**WEEK 18- May 10-14th**

To: Iowa Firefighters Association

From: John & Cyndi Pederson

**News from the Hill**

Everyone is wondering if this session will ever end! The House and Senate continue to dig their heels in the ground and stand firm in their negotiations. We are told the leaders are working through their differences. There seems to be a glimmer of hope that they will be back next Monday to work the entire week and close down the session. There is still much work to do but possible to get it done.

THE GOVERNOR SIGNED THE LIGHTS BILL HF 654 LAST WEEK AND WILL SIGN THE EXPANSION OF THE FIREWORKS FUND BILL ON WED MAY 18 AT 1:45, YOU ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND, MEET US AT 1:30 ON THE 1ST FLOOR BY THE GOVERNORS OFFICE DOOR. THE SIGNING IS AT 1:45!

The link for an explanation and use of federal funds was introduced, see link below:

(It does include essential workers, in red) Not exactly sure if that somehow includes volunteer firefighters. Maybe talk to your city leaders.

Full link: <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>

**USE OF FUNDS**

The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds provide eligible state, local, territorial, and Tribal governments with a substantial infusion of resources to meet pandemic response needs and rebuild a stronger, and more equitable economy as the country recovers. Recipients may use these funds to:

* **Support public health expenditures**, by, for example, funding COVID-19 mitigation efforts, medical expenses, behavioral healthcare, and certain public health and safety staff
* **Address negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency**, including economic harms to workers, households, small businesses, impacted industries, and the public sector
* **Replace lost public sector revenue**, using this funding to provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue experienced due to the pandemic
* **Provide premium pay for essential workers**, offering additional support to those who have and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service in critical infrastructure sectors
* **Invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure**, making necessary investments to improve access to clean drinking water, support vital wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and to expand access to broadband internet

Within these overall categories, recipients have broad flexibility to decide how best to use this funding to meet the needs of their communities.

Updates from this week are in GREEN and ACTION ITEMS are in RED. We need you to follow through with the ACTION ITEMS in RED TODAY. If they DO NOT hear from you they will not see any urgency in getting these laws passed. If you need more details, let us know but PLEASE make your voices heard!

**Bills of Interest to IFA-UPDATES IN GREEN**

**SF 71/ SF 331 Use of Lights- Transportation Committee**

**HSB 189/HF 654 Use of Lights-COMPANION Bill**

(Maxwell, Bradley, Forbes)

PASSED THE HOUSE, moved over to the Senate.

This bill authorizes the use of various lights on emergency vehicles.

(Shipley, Bisignano, and Rozenboom)

Passed subcommittee and full committee

Came over from the House and needs to be debated on the Senate floor

Senate passed with amendment, sent back to House.

House passed bill WITHOUT the amendment, back to the Senate to concur.

The Senate concurred and the bill passed.

**SIGNED BY THE GOVERNOR<NOW A NEW LAW.**

**PLEASE NOTE THE TOW TRUCK PROVISION WAS NOT ADDED SO THEY DO NOT HAVE AUTHORITY TO USE BLUE LIGHTS. WE FEEL NOBODY WILL ENFORCE THIS BUT THAT PROVISION DID NOT PASS.**

**HSB 247/HF 761-SF 438 Expansion of Fireworks grant fund**

**HOUSE: PASSED the House floor, moved over to the Senate**

**SENATE: Passed sub and full committee, passed the Senate floor with an amendment so it now has to go back to the House for final approval. The amendment basically just states that**

**the Fire Marshal must review a fireworks education grants first, then consider grants for other fire equipment.**

**PASSED THE HOUSE WITH AMENDMENT**

**THE BILL SIGNING IS THIS WED. MAY 18TH AT 1:45 PM IN THE GOVERNORS FORMAL OFFICE!**

**PLEASE JOIN US IF YOU CAN! THIS BILL WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO APPLY FOR GRANTS TO GET THE MUCH-NEEDED FIRE EQUIPMENT YOUR DEPARTMENT MAY NEED.**

The bill authorizes the state fire marshal to provide grants under the local fire protection and emergency medical service providers grant program to local fire protection service providers for the purchase of necessary equipment, in addition to the current authorization to provide grants to local fire protection service providers and local emergency medical service providers to provide fireworks safety education programming and to purchase necessary equipment related to the sale and use of consumer fireworks.

