

# THE HAHN REPORT

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Senator Jim Hahn

## **Economic Chill Created in the Senate**

*Too Many Bad Bills for Job Creation in the Senate*

Iowa has always projected the image of being a good place to conduct or own a business, but in the very near future, that might change, especially if Senate Democrats have their way. Senate Democrats have pushed nine bills out of committee in the last year that all hinder job creation in Iowa in some way.

The bills range from imposing more regulations on contractors to increasing the fees associated with amusement park ride inspections. If all the bills pass, Iowa's job creation atmosphere will no doubt be damaged. In fact just the mention of some of these proposals have kept good paying jobs from coming to Iowa.

In 2007 and 2008 Senate Democrats introduced the following bills that would put a chill on Iowa's job environment by:

- Increasing costs on contractors that would be passed on to consumers
- Increasing insurance rates on small businesses
- Increasing the costs of health insurance for small businesses
- Gutting Iowa's right-to-work law
- Increasing the payroll cost of small businesses

All businesses in Iowa are deserving of some sort of break yet with this Democratic Leadership the job producers of this state will see only more bureaucrat red tape. The repeated back room business deals made by Democrats can no longer go unnoticed.

Iowans deserve more from their elected officials and Senate Republicans will continue to fight for the small businesses that create jobs in Iowa. Small businesses and their employees have a major impact on the Iowa economy and adding additional taxes and regulations is counter-productive to the creation of new jobs for Iowa.

## **Democrats Reveal Spending Targets**

*Democratic Leadership focused on protecting special interests*

Last week Democratic Leadership began to unwrap the fiscal mess of their own creation that will be placed on the backs of the next generation of Iowans. The first peek at the proposed budget has answered some questions but many more questions must be answered over the following weeks.

According to the nonpartisan Legislative Service Bureau, the legislature begins this budget with nearly \$600 million of promises made by the Democrats and very little new revenue. The question that begs to be asked is how do you keep your promises facing a nearly \$400 million shortfall?

So far, the answer given by the Governor is to raise taxes on individuals or increase taxes on companies that employ Iowans; which is counterproductive in uncertain economic times. The Governor has advocated, however, that the Legislature refrain from spending out of the states' piggy bank. Senate Republicans applaud the Governor for standing up and protecting future generations of Iowans.

The only answer from Democrat legislators, unfortunately, is to spend down our savings accounts even though we are projected to have normal revenue growth this year. This shortsighted and misguided fiscal policy will stunt the growth of our state for years to come. This solution offered by Democratic leaders will only hurt the taxpayers of Iowa while protecting their special interest friends.

It is apparent that last year Democrats spent with complete disregard for the future, satisfying their special interest friends only. Yet it appears that if you are a Democrat and spent too much one year, you have no responsibility to protect the taxpayer. Deficit spending and putting Des Moines special interest group priorities on the credit card is not responsible.

Senate Republicans will vigorously defend the taxpayer during the upcoming session and advocate for fiscal restraint. While it is easy to increase spending in Des Moines, these politicians have forgotten that this is your money, not theirs'. Budgeting is a matter of priorities and the priority for Senate Republicans are the taxpayers of Iowa.

## **Education Standards at a Cross-Road**

*Democrats focused on "new age" curriculum while shunning the three Rs*

Senate Democrats this week passed legislation out of the Senate Education committee that will have serious and long-term impacts on the delivery of education in Iowa.

The Senate Democrats are endorsing a proposal provided by the Iowa Department of Education that will mandate a new and progressive style of teaching math, science, and literacy in both public and nonpublic classrooms.

While quality education is one of the Senate Republicans' highest priorities, there is concern that the implementation of the proposed curriculum will have negative consequences on our children's achievement in the classroom, and could set Iowa back in terms of competitiveness amongst high-performing states and nations.

Senate Republicans have continuously attempted to warn Democrats that many nationally-renowned educational experts believe the implementation of the new curriculum will have negative and "crippling" affects on our children's ability to learn. Unfortunately, this legislation, often referred to as "radical," appears to be on the fast-track towards passage and our high schools will begin noticing the affects of the bill by the beginning of the 2010 school year.

In an attempt to improve the legislation, Senate Republicans offered an amendment that would exempt nonpublic schools from the mandate, as they already have a long history of graduating high-achieving students that are well-prepared for college and the workforce. They should not be told by the Iowa Department of Education how they need to teach their students. The amendment was voted down on a party-line vote.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the new curriculum, Republicans also offered an amendment that would require the Department of Education to submit a report to the legislature with results of

Iowa's children's test scores, which would demonstrate if achievement has risen or declined since the curriculum's implementation. Democrats voted against that accountability measure as well.

It is not fair for the legislature to ask any generation of children to act as guinea pigs for a new-age, radical method of teaching. Both sides of the aisle agree that Iowa's education system is flawed and urgently needs to be fixed, but the Democrats want to go down the road of trying new-age, progressive teaching methods, while Republicans want to return to the proven and time-tested basics- reading, writing, and arithmetic- the methods that catapulted Iowa to #1 in education many years ago.

SENATOR JIM HAHN  
MUSCATINE, CEDAR &  
JOHNSON COUNTIES