

March 13, 2015

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State Policy Update

As many of you know, the first “funnel” of session occurred last week, meaning bills needed to advance through the committee of the house of origination in order to remain in consideration this year (with some exceptions). Several highlighted bills are featured below.

Bills that advanced:

The Governor’s proposed Capital Enrichment Advisory plan (now [House File 590](#)) has been modified to rename the workforce development board “the human capital enrichment board” and has been placed on the House calendar with Representative Deyoe as floor manager. The study bill in the Senate did not advance.

Iowa Employment Rides Initiative ([Senate File 234](#)) has passed the Senate and is awaiting action in the House Transportation Committee.

The Refugee Pilot Program ([Senate File 369](#) and [House File 354](#)) has been assigned to subcommittees in both chambers’ respective Appropriations Committees.

A bill that would provide for a waiver of eligibility requirements to receive a high school equivalency diploma ([House File 559](#)) has advanced and been placed on the House calendar with Representative Sieck as floor manager.

A state minimum wage increase to \$8.00/hour on July 1, 2015 and to \$8.75/hour on July 1, 2016 ([Senate File 269](#)) has passed the Senate and is awaiting action in a House Labor subcommittee.

The bills ([Senate File 258](#) and [House File 121](#)) amending the financial need criteria for gap tuition assistance have been placed on the calendars of both chambers, with Senator Wilhelm and Representative Byrnes as floor managers for their respective chambers.

Bills that did not advance:

Nurturing Iowans loan reimbursement program ([House File 479](#)) proposed by Representative Finkenauer did not pass out of subcommittee.

Senator Sinclair’s bill that would have spread out all the Iowa Opportunity Scholarship payments ([Senate File 182](#)) did not pass out of subcommittee.

Representative Steckman’s bill ([House File 132](#)) that would have established supplementary weighting for students who receive free and reduced price meals and for at-risk pupils did not pass out of subcommittee.

A proposal to increase the state minimum wage ([House File 71](#)) to \$8.20/hour on January 1, 2016, \$9.15/hour on July 1, 2016, and \$10.10/hour on January 1, 2017, did not pass out of subcommittee.

More information regarding bills that are still active can be found in the “Legislation” section.

Federal Policy Update

AIWP and nearly 150 local, state, and national organizations, have signed onto a letter drafted by the National Skills Coalition, urging both the House and Senate budget committees to adopt a budget resolution that supports adequate funding for the education and training programs that were included in the passage of WIOA. The letter also encourages the committees to support the new education and training initiatives included in President Obama's budget request.

To view the National Skills Coalition's fact sheet regarding Congressional support for WIOA programs, click [here](#).

President Obama also announced a new TechHire initiative to respond to the current job market, where about 500,000 of the 5 million job openings are in tech. This grant program would help low-skilled workers with barriers to employment access the skills needed to perform in technology jobs. It also supports "partnerships between employers, workforce boards, training institutions, nonprofit organizations, cities, and states," and supports the utilization of innovative approaches and a broad range of strategies.

To find out more, check out the [TechHire Initiative Fact Sheet from the White House](#).

The Workforce Data Quality Campaign has created a fact sheet based on frequently asked questions to help measure whether people are obtaining jobs in their field. [Take a look!](#)

Important Dates

April 3

Second Funnel

Final date for Senate bills to be reported out of House committees, and House bills out of Senate committees, to stay alive.

May 1

Target Adjournment Date

110th calendar day of the session and the date per-diem expenses will end.

Legislation

Senate File 432 (successor to [Senate Study Bill 1053](#)) - Would amend the duties of the College Student Aid Commission, including eliminating provisions requiring the Commission to develop and implement a program to assist criminal offenders in applying for higher education assistance. Proposed College Student Aid Commission bill. Passed Senate Education Committee and placed on Senate calendar with Senator Quirnbach as floor manager. Companion bill [House Study Bill 10](#) did not pass funnel.

Senate File 429 (successor to [Senate Study Bill 1239](#)) - Would strike a requirement that the state board's rules provide that for the school year beginning July 1, 2016, and each succeeding year, all student (grades 3-11) shall be administered an assessment during the last quarter of the school year that assess student progress on the core

academic standards. Would require that the assessment used after July 1, 2016 provide valid, reliable, and fair measures of student progress toward college or career readiness. Sponsored by Senate Education Committee. Passed Senate Education Committee and Senate placed on calendar with Senator Quirnbach as floor manager.

[Senate File 369](#) (successor to **[Senate File 144](#)**) and **[House File 354](#)** - Would establish a refugee family support services pilot program and make appropriations. It would increase the amount transferred to DHS from an appropriation within the Iowa Skilled Worker and Job Creation Fund to the Department of Education for an organization to provide resources and support services to international refugees for FY 2014-2015. Sponsored by Senator Petersen and Representatives Anderson, Hunter, Oldson, Ourth, Staed, Gaskill, Smith, and McConkey. Passed Senate Human Resources Committee, referred to Senate Appropriations Committee and assigned to subcommittee with Ragan, Dvorsky, and Segebart. Referred to House Appropriations Committee and assigned to subcommittee with Heaton, Oldson, and Sexton.

[Senate File 344](#) (successor to **[Senate File 108](#)**) - Would create a tax credit for apprenticeship sponsors employing an apprentice working in the construction trade at Iowa worksites. The credit would be available against the individual and corporate income tax for a portion of the wages paid to apprenticeships in the construction trade trained through an apprenticeship program. Sponsored by Senator Dotzler. Passed Senate Economic Growth Committee, referred to Senate Ways & Means Committee and assigned to subcommittee with Dotzler, Anderson, and Bolkom.

