
[ipamemberlist] 2026 State Capitol Report (Weeks 3 & 4)

1 message

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Iowa Psychological Association - State Legislative Report

Week 4 | February 8, 2026

The Iowa Capitol was buzzing with activity last week. Legislators took Monday off to attend their local caucuses, so the action was packed into a shorter three-day week. That did not stop lawmakers from having 141 subcommittee meetings and 31 committee meetings in that short timeframe. Work has started intensively on the Governor and legislative leaders' top priorities: cancer prevention, property tax reductions, and carbon pipeline eminent domain. There are also plenty of "messaging" bills that cater to each party's base, including several anti-LGBTQIA, anti-DEI, anti-library, anti-abortion and anti-vaccine bills that likely will pop out of committee but ultimately die.

New & Noteworthy Bills

Already in four weeks legislators have introduced 786 bills. Legislators added 217 of that total in the three days they worked last week alone. A few of note:

- **SSB 3116** is the **Psychology Compact (aka "PsyPACT")**. The Governor made joining the [43 other states](#) in this inter jurisdictional compact a priority in her Rural Health Transformation Grant application. Iowa gets additional funds for enacting this, so IPA has decided to stay neutral on it. While many members are concerned about patient safety under this compact, there are members who support it and want to see Iowa work through the advisory system to fix any issues. There is a subcommittee on this bill on Monday (2/9) at 2:00 p.m. You can watch or participate online with this [zoom link](#) (meeting ID: 818 1494 4251; passcode 369510).
- **HSB 502** expands the **mandated credentialing times for insurers passed last year to include mental health and other professionals**. Last year's legislation only covered ARNPs, PAs, and physicians. The bill passed subcommittee on January 15 (Rep./Dr. Steve Bradley), but still has not been scheduled for [HHS committee](#) action. This is an IPA requested bill.
- **SSB 3011 & HSB 611 regulate chatbots** to ensure they do not encourage self-harm or harm to others, requiring transparency that the chatbot is not a human. There are some amendments needed to make the technology industry comfortable that it will not impinge on customer service chatbots, but it appears everyone is in support of the concept of chatbot guardrails. The House subcommittee passed its bill (Rep. Austin Harris, Rep. Dan Gehlbach, Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell). The Senate subcommittee (Sen. Kara Warne, Sen. Jeff Taylor, Sen. Liz Bennett) have not yet met. These are IPA requested bills. IPA is undecided on another broader chatbot bill that addresses all interactions with minors ([HSB 647](#) - which passed subcommittee).
- **HF 2053** requires Medicaid **MCOs to adopt standardized processes for claims submission and reimbursement** by July 1, 2027. Rep. Taylor Collins (R-Des Moines) sponsored this bill, but it has not yet been assigned a subcommittee in the House HHS Committee (not a good sign). IPA supports.
- **HSB 669** states that **raising, guiding, and instructing a child in a manner consistent with the child's sex is not child endangerment**. This includes the use of pronouns, declining consent for gender transition procedures, and seeking mental health services to align the child's life with their sex (aka conversion therapy). A subcommittee will be held on this bill on Monday (2/9) at 12:30 pm in Room 103 at the State Capitol; you can watch the proceedings [here](#). It is important to note that the subcommittee had to be reassigned to Rep. Jon Dunwell (who works for the Family Leader when not in session), Rep. Steve Holt, and Rep. Aimee Wichtendahl (Iowa's first openly transgender legislator). IPA opposes this bill, along with other mental health professional organizations.
- **HF 2292 doubles the number of MHI beds** and allows them to be paid for with Medicaid dollars (if the Federal government approves the waiver). This bill is out of committee and ready for House debate, so it is safe from the first funnel deadline.

- [SF 2084](#) requires all public schools to list links to **Your Life Iowa** on their websites. The subcommittee on this bill is set for Monday (2/9) at 3:30 pm. You can listen to it virtually [here](#) (Meeting ID 835 4957 5189; passcode 220852).
- [HF 2220](#) is a bill co-written by House Appropriations Chair Rep. Gary Mohr (R-Scott) and House HHS Budget Chair Rep. Ann Meyer (R-Webster) to address barriers to accessing **subacute mental health care**. The bill establishes a psychiatric bed tracking system for children, requires insurers pay for this level of service, removes language that limited subacute care to 10 days (allowing for potentially longer stays as determined by clinical need), requires subacute care facilities to develop written treatment plans within 24 hours of the patient's admission, prohibits prior authorization for subacute admission and for first 15 days of treatment (MCOs can only review medical necessity after the 45th day and only once every 30 days after), prohibits MCOs from requiring discharge until proper supports are in place to mitigate risk of self harm/harm to others (as determined by a mental health professional), requires regulatory agencies to set requirements less stringent than those at the state MHIs, and allows emergency rules to implement faster. Provider and patient advocate groups support this bill; insurers and MCOs oppose. The subcommittee on this meets Tuesday (2/10) at 8:45 am. You can watch it virtually [here](#).
- [HF 2256](#) allows a child to go through the **Child in Need of Assistance (CiNA) process to get treatment for substance use disorder or behavioral health condition**, making it easier to commit a child. While this bill is out of committee and ready for debate in the House, Iowa HHS says that Iowa's current law is very flexible and there is no need for a parent to go through this process when the court has the ability to do this now under existing law. Rep. Ann Meyer is the floor manager.
- [HF 2114](#), which is cosponsored by Rep. Ann Meyer and Rep. Shannon Latham, has passed out of subcommittee. It allows a parent to **circumvent the court commitment process and directly commit their child to a state MHI or other facility**, regardless of their child's willingness to go. The parents would be responsible for payment. It is unclear if this means they do not have to meet criteria for admittance to the facility and if a private facility can be ordered to accept someone that does not meet the criteria.

