

STATE ISSUES FROM SANDS

House District 87

Serving Louisa, Muscatine and Des Moines Counties

Volume VI, Issue 01

HOME ADDRESS

134 Orchard Lane, Columbus Junction, IA 52738

Hm: (319) 728-8716 **Cell:** (319) 750-1423

Hm email: trsands@louisacomm.net

January 17, 2008

CAPITOL CONTACT

Statehouse: (515) 242-6437

E-mail: Tom.Sands@legis.state.ia.us

Web: www.SandsForStateHouse.com

News from the Hill...

The second year of the 82nd General Assembly has begun. The Iowa Code sets the scheduled days of the General Assembly at 210 days. The odd numbered years are set at 110 days and the even numbered years are set for 100 days.

On Tuesday, Governor Culver gave his second State of the State address. Wednesday, Chief Justice Ternus gave the State of the Judiciary. This was her second address to the general assembly since her appointment.

This year will be my sixth year representing you as a member of the Iowa House. I am the Ranking Member of the Ways and Means Committee, which I served on my first two years; this will be my fourth year serving on this committee. I am on the Commerce Committee for the sixth year, Environmental Protection Committee for the third year and Public Safety Committee for the sixth year.

The Governor's Promise...

During Governor Culver's address on Tuesday, he promised to "protect our priorities, [and] balance the budget... ." He maintained the only way to "fulfill these priorities is to keep our fiscal house in order ... [by] ... limiting new spending; continuing to live within our means, and protecting our cash reserves." Governor Culver "asked [his] Department Directors to submit budget requests that limited any new spending." I have been a strong advocate of getting the government to live within its means.

The Governor's Budget...

The Governor's budget spends \$6.4 billion in FY 09. When combined with his budget last year, government spending will increase more than \$1 billion. That's a \$1 billion increase in two years; a 20 percent increase over a two-year period. Despite strong revenue growth of over 10%, the Governor still proposes at least \$100 million dollar increase in new taxes and fees.

Community and Private Colleges Lose with Governor's Budget...

If the Governor's budget is enacted as recommended, K-12 will see a record \$185 million increase. \$100 million in allowable growth, \$75 million in new money for teacher pay and a \$15 million increase for preschool. The Regents will look forward to a \$60 million increase with a forecasted \$40 million devoted to faculty salaries. While K-12 schools and the Regents Institutions were high priorities in the Governor's budget, community colleges were not. Iowa's 15 community colleges, who educate 90,000 Iowans each year, will get a woeful \$3.5 million increase.

Will There Be a Vote on Traditional Marriage...

After the ruling from Judge Hanson late this summer, many Iowans have been concerned about the potential collapse of Iowa's marriage laws. The next 90 and some odd days this issue will continue to exist as a lingering question. I will continue to support traditional marriage defined as between one man and one woman.

Beware of Income Tax Phishing Scams...

The Internal Revenue Service has issued several consumer warnings on the fraudulent use of the IRS name or logo trying to gain access to consumers' financial information. Additionally, emails claiming to come from tax-refunds@irs.gov, admin@irs.gov and similar variations told the recipients that they were eligible to receive a tax refund. It directs recipients to claim the refund by using a link contained in the e-mail which sent the recipient to a Web site. The site displayed an interactive page similar to a genuine IRS one; **however, it had been modified to ask for personal and financial information that the genuine IRS interactive page does not require.**

If you or someone else you know has received an email such as those listed above, you can relay that email to a new IRS mailbox, phishing@irs.gov. The IRS can use the information, URLs and links in the suspicious emails you send to trace the hosting Web site and alert authorities to help shut down the fraudulent sites. The IRS does not send out unsolicited e-mails or ask for detailed personal information. Additionally, the IRS never asks people for the PIN numbers, passwords or similar secret access information for their credit card, bank or other financial accounts.

Until next time,
Tom Sands

Up Coming Des Moines County Forum:

- "Eggs and Issues" 7:30am at Burlington Chamber Office
- Public Forum 9am at Burlington Public Library