



IOWA CITY AREA
**Business
Partnership**
the voice of business for johnson county

IOWA LEGISLATURE OPENING DAY

On Your Mark, Get Set... The second 89th Iowa General Assembly convened this morning at 10:00 am. While it is scheduled for 100 days, it will likely be condensed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

January 11, 2021 - First day of session

January 12, 2021 - Condition of the State address by Governor Reynolds, triggering the release of the Governor's proposed budget

March 5, 2021 - First "funnel" – Bills not reported out of their originating committee by this date are "dead" for the session

April 2, 2021 - Second "funnel" – House bills not passed out of Senate committees and Senate bills not passed out of House committees are "dead" for the session

April 30, 2021 - Last scheduled day of session

MEET THE 89th LEGISLATURE

The House Republicans picked up 6 seats during the election and now will hold a 59 – 41 majority. Senate Republicans maintained a 31-18 majority with a special election for Senate District 41 to fill the vacancy for new Congresswoman Mariannette Miller-Meeks.

Senator Jake Chapman was elected as the new Senate President while Senator Jason Schultz will take over as the Senate Commerce Committee Chair. Senate Democrats elected Zach Wahls to serve as the new Minority Leader.

- There are 100 members of the Iowa House of Representatives and 50 members of the Iowa Senate
- There are 17 new members in the House and 8 new members in the Senate
- There are 42 women (28%) serving in this session which is down from 45 in the last session
- There are 8 lawmakers of color in this Legislature up from 5 in the

HERE'S WHAT TO EXPECT

As the Iowa House and Senate gavelled in for the first time this morning, we heard from leadership about their plans for this session. A few of the things they are talking about are:

COVID-19 Recovery. Governor Reynolds created the Economic Recovery Advisory Board to generate policy proposals following the economic impacts of COVID-19 on the state. Many of the proposals included in the final recommendations from the task force will likely be included in the Governor's policy priorities for 2021.

Taxes. Iowans voted in 2010 to approve a three-eighths of a cent sales tax increase to fund conservation efforts around the state with Iowa's Water and Land Legacy (IWILL). However, the legislature has never passed legislation to increase the sales tax. Governor Reynolds and the legislature have both indicated tax reform is a priority however, it is unclear what that will look like at this time.

Broadband. With an unprecedented amount of Iowan's working and learning from home, the need to further expand and fund broadband has become a key priority for both the legislature and the governor. The House created a new standing committee focused on broadband legislation while Governor Reynolds created a broadband advisory ground in her Economic Recovery Advisory Board.

Budget. Revenue Estimating Conference (REC) met in December and reported the ongoing and anticipated impacts of COVID-19 on Iowa's economy. While in a much more stable position than surrounding states, Iowa is on track to recover at a similar rate as the US economy. The REC anticipates a revenue of \$7.97 billion for FY22, a 3.7% growth.

Child Care. The child care industry has been hit hard by COVID-19. With a decrease in the number of children attending child care and increased health and safety measures, the Iowa legislature will need to address child care issues in order to get Iowa's parents back to work.

And So Much More. All have said they want to make addressing the state's workforce shortage a priority. Additional priorities mentioned have included mental health funding, addressing childcare needs, and criminal justice reform.



CONNECT WITH LEGISLATORS IN 2021

Business Partnership members have a unique opportunity to speak directly to their elected officials. Join us during the 2021 legislative session to discuss the issues that are most important to you and your business.

We will be meeting online on:

January 22 - 2:30 pm

February 26- 2:30 pm

March 26 - 2:30 pm

Thank you to our sponsors:



Green State Credit Union and South Slope.

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The Business Partnership advocates for economic growth policies on the local, state and federal levels. We collaborate with the business community and other stakeholders and partners to develop our yearly policy agendas, to create a consistent voice for the region.

We are a non-partisan organization that does not endorse or donate to political candidates. We support First Amendment rights for all people and encourage elected officials, candidates and citizens to be civil in discussions and debates on policy issues and political opinions. We are committed to leading by example.

If you have particular projects or issues that you would like addressed, contact **Jennifer Banta**, Vice President, Advocacy & Community Development.



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