

Legislative Newsletter

Feb. 28, 2020



In the wake of the first funnel legislative deadline, action at the capitol has slowed down. Debates on mostly non-controversial bills have started in both chambers, though bills targeting local control have made it through the House chamber.

House File 2477, the “agro-tourism” bill, prohibits counties from requiring an “agricultural experience activity” from getting a special use or similar permit if the experience is on land used for farming. The bill passed 85-11 and goes to the Senate.

House File 2502, which prohibits local governments from requiring shooting ranges in their jurisdiction from complying with any conditions stricter than state law. It also prohibits local governments from passing ordinances regulating the storage of weapons and ammunition, voiding existing ordinances. An amendment that further restricts local governments from enacting motions, resolutions or policies on these matters was adopted. The bill passed 52-44 and was sent to the Senate.

House File 2512 (formerly House Study Bill 632), the ag-exemption zoning bill, passed the House 66-29 and goes to the Senate. Johnson and Linn Counties met with their senators this week to discuss concerns about this bill and how it impacts local control in hopes of amending the Senate version of the bill.

Senate Study Bill 3194 is the Governor’s health and human services appropriations bill, which was introduced in the wake of the first funnel. Historically the General Assembly reviews but writes their own budget bills.

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In the House:

House File 2221 passed unanimously and has been sent to the Senate. This bill requires that one member of a local board of health be a physician or a physician's assistant, an ARNP, or advanced practice nurse rather than requiring that one member be a physician.

House File 2222, the Medicaid mental disease waiver bill, was amended on the floor with a strike-after amendment. The bill was introduced as requiring the Department of Human Services to request a federal waiver for reimbursement for services to Medicaid-eligible persons with a serious mental disease who were in a Mental Health Institute. As amended, the bill now requires the Department of Human Services to study mental health services in Iowa and determine based on the study's recommendations if the state should seek a federal waiver. The bill was unanimously passed as amended and will go to the Senate.

House File 2238, pertaining to rules for minors running food sales (cookies, lemonade stands, etc.), also passed the House unanimously and will go to the Senate.

House File 2308, the open meetings bill, passed unanimously and goes to the Senate. There were several open meetings and records bills this session. This particular one deems that any deliberations or actions taken by a government within the budgetary duties of the body are subject to the open meetings laws. The bill also includes matters involving students and personnel to the "good cause" list to go into a closed session.

On the Senate side:

The county engineers bill, **Senate File 2025**, which strikes the requirement that counties be adjacent in order to jointly hire a county engineer, passed the chamber unanimously and will go to the House.

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Senate File 2196, which moves the date of the repeal of the Iowa Cell Tower Siting Act to 2025, passed 50-0 and now goes to the House.

Senate File 2360, the classroom behavior bill, was amended and then unanimously passed to send to the House. The amendments adopted add a teacher's failure to implement an individualized education plan (IEP) or to do professional developments under BEE professional rules. The amendments also have corrections related to IEP's and transportation reimbursement. The House version of this bill has been renumbered to **House File 2532**.

The Senate Government Oversight Committee passed **Senate File 2395** (formerly Senate File 639) on a 3-2 line. This bill is in regards to government lobbying. It would require local governments using a lobbyist to hire that individual or firm through the RFP process (already a common practice). The bill also establishes reporting requirements if a lobbyist is hired or if anyone with the local government spends more than 10 hours a month in lobbying. Lobbying records would not be subject to any exception in the open records law.

Renumbered bills:

Senate Study Bill 3098 is now **Senate File 2394**. This bill pertains to county courthouses and deems the following: the physical facilities for district courts are the property of the cities and counties, therefore putting the physical security of those facilities under the control of the cities and counties; that questions about security to be non-justiciable, and; counties do not need court approval to enter into sharing agreements with neighboring counties. This bill passed the Senate Government Oversight Committee unanimously with no amendments.

Senate Study Bill 3178 is now **Senate File 2368**: Bans cities and counties from passing ordinances that allow a landlord from refusing to accept federal housing vouchers, and voids already adopted ordinances.

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Senate Study Bill 3180 is now **Senate File 2388**: local animal enterprises regulation.

Senate File 2080 is now **Senate File 2391**: Ransomware attack regulations.

House Study Bill 545 is now **House File 2587**: Secretary of State technical clean up bill, which includes provisions from former-Governor Tom Vilsack's 2005 Executive Order setting up a process to automatically restore voting rights/

House Study Bill 625 is now **House File 2495**: Hazard mitigation funds.

House Study Bill 518 is now **House File 2547**: Prisoner's medical expense.

House Study Bill 610 is now **House File 2571**: This bill pertained to "deaths of public interest," and has been heavily amended to establish a work group to study the information shared by the DCI crime lab and county medical examiners regarding drivers killed in car accidents.

House Study Bill 674 is now **House File 2572**: public improvement contract bill (Senate File 2274 is the Senate companion bill).

House File 2035 is now **House File 2518**: This is the county supervisor pay bill, which requires a vote by the county electors if the county supervisors adopt a compensation schedule that exceeds the median annual income for the county.

House File 2318 is now **House File 2528**: Allows the elected chief government executive, or their designee, to enter into contracts in order to allow that person to request assistance in an emergency under the state-wide mutual aid compact.

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