

Bills Ready for Debate

The following bills have passed their respective Senate committee this past week and are ready for debate on the Senate floor:

Governor's Parental Rights in Education: Here are the highlights of the governor's bill to promote parental rights and school transparency:

1. Mandates the human growth and development curriculum (sex ed) be age-appropriate, research-based, and should not contain any instruction on sexual activity or gender identity to students K-6 or elementary level.
2. Requires students to pass the civics test developed by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services as part of a U.S. government course.
3. Schools required to get prior written parental consent before conducting an examination or survey of a student's mental, emotional, or physical health. Parents must be given a copy of or link to the survey when given notice of the examination or survey.
4. Schools required to get parental consent before asking students information regarding political affiliations, sexual behavior, and religious affiliations. Parents are also to receive notice of the source and use of the survey data.
5. Requires schools to publish the following on their website:
 - a. List of all materials used to teach students
 - b. List of all people in direct contact with students
 - c. List of all books available to students in the classroom or library
 - d. Explanation of procedures and policies regarding requesting a book to be removed, a review of decisions made by the school board and the petition process
6. Districts would be required to notify the Iowa Dept. of Ed. (DOE) when material is removed from the school because it is sexually explicit. The Iowa DOE would maintain a list on its site of all such materials removed from school libraries. Districts must receive

parental approval before allowing a student to check out a book on the DOE list of removed books.

7. School boards must approve new material being added to libraries to ensure it does not contain obscene or sexually explicit material.
8. Requires schools to notify parents if a student is presenting as the opposite sex. If there are actual threats to a student from their parent then the parent would not be notified and the district is to report that to Iowa HHS.
9. Requires schools to get prior written parental consent to allow employees to address a student by a different name or pronoun that is different than the student's biological sex.
10. Requires schools to allow parents access to all of their student's school records
11. Violations of parental rights will subject the district and employee to a written warning for the first violation and a disciplinary hearing by the Board of Educational Examiners (BOEE) for a possible loss of license for a subsequent violation.

Bathroom Bill: This bill requires that bathrooms in schools are to only be used by persons of the same biological sex. This also applies to any area where a student may be in a state of undress: a locker room, shower facility or overnight accommodations. If a student desires more privacy and the parent provides written consent the student can request access to an alternative facility. This bill is intended to protect all students' right to constitutional privacy and a safe and secure environment at school. When we send our children off to school we expect the school will provide them this kind of environment when they are using the restroom, changing clothes or showering. Students should be treated with dignity and respect, and that includes having a right to privacy and safety in their schools.

SNAP (Food Stamp) Reform: This bill is designed to address the large overpayment (not fraud) SNAP rate in Iowa identified by the federal government. It establishes income, asset, and identity verification requirements for the SNAP program and improves the processes and technology to establish the eligibility of an applicant in real-time. The asset test will mean all liquid assets, including the value of a 2nd car over \$10,000 with a maximum allowed limit of \$15,000. It does not count a house, a 1st

car, and the value of a 2nd car under \$10,000, household goods, pension, or retirement accounts. The income test for Iowa currently is 160% below the federal poverty level (FPL). This does not change that. This reform will likely find some are disenrolled from SNAP but that will be because they weren't eligible from the start. This is to ensure that only those who are truly in need are eligible and will get the benefits and to provide accountability for taxpayer dollars.

Visitation Policy: This bill regulates patient visitation policies of a hospital or nursing facility, as a condition of their facility license. A hospital or nursing facility shall not institute a policy that limits a patient's or resident's ability to receive visitors designated by the patient/resident, regardless of their diagnosis. A hospital or nursing facility may impose infection control protocols related to the physical presence of those designated visitors.

Conscience Protection for Health Care Providers: A health care provider has the right to refuse to perform, assist, or participate in, or provide a referral for, a medical procedure, surgery, treatment, counseling, or prescribing, if to do so would violate that health care provider's religious beliefs and moral convictions. The bill prohibits discrimination or discipline for making such a choice.

Right to Hunt: This bill is a proposed constitutional amendment that would add to our constitution the right of citizens to hunt, trap, and fish.

Traffic Camera Regulation: This bill provides for the regulation of traffic camera use in Iowa.

