

## Policy Corner: Legislative Update

The Iowa legislature has been moving bills along at what feels like a record pace this year. Since opening day on January 9, the Department of Health and Human Services has been monitoring a plethora of bills that could potentially impact programs, including child support services.

Among the bills CSRU has been watching is House File 3, which relates to public assistance integrity. While similar bills have been introduced in previous years, this one is likely to be enacted. Like previous versions, the initial draft of this bill would require custodial parents (CPs) to cooperate with CSRU as a condition of eligibility. However, CSRU has proposed an amendment that would strike this requirement and instead require all Medicaid recipients to cooperate. At the time of writing, the bill had not been debated yet by the full House committee. The Senate has introduced similar legislation, Senate Study Bill 1105.

CSRU is also watching House Study Bill 126 and Senate Study Bill 1123, which relate to the organization, structure, and functions of state government. In her Condition of the State Address, Governor Kim Reynolds promised to streamline the state's operations by cutting cabinet level agencies from 37 to 16. Last year, of course, saw the merger of the Department of Human Services and Department of Public Health into the new Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. Both bills include language reflecting CSRU's proposed name change to child support services. The Senate version of the bill was approved by the State Government committee on February 22, while the House Republicans have split up sections of the 1,500-page bill among different lawmakers to dig into the details.

The first legislative "funnel" deadline is March 3, which means bills introduced in one chamber must receive approval from a full committee in that chamber to remain alive. Bills that don't reach that point in the legislative process are likely dead for the year. Both versions of the public assistance and state government reorganization bill need to pass a committee, so a flurry of activity is expected as we approach the funnel deadline.

The 90<sup>th</sup> Iowa General Assembly is scheduled to wrap up the session on April 28.