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## Legislative News

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March 21, 2006

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### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY BILL**

**\*\* URGENT ACTION NEEDED \*\***

The Parent Involvement Policy bill (HF2239) is in a Senate Education subcommittee made up of:

Senator Connolly [mike.connolly@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:mike.connolly@legis.state.ia.us)  
Senator McKinley [paul.mckinley@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:paul.mckinley@legis.state.ia.us)  
Senator Boettger [nancy.boettger@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:nancy.boettger@legis.state.ia.us)  
Senator Kreiman [keith.kreiman@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:keith.kreiman@legis.state.ia.us)

Senator Connolly has been assigned as floor manager of the bill. It is urgent that Senator Connolly receive TONS of phone calls and emails asking him to allow debate of HF2239 in the Senate.

**PLEASE CALL OR EMAIL SENATOR CONNOLLY TODAY AND ASK HIM TO ALLOW DEBATE OF HF2239, THE PARENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY BILL.**

Email Senator Connolly at [mike.connolly@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:mike.connolly@legis.state.ia.us) or leave a message at 515-281-3371.

HF2239 must be passed by the Senate Education committee by this Friday to remain "alive."

### **AFTER-SCHOOL FUNDING**

Funding for afterschool programs is still alive in the legislature. A couple of different bills are being considered. Let YOUR senator and representative know that you support funding for after-school programs.

### **HEALTHY CHILDREN TASK FORCE**

The bill (SF2251) to create a Healthy Children Task Force passed the Senate 48-0 and is in the House Education Committee. SF2251 must be passed by the House Education Committee by the March 24, "funnel date." **Iowa PTA supports legislation (SF2251) to form the Healthy Children Task Force.** Please contact your legislators about this important issue!

### **FUNDING FOR EDUCATION**

State funding for education (allowable growth) is still on the calendar in the Senate. The House passed an allowable growth rate of 4 percent. **Iowa PTA supports at least 6 percent allowable growth for schools.**

Parents are critical in helping legislators understand how this funding situation is affecting our children. **Please contact your legislators and ask them to support 6 percent allowable growth – do it for the children!**

### **TEACHER PAY**

Iowa ranks 41<sup>st</sup> or 42<sup>nd</sup> in the nation in teacher pay (depending upon the criterion used in the ranking). Iowa **MUST** attract and retain quality teachers in order to provide the best education for our children. **Urge your representatives to support increased pay for Iowa's teachers.**

### **SEAT BELT LEGISLATION**

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and injury for children 11 through 17 years of age in Iowa and the U.S. Two-thirds of teens killed in Iowa motor vehicle crashes were not wearing seat belts. Iowa code does NOT require youth aged 11 through 17 to wear a seatbelt if they are sitting in the back seat. SF2346 would require youth aged 11 through 17 years of age to wear a seatbelt no matter where they are seated in the vehicle. SF2346 must pass through the House Transportation Committee by March 24<sup>th</sup>. **Please urge your legislators to support SF2346, the seatbelt requirement for children 11 through 17 years of age.**

## IOWA PTA SPEAKS OUT FOR CHILDREN IN WASHINGTON, DC

Kim Winterhof, President, Bonnie Wheeler, First VP, and Sherry Brown, Legislative Chairman, attended the National PTA Legislative Conference last week and visited with congressmen from Iowa in Washington, DC. Three items were discussed:

**1) Parent Involvement** – PTA members shared information with congressmen about evidence on the importance of parent involvement in education and the positive effect it has on student achievement. When the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act begins next year, PTA members will urge congress to strengthen the parent involvement provisions in NCLB, Head Start, and other education programs. At the state level, Iowa PTA is supporting legislation to promote parent involvement in every Iowa school.

**2) Child Health and Nutrition** – PTA members provided congressmen with facts showing that adequate nutrition improves school attendance, learning, behavior, and productivity. The School Foods Bill, currently being written, will update the nutrition standards for foods available in such places as vending machines and cafeteria snack lines. Congressmen were urged to support this impending legislation. At the state level, Iowa PTA is supporting legislation to form a Healthy Children Task Force to address the critical issue of child health and wellness. Iowa PTA also encourages PTA members to become knowledgeable about their local school's wellness program and involved in its implementation.

**3) Funding for Education and Family Support Programs** – PTA members reminded congressmen that if we truly want children to be prepared for work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we must provide adequate funding for vital programs such as:

- \* Title I - provides educational support for low-income populations
- \* Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - Provides support for students with special needs
- \* 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers – Provides funding for Afterschool and other important community programs
- \* Parent Information and Resource Centers (PIRCs) – Provides support for parent involvement
- \* And other programs critical to children and families

In a stunning victory for the education and health communities, the US Senate voted to add more than \$16 billion to the proposed budget request for fiscal year 2007. As originally proposed, the FY07 budget would have provided no new funding for Title I, would have cut funding to many other programs and would have eliminated 42 education programs. The House is not expected to begin work on the FY07 budget until April 5.

### WRITING TO YOUR LEGISLATORS

During the legislative session, address mail to Iowa Legislators at:

The Honorable (full name of legislator)  
Iowa House of Representatives (or Iowa Senate)  
State Capitol  
Des Moines, IA 50319

Use the correct salutation:

Dear Representative (last name),

Or

Dear Senator (last name),

### CALLING YOUR LEGISLATORS

Leave a message for your Representative in the House by calling (515) 281-3221

Leave a message for your Senator by calling (515) 281-3371

### E-MAILING YOUR LEGISLATORS

You MUST include your home address in your email, so they know you are a constituent!

Email addresses are created as follows:

[firstname.lastname@legis.state.ia.us](mailto:firstname.lastname@legis.state.ia.us)

### DON'T KNOW WHO YOUR LEGISLATORS ARE?

Go to: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/FindLeg/>

### TIPS ON COMMUNICATING WITH LAWMAKERS:

[http://www.iowapta.org/pdf/legislative/Advocating\\_to\\_Lawmakers.pdf](http://www.iowapta.org/pdf/legislative/Advocating_to_Lawmakers.pdf)

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#### National PTA Legislative Information –

- To receive National PTA's weekly e-newsletter, "This Week in Washington", go to: [capwiz.com/npta2/mlm/signup](http://capwiz.com/npta2/mlm/signup)
- For information on National PTA issues, go to: [http://www.pta.org/ia\\_issues.html](http://www.pta.org/ia_issues.html)

#### Iowa PTA Legislative Information –

- To subscribe to Iowa PTA "Legislative News", go to: [www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=legislative.network](http://www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=legislative.network)
- To view previous issues of the e-newsletter, go to: [www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=updates.main](http://www.iowapta.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=updates.main)