



ADVOCACY ALERT

March 5, 2010

The Capitol Report

League of Women Voters of Iowa Legislative News

Post-Funnel Alert

Friday (March 5) was the final legislative "funnel" deadline - to be eligible for debate bills need to have passed one chamber and cleared committees in the other chamber. This second funnel deadline came and went with little fanfare, few committees and even fewer subcommittees met on what is usually a pretty chaotic "crunch time" week.

The state budget crisis, too few resources to do anything significant, and a sense of impending doom while waiting for the March 11 revenue estimates have left legislators paralyzed to press forward on many issues like mental health parity, flood plain management, expanding domestic abuse laws to cover dating relationships, and a whole host of union-backed bills. All died in this week's funnel.

- You can review the surviving LWVIA-tracked bills in our Bill Tracker [here](#).

The best thing about funnel week: the end of funnel week. Returning to the Capitol after the second funnel is like hitting the "reset" button. You get to start over. The list of bills has shrunk (this year, historically small). You start from scratch, re-evaluate your priorities, and find a way to get them done in the new environment. As the Dalai Lama said in his ten life rules, "Learn the rules so you know how to break them properly." Crafty legislators can always find ways to breathe new life into dead bills. Truly, where there is a will, there is a way. It is never over until that final fall of the gavel just 25 days (and counting) from today.

Campaign Finance Bill Passes

According to news reports, Iowa has become the first state to address the recent US Supreme Court ruling that opened the door for corporate campaign contributions. The Iowa Senate passed (on a near-unanimous vote) legislation that would require corporations to get their governing board's approval before contributing to campaigns, and would require strict and timely reporting of all expenditures. Sen. Brad Zaun, who is running for Congress, was the lone "no" vote.

The bill ([SF 2354](#)) also prohibits a company from using the same advertising firm as a candidate, requires disclosures on any advertisements that include the name of the sponsoring company and the name of the company's CEO, and requires all in-kind contributions be reported and assigned an accurate fair market value.

The bill had originally called for approval by a company's shareholders prior to any contribution being made, but that was taken out in the Senate for fear it too would be challenged constitutionally. Rep. Chuck Isenhardt of Dubuque, a strong supporter of public campaign financing, has filed two amendments to the bill. One would tax the contributions made by corporations, and the other would prohibit any company making campaign contributions from receiving state tax-supported incentives or program dollars.

You can read the bill and proposed House amendments to the bill [here](#).

You can read our explanation of the bill [here](#).

You can track progress on the bill [here](#).

Call to Action:

Iowa is expected to be the first to address this issue, and may have the strongest response. If this is important to you, contact your Representatives and let them know how you feel. You may also want to contact your Senators to thank them for their vote.

- You can find the names of your legislators [here](#).
- You can find the email addresses of your Senators [here](#).
- You can find the email addresses of your Representatives [here](#).
- You can call the switchboards during the week to talk to your Senators (515.281.3371) and Representatives (515.281.3221).
- Attend your local forums and stand up and thank them publicly.

Quick Links

LWVIA Bill Tracker *(status of tracked bills, updated daily)*

State Legislative Website *(schedules, legislators, committees)*

Governor's Website *(executive orders, press releases)*

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