[Senate File 270](#) (successor to **[Senate File 39](#)**) - Amends that an employer has the burden to establish that a deduction from employees' wages are lawful, and amends the burdens of the employer with regards to notification by workforce development, method used to calculate wages, and maintaining proper payroll records. Sponsored by Senate Labor and Business Relations Committee. Passed Senate and referred to House Labor Committee; assigned to subcommittee with Forristall, Hunter, and Watts. Companion bill **[House File 73](#)** did not pass funnel.

[Senate File 269](#) (successor to **[Senate Study Bill 1151](#)**) - Would increase the state minimum hourly wage to \$8.00 as of July 1, 2015 and to \$8.75 as of July 1, 2016. Sponsored by Senate Labor and Business Relations Committee. Passed Senate and referred to House Labor Committee; assigned to subcommittee with Forristall, Hunter, and Watts.

[Senate File 258](#) (successor to **[Senate Study Bill 1056](#)**) and **[House File 121](#)** (successor to **[House Study Bill 12](#)**) - Amends the financial need criteria for the gap tuition assistance program. Would give first priority to persons earning incomes between 150 and 250 percent of the federal poverty level, would give second priority to persons earning incomes below 150 percent of the federal poverty level, and states that a person who is eligible for WIA or WIOA is ineligible for tuition assistance unless the funds have been fully expended by a workforce region. Sponsored by Education Committees from both chambers. Placed on the calendars of both chambers, with Senator Wilhelm and Representative Byrnes as floor managers for their respective chambers.

[Senate File 234](#) (successor to [Senate File 110](#)) - Would establish an Iowa Employment Rides Initiative and related fund in Economic Development Authority. Sponsored by Senate Economic Growth Committee. Passed Senate with Senator Mathis as floor manager and referred to House Transportation Committee.

[House File 590](#) (successor to [House Study Bill 136](#)) - **Governor's bill. Center for Human Capital Enrichment Plan.** Proposes renaming the workforce development board "the human capital enrichment board," modifying the membership and duties of the board, and creating a human capital enrichment operations teams with the purpose of implementing better alignment of education, workforce, and economic development policies through the collaboration of representatives from the public and private sectors. Passed House Economic Growth Committee and placed on House calendar with Representative Deyoe as floor manager. Companion bill [Senate Study Bill 1114](#) did not pass funnel.

[House File 559](#) (successor to [House File 462](#)) - Would provide for a waiver of eligibility requirements to receive a high school equivalency diploma from Department of Education. Sponsored by Representatives Wessel-Kroeschell and Jorgensen. Passed House Education Committee and placed on House calendar with Representative Sieck as floor manager.

[House File 421](#) (successor to [House File 215](#)) - Would expand the qualifications required to teach as a community college instructor in the subject area of career and technical education. Sponsored by House Education Committee. Passed House with Representative Byrnes as floor manager and referred to Senate.

[House File 346](#) (successor to [House Study Bill 61](#)) - Would make changes relating to at-risk programs, alternative programs and alternative schools, and returning dropout and dropout prevention programs and funding for the schools and programs. Sponsored by House Education Committee. Placed on House calendar with Representative Dolecheck as floor manager. Assigned to Senate subcommittee with Quirnbach, Hogg, and Johnson. Companion bill [Senate Study Bill 1074](#) did not pass funnel.

[House File 191](#) - Would provide a state individual income tax credit equal to 25 percent of the federal American opportunity tax credit provided in section 25a(i) of the Internal Revenue Code. Sponsored by Representative Wessel-Kroeschell. Referred to House Ways & Means Committee.

[House File 190](#) - Would allow taxpayers to deduct from the computation of net income for purposes of the individual income tax the qualified tuition and related expenses of postsecondary education to the extent not otherwise deductible under federal or state law, and without amount or income limitations. Sponsored by Representative Wessel-Kroeschell. Referred to House Ways & Means Committee.

House File 63 - Would direct the College Student Aid Commission, in collaboration with the Board of Regents, to commission an independent study of student debt at Iowa's public postsecondary institutions and the impact of student debt on Iowa's citizens and economy. Sponsored by Representative Wessel-Kroeschell. Referred to House Appropriations Committee and assigned to subcommittee with Dolecheck, Stutsman, and R. Taylor.

Senate Study Bill 1262 and House Study Bill 177 - Governor's bill. A study bill for appropriating federal funds made available from federal block grants and other nonstate sources, allocating portions of federal block grants, and providing procedures if federal funds are more or less than anticipated or if federal block grants are more or less than anticipated. In House Appropriations subcommittee with Rizer, Rogers, and Running-Marquardt. In Senate Appropriations subcommittee with Ragan, Bolkcom, and Garrett.

Senate Study Bill 1178 - Governor's bill. Would create a student debt reduction organization tax credit available against the individual and corporate income tax, providing for the exclusion of student debt reduction grants from the individual income tax, and including retroactive and other applicability provisions. Referred to Senate Ways & Means and assigned to subcommittee with Bolkcom, Feenstra, and McCoy.

Committee Assignments

[Click here](#) to view members of workforce-related committees and their corresponding workforce development region.

This update is a bi-weekly publication intended to share information and resources regarding legislative activities, events, and bills related to workforce issues in Iowa. If you have questions or need more information, please contact Natalie Koerber at nkoerber@sppg.com or 515-237-0338.