

Legislative Newsletter

Jan. 13, 2017



87th General Assembly Gavels In

The 87th General Assembly gaveled in Monday. There are several new faces in the House and Senate in the wake of the 2016 election. Another major change anticipated this spring is the swearing-in of Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds as the new Governor of Iowa. Gov. Terry Branstad has been tapped as the next ambassador to China by President-Elect Donald Trump.

In his final Condition of the State address Tuesday, Branstad outlined his priorities for 2017, primarily: distracted driving, health insurance within collective bargaining, and water quality.

Notably absent from the Condition of the State was any mention of mental health funding. Mental health funding continues to be one of our top priorities, and the coalition of groups pushing for funding reform continues to grow, as are frustrations over a lack of action on this issue from last year. Conversations have already started in the last week about bills addressing the funding.

Several prefiled bills have been assigned numbers and could see subcommittee action as early as next week, including Senate File 21, which addresses distracted driving by making

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texting while driving a primary offense (essentially makes the current texting law more enforceable).

Also of note is Senate File 28, which would abolish the county compensation boards and give boards of supervisors the responsibility for setting the salaries of elected officials.

As of Friday, no House bills have been filed with the General Assembly. Speaker Upmeyer indicated their focus would be on the deappropriation bill (cutting \$117 million from the current Fiscal Year that ends June 30, 2017.).

We look forward to working with you again this legislative session. Please do not hesitate to contact any of the team as questions and concerns arise.

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