

LET'S TALK TOURISM

Travel Federation of Iowa

Capitol News – 2009 Post Session

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Post 2009 Legislative Session

May 26th, 2009, was the final day for the Governor to take action on bills sent to him by the Legislature. The General Assembly sent him a total of 184 bills that required his signature. The Governor signed a total of 177 bills, and made line item vetoes on the remaining seven bills. (The Governor has the authority to cross out sections within only bills that contain appropriations.) No bills this session received a flat-out VETO from the Governor.

The TFI Bill Tracker has been updated and is available at the link below. If a bill you are looking for is not in the list, then it did not advance to the Governor for his review (unless it was tucked into a larger bill as an amendment).

The 2010 second session of the 83rd Iowa General Assembly will convene Monday, January 11, 2010. Between now and January, legislators will be holding interim meetings, attending local meetings, holding fundraisers, walking in parades and generally taking the collective pulse of the constituents they serve on a variety of issues.

They will also begin talks among themselves about how to handle the large anticipated budget shortfall they will encounter in next year's budget – estimated to be about \$903 million or 14-15%! NOW is the perfect time to call or write your legislator and tell them what issues are important to you. Weigh in about the importance of tourism marketing to drive state revenues during this tough economic time. Now is not the time to cut marketing funds!

A Brief rundown on the TFI Legislative Agenda Items

1. Iowa Tourism Budget

The Economic Development Budget (SF 469) has about a 9.2% budget cut for the department when compared to last year and the Standings Bill cut the allocation for DED regional tourism marketing by \$126K to \$958,000 and CAPPED

the amount of revenue that can be used for this purpose. We have work to do to convince legislators and the Governor to protect tourism funding.

2. School Start Date

The amendment to HF 732 that would have fixed the school start date issue was never brought up for a vote, but this issue gained a lot of discussion among legislators behind closed doors. Keep talking to your legislators about this issue!

3. TIME-21 and the Gas Tax

A gas tax increase for road infrastructure was not brought up, but the Legislature and the Governor instead did approve the I-Jobs Bonding package which is estimated at \$830 million and is contained in several different bills. The Governor has already appointed an I-Jobs Board and they held their first meeting on June 3rd. You can view a brief summary of the I-Jobs program at <http://tinyurl.com/p6fe3d>.

The TFI Bill Tracker List is Available at:

<http://www.ialobby.com/CPCBillTracker/tabid/59/Default.aspx?cid=TFI>

Remember - The bill tracker contains several functions that we are still refining. You can view individual bills along with our description in the list by pressing the "Details" link below the bill title. Additionally, you can go directly to the bill's listing on the Iowa General Assembly's website by clicking on the bill's number. If your goal is to get the full bill list and copy and paste it for your own use, you can do that by clicking the "Print All" link at the beginning of the bill list.

Your Advocacy Toolkit:

Find Your Legislator - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/findleg/>

Contact Your Legislator - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Legislators/LegislatorInfo.aspx>

Legislative Committee Listings - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/asp/Committees/CommitteeInfo.aspx>

Track Legislation (instantly updated) - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Legislation.html>

Listen to Debate (live) - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Audio/Audio.html>

House & Senate Calendars (weekly & daily) - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Chambers.html>

Session Calendar - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Current/TimeTable.html>

How a Bill Becomes a Law - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Pubinfo/bill2law.htm>

Guide to the General Assembly - <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/Central/Guides/gaguide.pdf>

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