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[ipamemberlist] Lobbyist Capitol Report | Wrapping Up Week 6

1 message

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Iowa Psychological Association

Lobbyist Report 2025 | February 23, 2025

The first legislative deadline is just two weeks away. **Bills must be voted out of committee by Friday, March 7.** Those that do not make it out of committee will no longer be eligible for debate this legislative session.

With **more than 1400 bills** already read into the record this year, one can only hope more than a few fail to advance. Legislators held 148 subcommittees in their four days of work last week, so expect more of the same. One of the new bills introduced makes sweeping changes to Iowa's civil rights laws to further disenfranchise transgender Iowans, including prohibiting any changes to gender on birth certificates ([House Study Bill 242](#)). The bill is up in subcommittee on 2/24 at 11 a.m. and is expected to pass.

Bills on the Move

The next two weeks will be a zoo at the Capitol, so stay tuned to the [Bill Tracker](#) to see new bills introduced, renumbered bills coming out of committee, and updates on status of bills. Here are a few we wanted to highlight:

- The House passed a bill ([House File 312](#)) to allow for the involuntary commitment for individuals experiencing **psychiatric deterioration**. It was nearly unanimous (92-1).
- The House unanimously (92-0) passed [House File 385](#), which allows an attending PA or ARNP to testify at a **commitment hearing** on behalf of a mental health professional who conducted the evaluation of the patient.
- The House unanimously (92-0) passed [House File 303](#), which sets new timeframes for **prior authorization** responses. Health insurers and health professionals worked out this compromise that requires 48-hour turnaround for urgent care and 10 days for non-urgent treatment. Insurers

are also directed to review prior authorizations each year and eliminate them for codes that are routinely approved.

- A Senate subcommittee advanced a bill ([Senate File 237](#)) directing the Department of Education convene a work group to look into the **impact of technology and screen time on the cognitive function of students**. IPA testified in support, but asked that they include at least one psychologist on the work group (the list is not included in the bill, but legislators agreed and told the department to make sure they consider both educators and psychologists for the work group).

New bills introduced last week include:

- [House File 487](#) decriminalizes **fentanyl test strips** and other drug testing materials.
- [Senate Study Bill 1187](#) taxes **vapes** like cigarettes.
- [House File 443](#) requires insurers to pay for **Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)**.

Bills getting new numbers include:

- [House File 471](#) is IPA's bill to add psychologists to **school sport concussion protocol** professionals. It also got this new number when it came out of committee.
- [House File 509](#) got a new number after being voted out of committee; it requires **insurers to pay for autism treatment** (including ABA) throughout a person's life, without caps on visits or benefits.

Governor's Rural Health Bill Introduced

The **Governor's rural health bill** ([House Study Bill 191](#) and [Senate Study Bill 1163](#)) was introduced last week. The House bill has advanced out of subcommittee and is on the agenda for this week's House Health & Human Services Committee. The bill:

- Directs Iowa HHS to apply for a **health care hub-and-spoke partnership funding model** to finance innovative partnerships to improve access to quality of health care in rural Iowa. You can learn more about this type of model [here](#).
- Eliminates several stand-alone health care workforce loan repayment programs, replacing them with a single flexible program to include mental health professionals, nurses, nurse educators, ARNPs, PAs, and physicians (called the **Health Care Professional Incentive Program**). Eligible practice areas would be defined by HHS, along with the amount of funds for each profession. In addition, recipients could receive loan repayment or a cash payment for their service years (cash payment is only available now for a program for nurses, PAs, and nurse educators). It is important to note that all current obligations from programs being merged will be honored. Funds are not included in this bill, but if the pot of money grows, it could increase the number of mental health professionals receiving funds. IPA has asked for language that would

add transparency to the decisions HHS makes about eligible practice areas, location of providers vs. location of patient for determining practice area, number of slots for each profession, and other details.

- Current siloed **residency programs** are also merged and \$1.2 million is earmarked to fund new psychiatric residencies over three years. This sets up the system to add a new 115 medical residencies to the state.
- Eliminates the **Health Facilities Council**, turning the responsibility for certificate of need over to Iowa HHS. Another bill ([House File 277](#)) excluding birthing centers from CON passed out of the House HHS Committee earlier last week, so it is possible the two bills could be merged. Yet another bill ([House File 224](#)) eliminates CON entirely, but it is unlikely to even get a hearing.
- Makes changes to the **Iowa Health Information Network**, requiring the state to go out for competitive bid for the network and bringing state oversight back to the system.

Testimony Slide Decks

Iowa HHS has been making the rounds at the Capitol to testify on a number of issues. You can see their slide-decks:

- [HHS Federal Block Grant Appropriations](#)
- [Maternal Health in Iowa](#)
- [Supporting Youth in Crisis](#)
 - Amendments to their crisis youth bills [here](#).
 - Review of amendment [here](#).
 - Youth in crisis data snapshot [here](#).
- [Iowa's Child Care System](#)
 - Historical review of child care in Iowa [here](#).

Resource Links

[IPA Bill Tracker](#)
[Legislative Public Forum List](#)
[Guide to the Iowa Legislature](#)

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Representing AARP Iowa, Hills & Dales, Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Iowa Affiliate of the American College of Certified Nurse-Midwives, Iowa Association of Rural Health Clinics, Iowa Behavioral Health Association, Iowa Chapter of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault, Iowa County Conservation System, Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council/Iowans with Disabilities in Action, Iowa Library Association, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Iowa Nurse Practitioners Society, Iowa Nurses Association, Iowa Primary Care Association, Iowa Psychological Association, Iowa Public Transit Association, Iowa State Reserve Law Officers Association, Juvenile Detention Coalition of Iowa,

League of Women Voters of Iowa, Link Associates, Loess Hills Alliance, Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), Okoboji Tourism, On With Life, Polk County, Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, Professional Developers of Iowa, Rosecrance, SafeNetRx, Systems Unlimited

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