**SF 72/SF 333 Emergency Responder**

(Koelker, Driscoll and Taylor)

Passed sub and full committee

Passed Senate floor

**HSB 190/HF 721 Emergency Responder**

(Worthan, Gerhold, Konfrst)

Passed subcommittee

PASSED Full Committee with amendment

This was rereferred back to transportation committee.

We are not getting any clear reason why this bill was sent back to committee

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR AND LEADER PAT GRASSLEY TO ASK FOR REASONS WHY THIS BILL IS STALLED. “IT IS NOT READY’ IS NOT AN ACCEPTABLE ANSWER. IT PASSED THE SENATE AND SUB AND FULL COMMITTEES IN THE HOUSE.

EMAIL THE FOLLOWING:

Pat.grassley@legis.iowa.gov Leader

Matt.windschitl@legis.iowa.gov Leader

Brian.best@legis.iowa.gov Chair of Transportation Committee

Gary.worthan@legis.iowa.gov Bill Sponsor

Jared.Klein@legis.iowa.gov Chair of Public Safety

An amendment has been filed by Rep Worthan to be presented om the floor.

The amendment does 3 things:

1. Changes misdemeanor to aggravated or serious misdemeanor
2. Adds training through Homeland Security for EMA members
3. Strikes Page 5 Lines 11-19 dealing with a tort claim. They feel this is already covered in Iowa Code 670.” Motion to dismiss” will do the same thing.

This bill clarifies the operations, immunity and liability in emergency situations, use of emergency vehicles in parades, funeral processions, and events. It also defines authorized emergency vehicles.

**HF 144/HF 563 Raises tax credit from $100 to $200**

Subcommittee of Kaufmann, Brown-Powers and Graber

Passed sub and full committee-ready for floor debate

**This bill was added to the House tax bill HF 893. They raised it to $250 thanks to an amendment and agreement by Rep Jacoby and Rep Kaufmann. We are pleased with the actions of the House and hope the Senate will concur!**

**SF 447 Expansion of Firefighter tax credit to $1000**

**Ways and Means bill**

**Dickey, Dawson, Jochum**

**Passed the sub and full committee.**

**Needs to be debated on floor**

This bill relates to the individual income tax credits for volunteer firefighters,

This bill is basically dead, but we appreciate new Senate member Sen Dickey for his efforts. When this tax credit was passed many years ago by Senator Hancock the desire was that it would grow a little each year. Asking for $1000 at this time would basically have been considered a catch-up since it has never increased. Sen Dickey is still fighting for this in his caucus.

Volunteer emergency medical services personnel members, and reserve peace officers by increasing the amounts of the credits, and including retroactive applicability provisions. The bill modifies the tax credit by allowing vit increase applies retroactively to tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2021. The bill also modifies the tax credit by requiring a firefighter,

emergency medical services personnel member, or reserve peace officer to obtain written approval from their supervisor prior to claiming the tax credit. The bill does eliminate specific training requirements for a firefighter to be eligible for the tax credit, but the bill allows a supervisor to utilize the approval of the tax credit to ensure the individual meets training or other requirements specified by the department or program. Currently, such an individual is required to obtain a written statement from their supervisor verifying the individual was in such a position for the months the credit is claimed. The bill also rearranges the definitional portion of Code section 422.12, which is in alphabetical order, due to the strike of the term “volunteer”

**HSB #197/HF 750 Length of Service bill**

**PASSED subcommittee**

**PASSED Full Local Government**

**Waiting for floor debate**

**NO ACTION THIS WEEK-please contact your House Rep and Leader Grassley and Leader Windschitl and ask them to pass this bill. They can run it on its own or add it to the Standings bill or any approps bill! It will be a huge help in recruitment and retention. The lottery has agreed to fund it. They need to hear from you!**

Pat.grassley@legis.iowa.gov

Matt.windschitl@legis.iowa.gov

Jane.bloomingdale@legis.iowa.gov

Rep Bloomingdale is sponsoring this bill and has worked extremely hard for us.