Other Bills IPA is Watching

There are a number of practice bills IPA is keeping a close eye on, including:

- [HSB 663](#) requires the Iowa Department of Inspections, Licensing, and Appeals to use the SAVE clearinghouse to **verify the citizenship and immigration status for all professional license applicants** (and requiring denial or revocation if lawful presence cannot be verified). There are also other provisions on voting in the bill that will make it more controversial. There is a subcommittee meeting scheduled for Tuesday (2/10) at 12:30 pm - you can join virtually [here](#). This bill is clearly motivated by the Des Moines School Superintendent's licensure despite not being legally allowed to be in the United States.
- [HSB 654](#) nullifies all **health care provider non-competes** if the provider wants to work for a critical access hospital or rural medical facility (non-solicitation language stands). The subcommittee will meet Monday (2/9) at 4 pm to discuss this bill; you can join virtually [here](#).
- [HSB 628](#) **modernizes the state's professional licensing** processes and governance, including use of uniform timelines for renewal and fee structures. IPA is watching this closely. A subcommittee meeting has been set for Tuesday (2/10) at 8:30 am - you can watch this live [here](#).
- [HF 2337](#) makes **falsely representing one's academic degrees or credentials** for employment or personal gain a "fraudulent practice," which carries class D felony. This bill is out of committee and safe from the funnel. IPA is monitoring this bill, which was inspired by the Des Moines School Superintendent's false claim that he had a master's degree.

Several other bills of interest that are worthy of note:

- [HF 2304 & SSB 3074](#) **cap state-funded grant indirect costs at 5%**. While we still do not know what "state-funded" or "grant" means, the Department of Administrative Services said in testimony this applies to "all funds that flow through this state." This means it could include federally sourced grants distributed by the state, and would most likely impact IPA's grant to support the **psychology internship program**. This bill is out of committee, so is on the House floor ready for debate and safe from the first funnel deadline. The Senate bill passed out of subcommittee (Sen. Dennis Guth, Sen. Jeff Reichman, Sen. Art Staed) with a yet-to-be-drafted amendment. If the Senate companion makes it out of committee as well, it will be "funnel proof" and eligible for debate for the remainder of session.
- [HF 2133 & SF 2192](#) adds **Kratom (both synthetic and botanical) to Schedule I scheduled substance**, making it illegal (serious

misdeemeanor with escalation to class D felony for third and subsequent offenses). Both bills are out of committee and therefore eligible for debate for the rest of session. Sen. Jesse Green (R-Boone) and Rep. Mike Vondran (R-Scott) are the floor managers.

- **SSB 3082 & HSB 622 / SSB 3111 & HSB 623** are two sets of companion bills that further Iowa HHS' desire to create a uniform set of **HHS service regions** (borders same as behavioral health regions). The first set of companion bills merge in the Area Agencies on Aging (which oddly there are only six of, so this change moves it to seven). The second set deals with early childhood programming (moving from 30+ regions to seven). A Senate subcommittee advanced the aging realignment (SSB 3082) but has not yet taken up the early childhood alignment (HSB 623). A House subcommittee tabled the early childhood bill (HSB 622) and they are holding a subcommittee on the aging realignment this week (not yet scheduled).
- **SF 2156** gives courts the option to require **drug testing of parents as a part of child custody orders**, with failure an automatic custody order revision (but no mention of referral to treatment either proactively or after positive test). The subcommittee (Sen. Scott Webster, Sen. Jeff Taylor, Sen. Herman Quirnbach) has not yet met.

Bill Tracker Reminder

There are dozens of "messaging" bills that continue to be introduced. Instead of actively engaging in all of these bills, IPA has chosen to track them and make sure members who are interested in taking action have the information available to do so. These include several more anti-DEI and anti-vaccine bills, bills banning more gender theory instruction, book bans in public libraries, and many versions of "medical freedom" legislation. Most of these will likely be thrown overboard in two weeks when the first funnel hits, but a few will (and have) survive.

You can find all the bills we're tracking for IPA at www.ialobby.com/billtracker/IPA. This list is updated daily and status is updated automatically. You can download this list in excel or PDF to use with your own staff or local boards.

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