



Nick's News from the  
**Iowa House of Representatives**  
 State of Iowa  
*Eighty-Third General Assembly*  
 Week 13: April 6-9

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**Thirteenth Week of the 83rd General Assembly**

**Elimination of Federal Deductibility Still up for Debate**

HF 807, the proposed bill that eliminates federal deductibility is still open for debate. A new amendment was filed on Wednesday which increases the standard deductions, adds a \$100 credit for college tuition, and makes changes to the tax rates. Even with the changes there are still winners and losers in every tax bracket. There will still be persons making less than \$20,000 a year paying higher taxes and people making \$250,000+ that will pay less. To make matters worse, in 2011 just over 149,000 Iowa taxpayers who earn \$40,000 per year, or less, will see an increase in their Iowa income tax burden.

The numbers provided by the Iowa Department of Revenue tell the overall story for the next 5 years:

- 2009: \$20.198 million overall tax cut.
- 2010: \$34.898 million overall tax cut
- 2011: \$154.148 million overall tax INCREASE
- 2012: \$157.104 million overall tax INCREASE
- 2013: \$149.01 million overall tax INCREASE

As shown, the next two years Iowans as a whole will see about a \$55 million dollar tax cut, but in the following three years Iowans will see nearly a \$460 million increase of taxes paid. Overall that is \$405 million dollars Iowans will lose from their paychecks in the next 5 years.

Even with the changes I do not feel that it is right to raise taxes on any Iowan, and at this time there are over 350,000 Iowans that will see tax increases in 2009 and over 600,000 with increased taxes by 2011. In 2011 there will be more losers than winners. This is a tax increase! I was elected to fight for the taxpayer and when I review this bill I view it from the taxpayer perspective and it is definitely not good for the taxpayers.

**State Budget Proposals**

In budget debate this week Republicans have offered over \$150,500,000 in spending cuts due to the line-by-line analysis of the budget. These cuts are things such as reducing office supply expenditures, deferring the purchase of state vehicles, consolidation of multiple state e-mail and computer systems, elimination of cell phones for non-essential uses, and others.

In the Administration and Regulation budget, HF 809, I offered an amendment to reduce the amount of money spent on office supplies. During the debate on the amendment I made some comments about my personal habit concerning office supplies. The Des Moines Register found my comments amusing and printed them in the Wednesday paper:

**“That’s one nice pencil-** Rep. Nick Wagner, R-Marion, urged lawmakers Tuesday to tighten the budget belt even more. He used himself as an example, noting that he has used the same pencil for four months: ‘I’ll probably carry it for another 12 years because I love this pencil and I’m a cheapskate,’ Wagner said, holding up a mechanical pencil.”

I guess it was not persuasive enough, the amendment failed. Another amendment I floor managed, eliminating the per diem expenses for legislative ex-officio members to boards did pass however.

I also proposed an amendment to the Department of Transportation budget that eliminated the use of charter flights for in state travel by the DOT, and it was passed. This will save the state about \$17,000 in the next budget year.

One of the larger budget bills debated was the Health and Human services budget. This budget eliminates the Tobacco Trust Fund, the Gambling Treatment Fund, cuts funding to counties for mental health needs, leaves the Senior Living Trust fund with a \$0 ending balance, moves \$6 Million from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund to the general fund and uses \$400 million in one time federal stimulus dollars. I did not support these changes.

House Republicans continue to go through the budget on a line-by-line basis to find ways to make state government leaner and more efficient as we continue through the budget process.



**Bills Passed:**

- HF 266 SF 226
- HF 311 SF 279
- HF 488 SF 322
- HF 734 SF 323
- HF 788 SF 334
- HF 805 SF 342
- HF 809 SF 372
- HF 811 SF 374
- SF 81 SF 430
- SF 114 SF 435
- SF 142 SF 437
- SF 152 SF 467
- SF 225 SF 469

**For a full text of these bills and any others please visit:**

<http://www.legis.state.ia.us>

If you would like updates on legislation that is of interest to you, please visit the Iowa General Assembly Bill and Code Watch website at:

<http://coolice.legis.state.ia.us/se/cure/default.asp?Category=BillWatch&Service=BWSignIn>

This site will help you stay informed on bills scheduled for action on the House and Senate floors. There is no subscription or monthly fee. In order to function, the Bill Watch system must have JavaScript enabled in your browser.



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**Court Overrules Legislature, Legalizes Same-Sex Marriages**

Last Friday, in a unanimous decision, the Iowa Supreme Court held that the Iowa law limiting marriage to only a union between a man and a woman violates the equal protection clause of the Iowa Constitution.

The Court concluded that “the Legislature has excluded a historically disfavored class of persons from a supremely important civil institution without a constitutionally sufficient justification.” They even seem to go so far as to rule out the option of establishing civil unions for same-sex couples as a way to satisfy their ruling. While it is open to interpretation, the Court writes “a new distinction based on sexual orientation would be equally suspect and difficult to square with the fundamental principles of equal protection embodied in our constitution.”

The Court’s ruling was to take effect on Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup> but the courthouses will be empty on that day due to a furlough of court employees. The first day that marriage licenses can be issued is Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for the emails and concerns that many of you have sent regarding this issue. I share your concerns and believe that we should let Iowans decide by allowing them to vote on a constitutional amendment. There were two attempts to bring HJR 6 to the floor for a vote on Thursday. Voting on HJR 6 would be the first step in the amendment process. The first motion was ruled out of order by the Speaker of the House, and the second attempt failed on a vote of 54-44 against suspension of the rules to debate the language. I did vote in favor of the suspension of the rules to consider the language for a constitutional amendment. I strongly support strong families and believe they are the moral fabric of our society, because of this belief I also believe that marriage should be between one man and one woman.

**Imagine8**

Congratulations to the following individuals who were selected and appointed to the Imagine8 selection committee. These individuals will be tasked with reducing all of the ideas submitted to the final 8 ideas for Marion. This is a really exciting project for the City of Marion and these individuals are to be commended for helping and volunteering for their community. Thank you!

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|-------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| • John Rathje     | • Jacob Nieuwsma   | • Pam Halvorson  | • Ann Kiesling   |
| • Michelle Wilson | • Richard Cooper   | • Lou Stark      | • Joe Childers   |
| • Lacie Litton    | • Kyle Martin      | • Michele Jones  | • Katrina Turner |
| • Dennis Walters  | • Tom Barnes       | • Dan Fishel     | • Julie Lammers  |
| • Dan Dennis      | • Lois Foster      | • Laurie Simmons |                  |
| • Bob Hoyt        | • Vic Klopfenstein | • Cody Crawford  |                  |

**Capitol Visitors**



Rep. Wagner, Rev. Schumacher, Jenny Schumacher, and Josiah and Micah Schumacher

Monday, Rev. Eric Schumacher of Northbrook Baptist Church was my guest in the Iowa House of Representatives. I would like to extend my appreciation to Eric for leading the House in its opening prayer and for taking the time, along with his family, to visit the capitol.