



2/3/2023

Week 4 of the 2023 session is in the books. Though the news media tends to focus mostly on controversial issues, most of the bills that pass through the House are common sense tweaks to the Iowa Code and they are passed with overwhelming bi-partisan support. I think this is an important and encouraging point to pass along to you. Below is a sampling of some key issues we are working on.

Environmental Protection and Natural Resources

Two of the committees I serve on are Environmental Protection and Natural Resources. This has allowed me to be involved in some important discussions, one of which is the contamination left over from the December 8th fire in Marengo. At this point, it appears we are waiting on a cleanup plan from the DNR. I'll be doing what I can to help get this situation the attention it needs.

We also had a presentation by geologists from the University of Iowa talking about the deep geological structure beneath Iowa and the possibility of storing CO² here instead of running pipelines across farms in the state. This discussion is just getting started and gives rise to the debate about eminent domain being used by these private pipeline companies. In my opinion, eminent domain should never be used for a private enterprise, especially in this case, because CO² is not even a public utility. There are other questions surrounding the push to build this pipeline which need to be answered. I'll just say I am all about protecting private property rights and the rights of individuals. There is a quote on a wall at the Capitol which sums this up: "THE IDEAL STATE – THAT IN WHICH AN INJURY DONE TO THE LEAST OF ITS CITIZENS IS AN INJURY DONE TO ALL."

Government Realignment

Iowa's Executive Branch of government is proposing a major overhaul. The overhaul (realignment) will combine several agencies that have similar functions and save millions of dollars. It will reduce the number of cabinet level positions from 37 to about 16. By comparison, most states that have a similar population as Iowa's have an average of 15 cabinet positions and the Federal Government only has 21. This kind of downsizing is long overdue, but the bill to get this done is huge, about 1600 pages! The sheer size of the bill raises questions because it is going to make it next to impossible to fully understand it. I think it should be broken down in smaller pieces.

There are many other issues but for the sake of brevity, I will mention two very enjoyable events that took place this week.

FFA Members Visit the Capitol

We had a wonderful visit this week from FFA members from all around the district. This picture of a group from Williamsburg is the only picture I was able to track down. These young folks are our future and it was great to see them and their interest in State Government.



Last, But Not Least

This week my wife Carole and I celebrated our wedding anniversary and to honor her, I was able to introduce her to the House of Representatives during announcement time. Besides being a wonderful wife for 48 years, Carole is my campaign manager and my best friend. Happy Anniversary Carole!



Best Regards,

Brad Sherman, State Representative, District 91