

Legislative Newsletter

2017

April 7,



Budget Targets Released

Joint budget targets were released this week, signaling the end of session. Committee work is done, with the exception of Ways & Means and Appropriations, both of which remain on call until final adjournment. The agreed upon plan would spend \$7.2 billion.

- Administration and Regulation: \$47.39 million
- Agriculture and Natural Resources: \$38.84 million
- Economic Development: \$38.41 million
- Education: \$908 million
- Health and Human Services: \$1.7 billion
- Justice Systems: \$735 million
- Standings Bill: \$3.7 billion

Total: \$7.2 billion

The gun bill (House File 517) is on the Governor's desk, after passing the House Wednesday along party lines. The bill preempts cities and counties from enacting and enforcing their own ordinances to create gun-free zones in public buildings (state universities are exempted from this provision). It further allows members of the public who are permit holders to carry their handguns in the Iowa State Capitol. What isn't clear is whether permit holders will have to go through metal detectors when entering the capitol and other public buildings.

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The Senate also advanced their mental health levy bill out of the full Ways & Means Committee to close out the week. Senate As we discussed last week, Study Bill 1187 eliminates individual county caps and creates regional caps, with the intention that the region can decide how to apportion funds based on county-by-county. The bill gives three years to spend reserves or buy down to the 25 percent rate. Growth factors of one percent for the first two fiscal years and two percent for the next fiscal years, with a sunset provision at year five is provided for. A legislative review committee is established at year five. If a levy is raised, counties have 30 days to recertify its budget. We are awaiting an amendment that fixes shortfalls in Scott County.

The House also produced its own version of mental health levies this week (House Study Bill 194). Where the spend down of the reserves is three years in the Senate version, the House bill requires it be done in one year. We have expressed to lawmakers that this is not sound policy: regions would be forced to levy to zero and then crank their levies all the way back up the next year in order to make that work. The bill also differs in that it reduces the cap on funds from 25 to 20 percent.

The Senate Ways & Committee will also bring the E911 Consolidation bill to the Senate floor for debate (Senate File 500. **NOTE:** This is formerly Senate File 454). This bill does some technical clean up with E911 references – including removing last year's \$4 million scoop - but it also allows the 911 grant manager to disburse grants to 911 service boards, and allows the Department of Public Safety to develop a geographic information system. It finally requires DHS/EM to develop a plan for combining the wireline 911 network with the Next Generation 911 network.

The following bills were passed by the House:

Senate File 438: PLA ban. Now goes to the Governor.

The following bills were passed by the Senate:

House File 467: State communications. Now goes to the Governor.

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