

Senator Mark Chelgren

THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER



Forty-first District
Statehouse: (515) 281-3371
819 Hutchinson
Ottumwa, IA 52501
C: (641) 777-7047
mark.chelgren@legis.iowa.gov

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

COMMITTEES
Economic Growth/Rebuild Iowa
Local Government
Veterans Affairs

Administrative Rules Review Committee
Justice System Appropriations Subcommittee

Week 3-

Education spending was at the top of the priorities in the last week of January in 2013. Three bills dealing with education spending growth and the associated tax increases were debated. Senate Democrats proposed spending 4% more on education with no changes to the system. Forty years ago the allowable growth formula was created to accelerate the spending on education and it worked great. In 1973, Iowa spent \$930 per student and we ranked at the top in education in the nation. Since then we have increased spending to over \$6,000 per student and have fallen to about 25th nationally. Even accounting for inflation, we still spend over three times as much with little if any improvement to the system. Governor Branstad has proposed changes to the education system that could cost hundreds of millions of dollars per year and dramatically raise teachers' salaries. This is a lot of money and I am looking forward to the discussion on improving Iowa's entire education system. I want every child in Iowa to have access to the best education in the world and will vote to spend your tax dollars on it, but only if we have a good plan to achieve this goal.

This week Iowa Republican Senators proposed an amendment to return unspent money from last year to the tax payers. Iowa has its emergency fund and rainy day fund maximized; this is over 600 million dollars. We also have \$800,000,000 extra in our accounts from over collecting taxes. It is my desire to return the money to its rightful owners and that is you. The Republican tax return plan would give back to tax payers; approximately \$750 per family or \$375 per single filer. I trust you with your money; I do not trust my fellow politicians with it. The Senate Democrats refused to debate the amendment and ruled it non-germane.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the League of Women Voters' Forum in Ottumwa.

The American dream to me is the insatiable desire to be the master of my own destiny.

Senator Mark Chelgren
Ottumwa, Iowa

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