

Olsen's Observations

Written by Steven Olsen
Thursday, 26 January 2012 15:48

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Governor Branstad is sticking to his pledge to not propose a fuel tax hike this session. Instead, he's looking at alternative ways to sustain Iowa's road construction projects and staying away from raising the state fuel tax. The Governor has laid out 13 cost efficiencies as way to save \$50 million. The efficiencies include:

- better overall management,
- merging government functions,
- and reforming how our Road Use Tax Fund is administered.

House Republicans have pledged to not spend more than we take in. This demonstrates a commitment to commonsense budgeting and economic health. It appears budget targets will be out shortly, and while Iowa's budget OUR GOAL SHOULD BE TO seems to be in good condition, it looks like the Bush tax cuts will end. This will cause Iowans to pay more federal tax and HAVE A STATE AND FEDERAL less state tax. This in turn will reduce Iowa's revenue by approximately \$175 million. Our goal should be to have a BUDGET THAT CONTRIBUTES state and federal budget that contributes instead of takes INSTEAD OF TAKES AWAY FROM away from economic, family and community health.

The Senate approved \$1.3 million additional dollars ECONOMIC, FAMILY AND for Iowa National Guard tuition aid for members attending COMMUNITY HEALTH. Iowa colleges and universities as thousands of troops have returned home from Iraq and Afghanistan. Before spending this money, Republicans want to be certain \$1.3 million is the correct amount and that this new expense fits within the budget already approved by Republicans and Democrats and signed by the Governor. Iowa National Guard members can be confident that this issue is a priority for House Republicans.

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On Wednesday the Iowa House passed the first bill of the 2012 Legislative session, House File 2042, a bill that requires all administrative rules created by state agencies to be accompanied by a jobs impact statement which sets out in detail the impact of the proposed rule on state agencies, local governments, and public and Iowa businesses. Additionally, it must determine whether a proposed rule would have a positive or negative impact on private sector jobs and employment.

If you have questions or comments please feel free to contact me via email at steven.olson@legis.state.ia.us