This legislation creates a length of service award to volunteer firefighters who meet criteria to receive an award given by the city/county and will be matched by the state.

**HF 248/HF 683- EMERGENCY RESPONSE DISTRICTS/FIRE DEPARTMENTS:** (Klein (C), Breckenridge, Thorup) Public Safety

PASSED BOTH SUB AND FULL COMMITTEE in the House

PASSED FLOOR DEBATE, moved over to the Senate

The Senate failed to move this bill. They did not like the PSO section of this bill. The PSO part was NOT our language and was added by House legislators. We asked the Senate to remove that and run our part. At this point our language could be added to the Standings bill and they can

work the PSO language out next year. PSO stands for Public Safety Officer, the model that is currently happening in Cedar Falls. PLEASE contact your SENATOR and Sen Jack.Whitver@legis.iowa.gov and ask them to NOT throw our bill out!

This bill allows communities, townships, regions to create Emergency Response Districts. This is completely voluntary and would help many small rural departments.

Cities do not like Sec 6 which states:

The bill requires a city in which an institution of higher education governed by the state board of regents is located to establish, house, equip, staff, uniform, and maintain a full-

time, professional fire department that is separate from the city’s police department. This was not part of our language but added by a few legislators. They are referring to the city of Cedar Falls who are cross training police and firefighters.

**HSB 186/HF 562-EMS funding**

An Act relating to funding emergency medical services by modifying provisions relating to city emergency medical services districts, benefited emergency medical services districts, and optional taxes for emergency medical services.

House: Passed sub and full committee-Passed House 93-0
Now in Ways and Means- R. Smith, Boulton, Goodwin

No action this week

While this bill is handled by the EMS lobbyist it pertains to many if not all our departments. It is sad to think that this is SO HARD to get passed! There are many champion legislators working to save this bill.

Feel free to add this to your conversations with House Leaders Rep Grassley and Rep Windschitl

Pat.grassley@legis.iowa.gov

Matt.windschitl@legis.iowa.gov

**HF 444/HF 718- Township Fire Departments**

Westridge, Wheeler, Oldson

Passed sub and full committee

READY FOR FLOOR DEBATE

Now in Ways and Means

No action this week, this is still alive because it is a Ways and Means bill but we do not feel there will be any further action this year. It can definitely be brought up again next year.

An Act relating to township fire stations by authorizing the use of certain property taxes approved at election for the payment of anticipatory bonds.

The tax return Check-off bill-This bill is to renew the “check-off” as a donation to firefighters fund when you complete your taxes. This bill needs to be renewed every two years. Senator Dickey is sponsoring this bill. It is in Ways and Means.

**WE WERE NOTIFIED OVER THE WEEKEND THAT THE CHECK-OFF BILL IS BEING EXTENDED UNTIL 2024 AND NO LEGISLATION NEEDS TO BE PASSED THIS YEAR!**

Remember you can contact your legislator to ask for support by emailing them at:

First name.last name@legis.iowa.gov

If you need to determine who your legislator is, look them up at: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find>

Want to read a bill? Go to: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/legislation>

And enter the bill # in the upper right corner where it says BILLS

PLEASE TAKE A MINUTE AND BE AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUR DEPARTMENT- TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE AS THE LEGISLATURE WILL BE CLOSING DOWN VERY SOON! YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

As always, feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

Pedersonconsulting@gmail.com

John & Cyndi Pederson

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