

LET'S TALK

TOURISM



Iowa Legislative Report *Capitol News Issue # 1*

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School Start Date

Senators Johnson, Kapucuan and Kettering introduced a bill this week ([SF 37](#)) to change the school start date to August 25 and to disallow waivers for starting before that. It is unclear whether we will see a similar bill introduced in the House.

Legislators need to hear from a lot of people on this issue in order to advance it. TFI is working with a number of other groups on this issue. To help the cause, please try to get as many people as you can to



A New Session

Friday, January 21st marks the end of the Second Week of the 84th General Assembly, and it has been a whirlwind, so far. The session kicked off with 38 new faces - 33 of whom are brand new to the Legislature and 5 of whom who are making a return or are switching chambers. Last year's Democrat-controlled House, Senate and Governor's Office has yielded this year to an Iowa House that is controlled by Republicans with a 60-40 majority, a Senate that Democrats control 26-24, and the return to the Governor's Office of Governor Branstad who served four terms twelve years prior to be re-elected this past November.

The first week was marked most heavily by budget news. First, outgoing Governor Culver announced \$84 million in cuts to the state budget for the current fiscal year. Then, House Republicans, now led by new House Speaker Craig Paulsen and House Majority Leader Linda Upmeyer, introduced the first bill of the session. House Study Bill 1 (now House File 45) creates a Taxpayer Relief Fund and attempts to find \$500 million in savings within the first three years by cutting or eliminating several state programs. The bill was amended

visit
www.saveiowasummers.com
and sign the petition,
especially if they're parents
and/or teachers.

TFI's Legislative Showcase

Tuesday, February 1, 2011

5:00 to 8:00 PM

Richard O. Jacobson
Exhibition Center

Iowa State Fairgrounds, Des
Moines

Tourism Funding

Senator Joe Seng is working on a bill to increase funding for the Iowa Tourism Office to the Midwest Regional Average (excluding Illinois). This would be over \$9.1 Million. While the budget woes this year will make such a bill difficult to enact, the return on investment for tourism and marketing expenditures definitely helps us make our case. We'll have more details about this bill after it is introduced, but in the meantime, be telling your legislators about the incredible value they get for investing in tourism!.

slightly and passed the House this past Wednesday evening. HF 45 faces an uncertain future in the Iowa Senate.

Where does tourism fit into the big picture? With the large number of new legislators, it is pretty clear that our work is cut out for us. TFI members will need to call or e-mail their legislators to introduce themselves and bring them up to speed on the importance of Iowa's tourism industry and the revenue it generates for the state. **PLEASE TAKE TEN MINUTES to call or e-mail your House and Senate members TODAY.**

Don't know who your legislators are? Just use TFI's Action Center and it will figure it out for you. It's quick and easy. Click [HERE!](#)



New Department of Economic Development Director

Governor Branstad named Debi Durham of Sioux City as his new director of the Department of Economic Development. Durham has been president of the Siouxland Chamber of Commerce since 1995. She was also this year's President of the Iowa Chamber Alliance, served as president of The Siouxland Initiative (TSI) and the Siouxland Chamber Foundation. Durham was the 2002 Republican lieutenant governor candidate.



Quick Links

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[State Legislative Website](#)

Governor Branstad has said his goal is to create 200,000 new Iowa jobs over the next five years. Durham will be spearheading the conversion of the Department into a public-private partnership that will be known as the Iowa Partnership for Economic Progress.



Long Session Ahead

No one is predicting a short session this year. With new legislators, a "new" Governor, and a divided Legislature where the Democrats narrowly control the Senate and the Republicans control the House, coming to a compromise on many issues could be difficult. In addition, Iowa has started redistricting (never an easy thing but really tough when losing a Congressional seat).

With all these issues on their plates, legislators will need the full 110 days (and maybe more) to finish their work. Here are a few dates you might want to remember:

Friday, February 18 - Last day legislators can request bills. Committee chairs and leaders can still ask for bill drafts after this deadline.

Friday, March 11 - Bills need to be voted out of committee by the end of the day, or they can no longer be debated (except budget and tax bills). This is known as the "first funnel."

Friday, April 8 - Bills have just a few short weeks after the first cut-off date to make it through this "Second Funnel" deadline. Bills need to be voted out of one chamber, and then out of committee in the other chamber by this date.

Friday, April 29 - The "last" day of session. This is the 110th day, the final day legislators receive a per diem. Legislators can and do often go longer, they just do not get paid for their work after this date.

You can view the entire session timeline by clicking [HERE](#).

Your Advocacy Toolkit:

[Grassroots Contact Center](#)

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[Legislative Committee Listings](#)

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[Session Calendar](#)

[How a Bill Becomes a Law & Other Educational Information](#)

Your Capitol Team

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