

Iowa Legislative Report
Iowa State Police Association
90th General Assembly, 2023 Session
End of Session Final Report: May 16, 2023
Fitzgerald, Smith & Associates, Lobbyists

The 2023 Legislative session ended May 4th with the approval of a Sine Die resolution (adjournment) shortly after noon. It was a very contentious session with many battles between the two chambers, as well as the Governor's office. This session proved that politics will always find its way into the creation of policy. Even though Republicans control the Governor's office and the Legislature, moving policy between chambers and receiving the Governor's approval can still be very difficult.

The division of political philosophies seemed to grow wider between the two Legislative chambers this session than in years past stemming from a couple controversial policy bills introduced by the Governor's office. Educational Savings Accounts and the Government Reorganization bills were introduced early in session and were viewed quite differently between the House and the Senate. These were bills that had dramatic changes in policy as well as fiscal impacts. This seemed to set the stage for confrontation between the Chambers that would last throughout the 2023 legislative session.

We are aware that no session is ever the same, so we must adapt to the session in front of us and move forward. We registered on nearly two dozen bills actively lobbying on most of them. Success is measured in many ways in the legislature as we lobby to pass, amend, or defeat bills as they are drafted and move through the committee process. Sometimes defeating a bill can be more important than passing one into law. We had success in both of those areas this session, which we will detail below.

- HF-358 is a bill relating to eluding or attempting to allude a law enforcement vehicle. We registered in favor of this bill and it was signed by the Governor on April 28th.

- SF 183 is a bill relating the maximum age of certain firefighters and police officers. It essentially took away the maximum retirement age. We were registered as monitoring this bill but lobbied to remove the maximum retirement age to only Reserve officers. We were successful in this endeavor and the Governor signed it as amended on May 3rd.
- HF 631 is a bill relating to police officer, public safety, and emergency personnel in relation to the Brady-Giglio list and confidential information. This bill was messaged to the Governor's office, and she is expected to sign although, at the time of this report, she has not.
- There were three different window tinting bills that were introduced this session. We were able to defeat all three of these including adding them to other bills later in session.
- There were companion bills in both chambers dealing with hands free electronic usage while driving. The Senate passed this bill 47-3 but it died in the House. There was a last-ditch effort to move this bill towards the end of the session. This included adding one amendment that would have removed the requirement for front license plates and another that would have restricted the placement of automated traffic cameras as well as a version of one of the window tint bills. This proposed compromise was not satisfactory to ISPA and ultimately died.

All these bills are also listed in the bill watch spread sheet.

Once again, a strong push to pass the 411 bill was made this session. As in past years, we have had success in the House but always experienced resistance in the Senate. Unfortunately, this year was no different. The House passed this bill again and although we were able to make some progress in the Senate, they ultimately did not take the bill up on the Senate floor.

This year was even more frustrating for a couple of reasons. First, we worked very hard with the Metro Coalition during the interim (at the request of Senate Leadership) to find a compromise that all could agree to. We were able to find that compromise and presented it to the Senate Leadership and Committee Chair. In the end it seemed politics got in the way again and they chose not to run the compromised bill. Secondly, we truly believe that if this bill was brought before the full Senate Chamber, the 411 bill would pass with vast bipartisan support similar to what we've seen in the House over the last few years.

Fortunately, we are in the first year of a biannual Legislative session and because this bill passed the House floor, it is still alive for the next session. In the interim we will work to shore up support with members in the Senate and work to have leadership give this bill an opportunity to be debated on the Senate floor.

It has once again been a pleasure to work on behalf of the Iowa State Police Association this session. We appreciate the board members' support and quick response to technical questions and their ability to meet with legislative leaders on short notice. Although we had successes this past session there is much work to be done and we look forward to that opportunity. And as always, feel free to contact us at any time with any questions or concerns.

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