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## Eide Walton Legislative Update March 17, 2023

1 message

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# EIDE · WALTON

LOBBYING AND GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## Legislative Update Week Ten



**Cheers to a happy and safe St. Patty's Day weekend!**

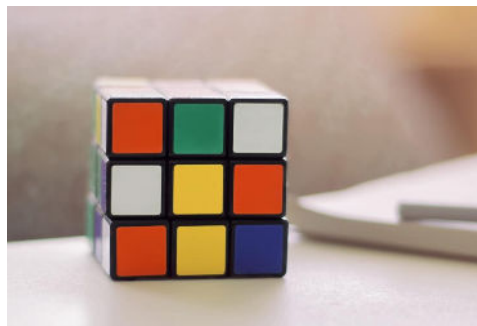
## State Government Reorganization

This week the House passed the State Government Reorganization bill, [SF 514](#), on a vote of 58-39. Five Republicans voted with Democrats against the bill: Cisneros, Dieken, Sexton, M. Thompson and C. Thompson.

After a lengthy debate, the House conformed its bill to the Senate, but did not make any further changes. House lawmakers voted down 15 amendments proposed by Democrats. Democrats raised specific concerns related to the oversight of the Department of the Blind, as well as the Governor's additional oversight of state agencies. Republicans highlighted that the bill will streamline state government and save the state money.

Governor Reynolds released a statement upon passage of the bill:

*"For decades, Iowans have seen state government grow beyond its means. Today, the Iowa House joined me and the Iowa Senate to declare an end to bloated bureaucracy. We are making government smaller, more efficient, and more effective. We are saving taxpayer dollars and putting Iowans' needs first. This transformational legislation will put Iowa in the best position to help our state thrive."*



The bill now awaits Governor Reynold's signature.

The passage of SF 514 allows legislators to more formally turn their attention to work on the state budget. The state government reorganization will also change some of the budget subcommittees assigned departments and programs, so final passage of the bill will also realign the legislature's work on the state budget.

## Childcare Rules Withdrawn

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) withdrew administrative rules that would implement changes to childcare eligibility and childcare provider reimbursement.

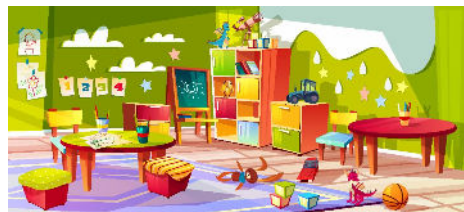
The rules would have implemented initiatives [announced last month](#) that would increase eligibility for childcare assistance to 155% of the federal poverty level, raise childcare assistance provider reimbursement rates relative to the most recent market rate survey and allow for individuals working as childcare providers to be categorically eligible for childcare assistance. The rules were withdrawn over concerns expressed by some legislators regarding implementing additional spending without a legislative appropriation.

The Iowa HHS is working with legislators and stakeholders to determine next steps on these changes, which were scheduled to begin March 1st, and will provide additional information as soon as they are able.

## Childcare Bills Update and Tracker

### [HF 319](#) Childcare Physicals

This bill passed the House last week, by a vote of 66-32. This week, it passed a subcommittee of the Senate's HHS Policy Committee. It is now eligible for consideration by the full committee.



The bill eliminates the requirement for childcare employees to have a pre-employment physical exam.

  
**Spotlight Tracker: Child Care Bills**  
\*\*New information highlighted\*\*

| Short Title                | Description   | Current Status   | Public Notice (if applicable) |
|----------------------------|---|--|-------------------------------|
| Childcare Waiver Exemption | Exempts from the income tax the wages received by performing certain childcare services. Defines such services.                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>HF 613</b> in House Ways and Means. Passed subcommittee on 3/15. Higher tax carryover vote.</li> </ul>   | <a href="#">Read More</a>     |
| Childcare Payments         | Requires employers of childcare facilities to take a prorate with the number of working employees on either the day of working employees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>HF 613</b> in House Health Policy. Passed subcommittee. Eligible for consideration by the full committee.</li> <li><b>HF 613</b> in House Health Policy. Passed committee. Received new bill number. Eligible for consideration by the full Senate Chamber.</li> </ul> |                               |
| Childcare Payments         | Requires DHS to annual to take to make childcare assistance payments for a child covered under the program on days the child              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>HF 613</b> in House Health Policy.</li> </ul>  |                               |

For a summary of the status of key childcare legislation click [here](#).

