

2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IN REVIEW

IOWA SENATE DEMOCRATS

BIPARTISAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. MAINTAINING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY:

- We successfully fought to **save Iowa preschool**, despite Republican attempts to eliminate it completely.
- We secured **2% growth in K-12 funding** for next year, though Republicans wanted no growth for two years.
- We preserved **job training opportunities** at Iowa's community colleges and fought to **keep tuition down** at state universities and private colleges, too.



2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

- We replaced the Iowa Dept. of Economic Development with a new **public-private partnership**.
- We established the **Taxpayer Trust Fund** to return surplus revenues to Iowa taxpayers.
- We provided new funds to help **revitalize Main Streets** and preserved the Iowa Values Fund.

3. TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

- We created an **online database** of the state budget & lobbyist disclosures.
- We strengthened Iowa's **sunshine laws**.
- We ensured **equal political representation** for all Iowans through fair & balanced redistricting.

4. SAFER COMMUNITIES:

- We increased nursing home inspectors to **protect seniors**.
- We **banned designer drugs** & dangerous caffeinated beer.
- We **redesigned mental health services** and took steps to keep guns away from the insane.

5. QUALITY OF LIFE:

- We honored veterans by making **military pay tax-exempt**.
- We **promoted tourism** by preserving the Great Places Program.
- We extended the **mortgage foreclosure hotline** to help Iowans keep their homes.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Senate Democrats approved numerous job creation initiatives targeted to help small businesses, but Republicans failed to act on these proposals.

We vow to keep fighting for job creation in the 2012 session.

- Our **property tax relief** proposal would provide \$200 million annually targeted to small businesses, without shifting the burden to homeowners.
- We proposed a **health insurance tax credit** to help 60,000 Iowa small businesses.
- We proposed expanding the **Save Our Small Business low-interest loan program**.
- We proposed helping Iowans get back on their feet with **industry-approved job training programs**.
- We proposed consumer rebates for **small solar & small wind projects** to jumpstart Iowa's clean energy sector.
- We gave families making less than \$45,000 a **Working Families Tax Cut**, which Gov. Branstad vetoed.

DID YOU KNOW?

ON JULY 1, THE STATE BEGAN THE
NEW FISCAL YEAR WITH \$858
MILLION CASH IN THE BANK.



THE GRAVEYARD OF BAD IDEAS

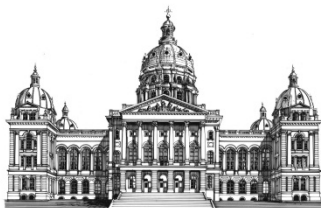
Some of the best news of the 2011 session was that several dreadful proposals died because of opposition by Iowans across the state and by Democrats.



- Republicans tried to bring Wisconsin to Iowa by completely eliminating collective bargaining rights.
- Republicans tried to kick 26,100 kids off the health insurance rolls by slashing eligibility for Hawk-I.
- Republicans tried to repeal all concealed weapons permits, a bill their own Speaker Pro-Tem dubbed the “give a gun to a schizophrenic bill.”
- Republicans wanted to cut millionaires’ personal income taxes by 20%.
- Republicans proposed a huge corporate tax break that would create the largest residential property tax increase in Iowa history.
- Republicans introduced dozens of bills to overturn marriage equality and politicize the judicial system.
- Republicans took their cues from Donald Trump and introduced a bill requiring all presidential candidates to present birth certificates.
- Republicans wanted to eliminate Area Education Associations, the regional agencies that provide special education services to private and public schools.
- Republicans introduced voter ID legislation to make it harder for Democrats to vote.
- Republicans introduced a dozen bills limiting reproductive freedom, even including a ban on contraception.
- Republicans introduced legislation that would make Iowa return to the gold standard.
- Republicans wanted to repeal the Healthy Kids Act, which sets P.E. & nutrition standards for schools.

For a more detailed version of this document, visit
www.senate.iowa.gov/democrats/2011highlights

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