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The Senate
State of Iowa
Eighty-fifth General Assembly
STATEHOUSE
Des Moines, IA 50319

COMMITTEES

Economic Growth/Rebuild Iowa
Local Government
Veterans Affairs

Justice System Appropriations Subcommittee

Administrative Rules Review

Senator Mark Chelgren ***THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER***

Medicaid Expansion-

This week the Iowa Senate debated and passed SF 296 which deals with expanding Medicaid and implementing the Affordable Care Act, aka Obama Care. The argument for this bill is that the poor and moderately poor (133% of poverty) will now have free healthcare paid for by the federal government for two years and then Iowa will pay only 10% after that. I understand the desire to help the poor but...I have worked with children and adults with disabilities for 17 years. Medicaid is not an option for many of these people, it is a necessity. If SF 296 is signed into law we will add between 110,000 and 181,000 additional people to Medicaid, but in a recent survey of medical providers 31% said if Medicaid is expanded they will stop accepting it. I cannot, in good conscience, destroy a system that provides for our most vulnerable citizens. The elderly and disabled should not have to wait for long periods of time to receive their healthcare. Fewer providers and more customers is a recipe for disaster. Governor Branstad is working on a healthcare plan called "Healthy Iowa" to accommodate those defined below poverty without jeopardizing current Medicaid recipients. I look forward to evaluating it and sharing my findings with you.

Education Reform-

SF 423 was debated as Education Reform. I am tremendously disappointed in government's definition of reform. What would education reform look like if Senator Mark Chelgren could decide?

1. Empower parents to become active in the education of their children by choosing the best schools and teachers as opposed to being forced into the public school monopoly.
2. Trust teachers to do their jobs by giving them the power to control all aspects of the classroom, from information to discipline.

3. Neuter the Department of Education in the state of Iowa. The Department of Education should work for the school districts to simplify the governmental bureaucracy so that the schools can focus on the children of Iowa.
4. Reward the best teachers. A great teacher is priceless and will inspire a child for life. We should aspire to pay as much money as possible to our best teachers.
5. Fire bad teachers. It's a travesty to allow a bad teacher anywhere near our children. I do not give a damn about tenure or union excuses. Fire them!
6. Protect our children. The tragedy of Sandy Hook Elementary school should be a wake-up call that a gun free zone only stops the good guys. Do not make our schools a target by letting mentally disturbed individuals know that our teachers and other school employees are unarmed. I trust our teachers with my most valuable possession, my children. I trust them to defend my children also.

"I swear to support the Constitutions of the United States of America and the State of Iowa. So help me God."

Senator Mark Chelgren