

ECR Legislative Newsletter

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Updates on Activity at the Capitol in Des Moines

We continue to wait for the end of the spring legislative session. Currently, the two chambers (House and Senate) are at odds with one another over two topics: the amount necessary to fund the state budget for next year; and legislation that would provide vouchers for families to fund their children's education. As we wait for the issues to be resolved, there are other bills that we hope will still pass through both chambers, then onto the Governor for her signature.

This week, both chambers passed **HF2246**, which is related to our workforce priority. The bill allows for the provisional licensing of interns who are enrolled in a psychology doctoral program and under the supervision of a qualified provider. This is important because the provisional license will allow interns to bill Medicaid and other third-party policies which expands the ability to provide qualified brain health services. HF2246 now goes to the Governor for signature.

One of our other bills that was approved by the House, amended by the Senate, and is now waiting concurrence (agreement with the amendment) from the House is **HF2549** called **Mental Health Provider Loan Forgiveness**. This bill allows health care practitioners who agree to practice in Iowa for five years (under certain conditions) to have their student loans forgiven. We are hopeful that the House will concur, and then it will move to the Governor for her signature.

The Bill Passage Process -- How does it Work?

When a bill passes through both chambers and goes to the Governor's desk, there are different options the Governor can take: she can sign the bill into law; veto the whole bill; or depending on the type of bill, she can pick out line items and veto only certain provisions of a bill and pass the rest of it.

In Iowa's history, there have been many years in which the work is not done by the time the legislators' per diem runs out, so this year is not necessarily unusual. However, with their expenses unpaid and many legislators (who are also farmers) anxious to start planting in the fields, they are feeling the pressure to finish their work and send bills to the Governor. When the legislature is in session and a bill lands on the Governor's desk, she has only three days to sign or veto, or it becomes a law. But when the legislature is not in session and a bill makes its way to the Governor's desk, she has 30 days to review, sign, veto or line item veto. Long story short, there is still time for your voice to be heard! **We strongly encourage you to contact your area legislators in both the House and Senate and advocate for them to take action and move forward as much as possible on bills that affect those in our state with brain health and disability needs.**



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