

Legislative Newsletter

Jan. 15, 2016



2016 Session Commences Under the Golden Dome

The 2016 session of the Iowa General Assembly commenced Monday with the traditional pomp and circumstance, including Gov. Terry Branstad's Condition of the State Address and Chief Justice Cady's Condition of the Judiciary.

The Governor reported record low unemployment in Iowa, however, overall growth was "not as robust as we had hoped," and that his office's proposed budget will be tight (please find an online copy of the Governor's budget here:

<https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/publications/LADR/711145.pdf>). The Governor also spoke at length about his water quality proposal, which would divert funds from school infrastructure to water quality improvement programs.

Absent from the Condition of the State was mental health funding. At this time, the Urban County Coalition will not register as in support of or in opposition of the Governor's water proposal until he has signed a mental health funding solution and the promise to backfill the property tax loss has been fulfilled.

On page 117 of the Governor's budget recommendations is the budget proposal for public safety. The Governor has recommended taking \$4.3 million from the RIIF budget for the

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interoperability network, as opposed to scooping from the surcharge. This is an excellent start, as we did not want that funding for fiscal year '17 to be taken from the surcharge. This issue is certain to evolve as session moves forward, and we will continue to work closely with other organizations, including the Iowa Police Chiefs Association, the Sheriff's Association, Peace Officers, Firefighters Association and ISAC to promote our stance on the E-911 funding.

As a reminder, Urban County Coalition's Day on the Hill is Jan. 26 beginning at 1 p.m.

We look forward to another year working for you at the Capitol. Please do not hesitate to contact one of us with questions, concerns or comments.

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