## Public Assistance Oversight

A new Iowa Poll found that a majority of Iowans approve of legislation such as [HF 613](#) that would restrict candy and soda purchases with SNAP benefits.

57% of Iowans say they favor a ban on individuals from using SNAP funds to buy pop and candy, while 40% oppose a ban, and 4% aren't sure. The ban receives support from 66% of Republicans and 54% of independents, with 45% of Democrats also in favor.



The poll, conducted on March 5-8 by Selzer & Co., asked 805 adult Iowans for their views on this topic, along with many other relevant proposals from this legislative session. The poll has a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

While HF 613 includes the ban on candy and soda, the Senate's version, [SF 494](#) does not. If the bill passes with this restriction, the state will still need approval from federal officials to exclude pop and candy from the list of eligible food items under the program.

There was no movement this week on either bill.

## Did You Know? The Dolls

A week or two ago, Kate was staring at her phone in one of the elevators and wound up atop the Capitol in the creepy part - not the cool, see-all-the-way-to-downtown part - of the dome.

Honestly, none of us would know how to get back to where she ended up if we tried. We're relieved she found her way back from Narnia!

That got us thinking about other spooky areas of the Capitol one might wander into and instantly we all thought of...THE DOLLS!



**Kate's Spooky Adventure to the Capitol's Attic**

Outside of the Governor's formal office is a display case of dolls depicting all of the First Ladies of Iowa, each outfitted in their inaugural ballgowns. First Gentleman Kevin

Reynolds is the obvious exception in his inaugural tuxedo.

The dolls were the idea of former Governor Robert Ray's wife, Billy Ray, as a project to celebrate Iowa's bicentennial in 1976. Much research was done to make the dresses as authentic as possible. The dolls are porcelain, and the faces were created from a profile of Mrs. Ray. (Legislative Services Agency: Capitol Tours)



**Do they move around at night when no one is at the Capitol? Stranger things have happened under the Golden Dome...**



**No kids it's not a Ken doll, it's First Gentleman Kevin Reynolds!**

## Around the Capitol

March Madness is a hot topic under the Golden Dome as Des Moines becomes a national host for the NCAA tournament this weekend.

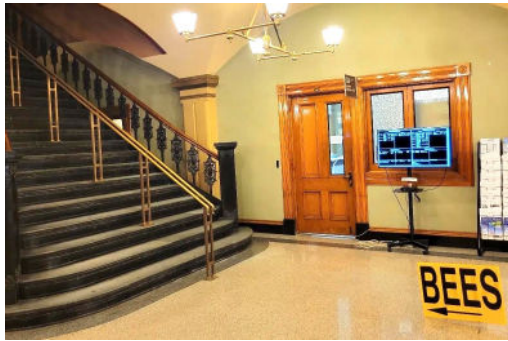


**Senator Chris Cournoyer (R-LeClaire) and Matt are pictured here with members of the University of Texas' Longhorn Pep Band. Hook 'em horns!**



**Fellow Drake University alums, Senator Nick Boulton (D-Des Moines) and Matt, discuss the Bulldogs' chances in the NCAA tournament.**





Capitol visitors were met with this sign on Thursday. Lobbyists and advocates shuddered and thought, "what fresh hell is this?" Those in the know headed up to the Iowa Honey Bee Day on the Hill!

How would you caption this photo (left)? Send us your ideas at [maddy@eidewalton.com](mailto:maddy@eidewalton.com)!

**Please don't hesitate to contact us!**



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