

Members and friends of the Older Iowans Legislature,

The 2008 session of the Older Iowans Legislature is scheduled for September 29-30 and we need your ideas for bills.

As a reminder, the following bills were adopted by the 2007 session of the Older Iowans Legislature and then submitted to the 2008 session of the Iowa General Assembly:

- **SENIOR LIVING TRUST FUND:** An act to restore and maintain the integrity of the Senior Living Trust Fund by ensuring that funding to the Fund is used for its original purpose to expand and fund a home and community based services system in Iowa.
- **ELDER ABUSE INITIATIVE PROGRAM:** An act relating to establishment of Iowa's Elder Abuse Initiative Program to serve all Iowans instead of only 19 counties.
- **PARITY REIMBURSEMENT FOR HOME SERVICES:** An act establishing parity of reimbursement for home and community based services.
- **LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE:** An act establishing standardized requirements for long term care insurance.
- **PERSONAL NEEDS ALLOWANCE:** An act establishing an annual increase for a Title XIX recipient's personal needs allowance equal to the percentage increase of Social Security payments as determined by the Social Security Administration.
- **ELDERLY WAIVER CASE MANAGEMENT:** An act to allow providers of the Medicaid Elderly Waiver case management service to be reimbursed for their actual cost of providing the service.
- **CONSUMER FRAUD PROTECTION:** An act creating a private cause of action for certain fraud violations.
- **PROPERTY TAX RELIEF:** An act to provide property tax relief for lower income seniors.
- **INTERNET SALES TAX:** An act to provide for Iowa vendors and businesses engaged in sales of products and services on the Internet to collect sales taxes that are appropriate.

The Older Iowans Legislature was pleased that our bills, with the exception of the Internet Sales Tax bill, were introduced to the Iowa General Assembly and given bill numbers but by the end of the session none of our bills were passed by both houses. The 2008 session of the Iowa General Assembly did, however, pass several bills of interest to the Older Iowans Legislature on the subjects of:

- Dependent Adult Abuse
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Elder Group Homes
- Long Term Care Insurance
- Health Care Reform
- Human/Health Services Budget

The Older Iowans Legislature must first understand what laws were enacted by the 2008 session of the Iowa General Assembly before we start writing new bills for the 2009 session.

It is important to understand that over the years the Iowa General Assembly passes only 8-10 % of the total bills that are submitted. In the 2008 session, a total of 2,383 bills were drafted by Iowa's senators and representatives (for an average of 16 bills per legislator) and of those 2,383 bills only 2,087 bills were actually introduced and given bill numbers. By the end of the session the Iowa General Assembly passed only 196 bills of which 194 were enacted into law with the Governor's signature for a final percentage of 9.3% bills that became law.

Because only 8-10 % of bills are ever enacted into law it is important that OIL stick to a few important issues and work them hard starting now!

This summer the members and friends of the Older Iowans Legislature are encouraged to contact their legislators and thank them for their time and sacrifices this past year and especially if they did something in particular that we liked. A quote from infoNET 2008 – Issue #8 June 14, 2008 discusses the importance of maintaining personal contacts with our individual Senator and Representative. “Your stories and your activism are what will increase the chances of changing a law, increasing funding, or passing a bill. There is a saying at the Capitol, **If you get one call from a constituent, you have an issue. If you get two calls from a constituent, you have a problem. If you get three calls, you know it’s a crisis.** The more you contact your legislators, explain what the issue or funding means to you, and spend time working with --- your legislators, the better chance you (or the organizations in which you are a member) have of passing a bill or its legislative agenda.”

Several study groups of Senators and Representatives will meet between July and December to discuss issues in the following committees:

- **Property Tax Reform Study Committee**
- Criminal Code Restructuring Interim Study Committee
- **Effects of Flooding on Livestock Industry Study Committee**
- Energy Efficiency Plans and Programs Study Committee
- Identity Theft Prevention Study Committee
- Iowa Law Enforcement Academy Facility Analysis
- Mass Transit Study Committee
- **Medicaid Elderly Waiver Study Committee**
- **Medicaid Program Drug Product Selection Study Committee**
- Postsecondary Education Rigor Analysis

The Older Iowans Legislature will pay special attention to the committees highlighted above.

CALL FOR OIL BILLS: SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2008

- We are reminded that OIL’s mission statement includes pursuing quality of life for older Iowans and especially the frail elderly.
- Sticking to a few important issues and working them hard throughout our advocacy season may be beneficial to OIL.
- Support for home and community based services and elderly waiver case management continue to be important for OIL.
- Unmet needs of older adults in Iowa as recorded by the Department of Elder Affairs may be issues for OIL bills.
- The bills passed by OIL in 2007 but not enacted by the Iowa General Assembly perhaps need to be resubmitted to OIL in 2008.
- OIL understands that the weather disasters in Iowa during May-June will affect actions in the Iowa General Assembly.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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