



GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS NEWSLETTER

Week 5 State Legislative Session

Childcare Legislation

Iowa House members have introduced several bills to address childcare needs across the state. Most of the bills filed provide grants, tax credits, and incentives to increase the number of childcare providers and encourage businesses to offer childcare options. The House passed several of these bills during Week 5, including:

HF 230 – *Increases the income threshold for a Child Care Tax Credit from \$45,000 to \$90,000.*

HF 370 – *Creates an incentive for employers to provide child care for their employees by providing a tax credit up to \$150,000.*

HF 260 – *Allows individuals providing child care in their homes to care for six (6) or fewer children, an increase from five (5) or fewer.*

HF 292 – *Raises the state's child care rates to the 50th percentile (according to the Market Rate Survey.)*

HF 302 – *Creates an "off-ramp" from the Child Care Assistance program so parents can continue to grow in their career without losing their child care assistance entirely, all at once.*

HF 301 – *Creates a fund to provide child care workforce grants on a dollar-for-dollar matching basis from communities. These programs are intended to help move child care providers up the pay scale and the education pathway.*

Locally, the Iowa Childcare Resource & Referral Center (a Chamber member) is seeking feedback from businesses regarding childcare issues. We encourage businesses to complete a short survey available at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FJJCCP6>

Broadband

During the Condition of the State address, Governor Reynolds announced her commitment to expanding broadband to meet the needs of Iowans. The governor's office filed HSB 133 and SSB 1089, which outline the proposed \$450 million state investment in broadband infrastructure and expansion over three years. HSB 133 was referred to the House Information Technology Committee and passed out of subcommittee on February 10. SSB 1089 was referred to the Senate Commerce Committee. Senator Koelker held a subcommittee meeting on SSB 1089 last week where there was broad support for the legislation. Commerce Committee Chair Senator Schultz asked interested parties to provide policy recommendations that could supplement the requested funding.

Housing

The governor's office also introduced SSB 1142 and HSB 178 to address housing needs across the state. These housing bills will increase workforce housing tax credits, establish a housing tax credit program, expand redevelopment tax credits, create disaster recovery housing assistance, support Main Street revitalization efforts, and support the Iowa Housing Trust Fund. Both bills passed out of subcommittee with minimal pushback. SSB 1142 was renumbered to SF 295 after passing out of the Senate Local Government committee.