Sex Change Treatments for Youth: This bill prohibits sex change treatments for minors. Sex change treatment and/or surgery is mostly permanent and irreversible. There may be partial recovery of a person's original state, but certainly no total recovery of their original state. What we are talking about here is the chemical castration, sterilization, and sometimes mutilation of emotionally distressed children. A minor is too young to make such a life changing decision. Youth are unable to comprehend and fully appreciate the risk and long-term life implications of these treatments. Known harms to these treatments are decreased bone

density, memory impairment, sexual dysfunction, sterility, risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, asthma, pulmonary disease, cancer, and decreased life expectancy. These children are also expected to suffer through a lifetime of complications from the surgery. Studies have shown that individuals who have undergone this treatment suffer from increased mortality rates, higher suicide rates than the general population, and significantly more mental health issues than the general population, such as substance abuse, depression, and psychiatric hospitalizations. People under the age of 21 in Iowa, are prohibited from consuming alcohol, in order to protect their health and safety. And youth under 18 are prohibited from buying tobacco and even getting a tattoo. We don't leave these activities up to the parents. The state has an interest in protecting children. Sex change treatments are way more invasive and dangerous than any of those.

Convention of States Application: This joint resolution makes application for a convention of states as provided under Article V of the U.S. Constitution for the exclusive purpose of proposing constitutional amendments pertaining to fiscal restraints on the federal government, reigning in federal overreach, and limiting the terms of office for federal officials and members of Congress.

I voted no on this in Senate committee. I totally agree that the federal government certainly is out of control especially with the budget and spending and that it needs to exercise fiscal restraint and limit its power and jurisdiction. These are the concerns that I have regarding this proposal:

1. There is no language in the U.S. Constitution to protect us if an Article V convention is called. The Constitution could be totally rewritten, as there are no rules or safeguards governing the process outlined in the Constitution or federal law. The legal process is too vague and unknown and not laid out in detail in the Constitution or federal law. And the legal process and rules would make all the difference as to the outcome of this kind of convention. Every constitutional right, liberty, and protection could be up for grabs, including the freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to vote, the right to bear arms, protection against unreasonable searches and seizures and more. This could change the character of our republic for the worse.
2. The Constitution does not delegate any power to the states regarding the operation of the convention. But it does give Congress the power

to call such a convention and further gives Congress the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out all the powers vested by the Constitution in Congress. (Art. 1, Sec. 8)

3. When Article V conventions have been considered in the past, historical records show that Congress has laid claim to broad responsibilities in connection with a convention, including determining the number and selection process for its delegates, setting internal convention procedures, including how votes are allocated among the states.
4. Further, once the convention is convened, the rules by which the convention would operate would be set up by the delegates themselves and they could establish anything, including the operation of the convention, how delegates are removed, the topics that would be included, how votes are counted, the ratification process, etc.
5. Problems with reining in the federal government are not due to the inadequacy of the Constitution but due to the fact we are not following it. If we don't follow it now, we will not follow a new one or a changed one.
6. We face many problems as a nation. But a constitutional convention is too unpredictable to consider as a serious method for changing our country. As time goes on and the country becomes more divided and more rights and freedoms are eroded, it seems highly unlikely these rights and freedoms would be preserved in a changed or new constitution. I do not want to gamble with our constitutional rights when time-tested methods of improving our nation already exist.

Certificate of Need: Iowa currently regulates the number of health care facilities and their expansions by requiring them to get approval (called a certificate of need) from the Health Facilities Council to move ahead with the proposed facility or expansion. Under this bill the following facilities will no longer need to apply for a certificate of need: mental health facilities, birthing centers, health care facilities or expansions under \$5 million, service expansion, including mobile, new or replacement equipment, and air transportation by a hospital. The Health Facilities Council will be disbanded and any remaining duties will be carried out by Iowa HHS. The certificate of need process would only pertain to brick and mortar health care facilities that are new or relocated, capital expenditures in excess of \$5 million, and a permanent change in bed capacity. This change is designed to help spur development of health care services and facilities in rural areas, improve competition and lower health care costs. 15

states no longer have the certificate of need process and they have lower costs and more access due to competition.

Feel free to contact me with ideas, thoughts, and concerns. My phone is 319-987-3021 or you can email me at sandy.salmon@legis.iowa.gov . I want to hear what you are thinking and will listen to your input. Together we will work to make a difference for the future of Iowa. Thank you very much for the honor of representing you!

Sincerely,

Sandy