ways to access that information. Members now have a convenient way to stay up to date on advocacy issues with the Iowa Hospital Association Capitol Update.

Capitol Update can be accessed through a Zoom video recording or audio-only version.

- [Podcast Link](#)
- [Vodcast Link](#)

Questions can be emailed to [Joah Hogan](#) at IHA.

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 legislative events occurring over the next few weeks. Some of these events are virtual and others are in person.

Saturday, March 27

- 8-9 am Legislative Forum, Shenandoah
- 8-10 am Eggs and Issues, Rock Rapids
- 8:30-9:30 am Eggs and Issues, Oskaloosa
- 9:30-11:30 am Legislative Forum, Johnson County
- 9:30-11 am Legislative Coffee, Clinton/DeWitt
- 10-11 am Legislative Coffee, Walcott
- 10-11 am Town Hall, Marcus
- 10-11:30 am Legislative Town Hall, Sioux City
- 10-Noon Talk With Officials, Urbandale
- 10-11 am Legislative Forum, Clarinda
- 10-11 am Coffee With Your Officials, Carlisle
- 10:30-Noon Legislative Forum, Quad Cities
- 10:30-Noon Talk With Officials, Urbandale
- 1-2 pm Town Hall, Sheldon
- 1-2 pm Legislative Forum, Mount Ayr

Monday, March 29

- 8-10:30 am Marti's Morning Coffee, Des Moines

Tuesday, March 30

- 7-8 pm Blue Statehouse Alert, statewide

Friday, April 2

- Noon-1 pm Lunch With Lindsay, Dubuque

Saturday, April 3

- 8-9 am Legislative Coffee, Guthrie Center
- 9-10 am Legislative Discussion, Muscatine
- 9-10 am Legislative Coffee, Grinnell
- 10-11 am Legislative Coffee, Greenfield

Monday, April 5

- 8-10:30 am Marti's Morning Coffee, Des Moines

Tuesday, April 6

- 7-8 pm Blue Statehouse Alert, statewide

Friday, April 9

- 9-9:45 am Legislative Event Series, Quad Cities
- 4:30-6:30 pm Legislative Forum, Cedar Valley

Tuesday, April 10

- 8:30-9:15 am Legislative Forum, Bronson
- 9-10 am Coffee Chat, Altoona
- 9-10:30 am Legislative Coffee, Creston
- 9:30-10:15 am Legislative Forum, Sergeant Bluff
- 10-11 am Legislative Forum, Carroll
- 11-Noon End of Year Legislative Forum, Quasqueton

Monday, April 12

- 8-10:30 am Marti's Morning Coffee, Des Moines

Tuesday, April 13

- 7-8 pm Blue Statehouse Alert, statewide

Friday, April 23

- 11-11:45 am April Capitol Chat

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). The Iowa Hospital Association also will mobilize hospital advocates through VoterVoice Action Alerts when legislators need to hear about hospital issues. **Advocates can sign up for email or text message 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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