

# **The Greiner Report by Senator Sandra Greiner**

February 1, 2013

Activity in the Iowa General Assembly is picking up. Constituent groups have begun visiting the Capitol hoping to gain support for a litany of issues. At the same time, committees continue to focus on hearing from Agency heads about programs administered through their respective agencies.

On Thursday, we heard the "State of the National Guard" address presented by the Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Major General Tim Orr. This was Orr's 4<sup>th</sup> year to address the General Assembly, and he assured us that our National Guard continues to stand ready to respond to whatever emergency arises, both at home and abroad.

There are currently 260 Iowa National Guard members deployed, the lowest number since Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Fourteen members of the Guard continue to be treated for injuries received during a previous deployment, and the Major General reminded us that no Mission is over until all the wounded have been released from medical care and have returned home.

Orr reminded us of the economic impact of the Iowa National Guard, in that there has been approximately \$370 million in federal funding flowing into the Iowa economy each year.

The Iowa National Guard has been in existence for the past 175 years, and since its start it remains Mission Focused and Warrior Ready.

The number of Filed Bills appearing on our desks each morning is beginning to increase.

SF 91 increases the civil penalties for Pipelines and Underground Gas Storage violations. Currently, violations are subject to a civil penalty levied by the Iowa Utilities Board not to exceed \$10,000 per violation, subject to a \$500,000 maximum. The bill increases these limits to \$100,000 and \$1 million respectively. Civil penalties collected for violations are credited to and appropriated for the Iowa Energy Center.

SF 92 would provide Reserve Peace Officers with a nonrefundable individual income tax credit. Recipients would be required to meet minimum training standards and fulfill an entire tax year employment requirement. The credit is to compensate the individual for services as a reserve peace officer. The amount of the credit equals \$50. If the individual was not a reserve peace officer for the entire year, the amount of the credit would be prorated based upon months of service. If the eligible taxpayer is also a volunteer fire fighter or a volunteer EMS personnel, who already receives a tax credit, they will only be eligible to claim credit for one position.

The Senate Ag Committee heard from Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Director Chuck Gipp this week. It was during this presentation that we learned that IDNR has appointed

Gene Tinker to serve as the DNR's Agriculture Liaison. Director Gipp urged the Senators to let their area Commodity Groups know that Tinker is available to speak to individual groups.

It was in this same meeting that Gipp gave a short briefing on steps the IDNR is taking to accelerate the permitting process for well water drilling, should wells begin going dry due to the continued drought conditions.

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