

BILL ANDERSON
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Third District

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The Senate

State of Iowa

Eighty-fifth General Assembly

STATEHOUSE

Des Moines, IA 50319

COMMITTEES

Commerce, Ranking Member

Labor and Business Relations

State Government

Transportation, Infrastructure, and Capitals

Appropriations Subcommittee

The Anderson Report

First, thank you for the honor of representing you in the Iowa Senate. Please feel free to contact me with your questions, comments and ideas. You can reach me at 712-898-2505 or email to bill.anderson@legis.iowa.gov.

Over the weekend I held forums across the Third District. A number of issues were discussed. I would like to highlight a three of those issues this week.

Gas Tax

Last week on Iowa Press the gas tax was discussed and the Senate Ways and Means Chair stated the gas tax is “dead.” For a second year I have sponsored a Critical Needs Fund which would provide \$100 million to replace and repair state and local roads and bridges in critical need. The Critical Needs Fund will be overseen by the Department of Transportation. The creation of this fund provides another option to address our critical infrastructure needs. It is imperative we explore all avenues to find solutions to our infrastructure needs. At a time when Iowans are over taxed, we as elected officials should be innovative in our approach rather than raising another tax.

The Healthy Iowa Plan

Governor Terry Branstad unveiled a healthcare plan providing medical coverage for uninsured Iowans while enabling them to take ownership of their healthcare and wellbeing. The Healthy Iowa Plan would cover all of the approximately 89,000 uninsured Iowans earning below 100% federal poverty level without depending upon Medicaid or the federal government for full funding.

The program provides outcome-based solutions for Iowans, allowing them to take ownership of their health by providing incentives for healthy behavior. Much like private insurance, Iowans will pay reduced costs when they take preventative measures to protect their health. Additionally, local hospitals will participate in the Healthy Iowan Plan, giving Iowans freedom to see their family doctor of choice.

The Healthy Iowa Plan provides much-needed coverage for eligible Iowans in a responsible and sustainable manner. Iowans will be able to make informed choices about their healthcare without our state being beholden to the federal government and unsustainable funding sources.

Different Budgets, Different Visions

Last week the House Republicans and the Senate Democrats released their budget targets – the parameters within which they plan on allocating and spending state dollars. Comparing the budgets provides a clear picture of the priorities of each party and the vision they have for our state’s future.

House Republicans spend 98% of ongoing state revenue and only 89.5% of available revenue. In comparison, Senate Democrats spend roughly \$500 million more than the House Republicans and over \$200 million *above* what the state takes in. This is a 10.8% increase in spending above last year’s estimated appropriations. The Republican budget meets the needs of Iowans while adhering to sound budgetary principles of spending within one’s means. The budget offered by Senate Democrats pushes the state down the road of fiscal uncertainty through out-of-control spending and lack of budgetary restraint.

Just three short years ago Senate Democrats spent the state into the red, leading to across-the-board cuts and the largest spending gap in state history. We cannot revert back to these failed practices. Iowa is fiscally sound and we must continue to look forward when it comes to budgetary planning. Senate Republicans will continue to advocate for sustainable budgetary practices for the long-term benefit of Iowans.

Upcoming Events

I have town halls this Friday, March 15 – **10:00AM – 11:00AM** – Merville Forum – Fire Station, 24 W Main Street and **11:30AM – 12:30PM** – Pierson Forum – Community Center, 514 2nd Street.

Have a great week!