



Under the Golden Dome, Too

This newsletter is overdue. As I have traveled the district, walked in parades, and participated in community events, it is clear that Iowans are worried about jobs, the economy, and the future for their kids and grandkids. In the coming weeks, I am going to discuss in greater detail some of the issues you have talked to me about. If there are topics you would like me to discuss, just let me know. I'm going to start with the budget since we just closed the books on 2009.

Fiscal Year 2009 ended on June 30th and it was announced that net revenue was \$161 million below the Revenue Estimating Conference prediction. This breaks down as follows:

- \$57.7 million less in gross revenue than predicted (fewer dollars coming in)
- \$72.3 million increase in tax refunds than predicted (more dollars going out)
- \$31.0 million increase in school infrastructure refunds (more dollars going out)

This means that the Fiscal Year 2010 budget is also out of balance. The base revenue for Fiscal Year 2010 (the dollars we can spend) must be lowered by \$161 million, which completely wipes out the estimated \$99 million ending balance that was predicted. The shortfall combined with the built in spending means that the spending gap for Fiscal Year 2011 is now over \$1 billion.

The Governor and Iowa Department of Management are continuing to say that "all is well" in regards to the state finances. All is definitely not well and serious leadership is needed to get our budget back in balance. Despite claims that the Governor does not need a special session to fix the Fiscal Year 2009 budget, the Governor will need legislative approval to create a balanced budget.

Iowa families are forced to budget during economically trying times and the state should be required to do the same. Instead, the last two years have seen the largest increase in spending in the state's history. The largest state budget ever passed was during the 2009 session. Governor Culver keeps telling Iowans that we have a revenue problem. This could not be further from the truth. We have a spending problem! I will continue to advocate for Iowa taxpayers that their tax dollars are utilized in a fiscally responsible manner.

The summer is flying by, and the county fairs are in full swing. I am sorry I didn't make it to the Klemme or Coulter parades. I have participated in the Band Festival, Sheffield Sourdough Days, the Goodell Quasquicentennial, Swaledale Big Days, and the Clear Lake Independence Day parade. Every parade day has started out rainy, but cleared a little in time for the festivities.

I had the privilege of spending a day touring some of the businesses in Franklin County. Every business we visited was feeling the effects of the strained economy. Orders are down. But each of them told us how they planned to weather the storm and even venture into new opportunities. It was a great day.

I will be attending an American Legislative Exchange Council meeting in Atlanta (hot and humid) this week, so I will miss a parade or two. I serve on their board as well as chairing the Health and Human Services Task Force. I am also participating in a panel on Government Transparency. It will be busy, but I always learn new things as I talk with colleagues in other states. Please continue to contact me at linda.upmeyer@legis.state.ia.us or 641-923-3398. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your representative.