

Legislative Session

The Iowa Legislature wrapped up its work for the year on May 15 after three consecutive 18+ hour days. During this time they managed to pass all nine budget bills, the federal block grant bill, opioid settlement spending, a bill limiting what carbon pipeline companies can do to take private land, the Governor's rural health initiative, the Governor's unemployment tax reduction, state government employee paid leave, Iowa Health & Wellness Plan work requirements, the Governor's tax credit bill, local government ban on DEI activities (Diversity – Equity – Inclusion), regulation of crypto-currency (bitcoin), an expanded state adoption tax credit, and 35 other bills. After months-long negotiations and several subcommittees, they did not end up making changes to the state's property tax system (look for that next year).

If it felt like there were a lot more bills than usual, it is because there actually were a lot more bills than usual. The 2025 Iowa Legislative session broke the record in the number of bills filed. In fact, there has never been a House File 1000 in the history of the State of Iowa (since records were kept from 1876). This year we got to House File 1055.

Tensions ran high this year with deep divisions on early childhood education redesign, pharmacy benefit manager reform, and most significantly, banning the use of eminent domain for private carbon pipeline companies. Of the 171 bills sent to the Governor, all but two were signed and a third was line-item vetoed.

The Iowa Nurses Association maintains an extensive bill tracker, which keeps tabs on bills of importance to the nursing profession. If you have not checked it out, it is now updated with effective dates, vote totals, plain language explanations, and other details on bills. You can check it out here (or navigate from the Advocacy section of the INA website).

Bills that passed in the 2025 legislative session are listed in the default "active" list in the bill tracker. Bills that did not make it through the process are in the "inactive list" and will be alive again in 2026. In either list, you can organize this by topic or bill number. You can also download the lists in spreadsheet format.

Outlook for 2026

If you think the 2025 legislative session was contentious, just wait for 2026 when a handful of legislators are jockeying for new committee and leadership positions, as well as running for higher office. The Governor's veto of the carbon pipeline/ eminent domain bill prompted a quick response from House leaders, saying they will block all of the Governor's initiatives next year. There are still deep divides in the Senate Republican caucus over the issue, leaving the 12 who refused to vote for a budget bill until a carbon deal was passed more emboldened than ever.

Some of the high-profile issues we know will be discussed in 2026:

- **Eminent domain** & carbon pipelines – round 2.
- **Property tax reform** – they got close but could not close the gap at the end of session. 2026 is an election year; you can bet it will top the Republican's "to-do" list.
- **Budget reconciliation** – depending on the fallout from the President's "One Big Beautiful Bill," legislators may have to come back to backfill Medicaid and make difficult decisions on where to cut corners. More frequent eligibility checks, paperwork requirements for work, and less funding may cause people to lose their coverage.

While these are pretty big issues for a 100-day legislative session, the bigger problem may be the changes coming in leadership and in committees.

Make Your Voice Heard: Fall Advocacy Challenge

Nurses educate patients every day. Advocacy is nothing more than educating legislators on the challenges of their profession and the things you need to make Iowans healthier. While INA's Capitol Days have been successful, it is more important to talk to your legislators when they are NOT in session. Legislators have more time to talk to you in the summer and fall. Here are a few things you can do to support INA's legislative priorities as we move into the next legislative session:

- Find out who represents you at the State Capitol [here](#).
- Connect with them and ask them to meet you for coffee. Even better, bring a group of nurses to meet with your legislators.
- Introduce yourself, talk about the challenges in nursing, why you decided to become a nurse, and what can be done to keep and attract more nurses. You can use our priorities and infographics to help.
- Ask them about their priorities. If they mention something you support, ask how you can help them.
- Ask how to keep connected with them. This may be signing up for their newsletter or local forum they hold or texting them when something comes up. Each legislator is different so ask your legislator how they like to be contacted during session and in the interim.
- Let us know how it goes! You can email lobbyist Amy Campbell (amy@ialobby.com) and INA Public Policy Committee Chair Kate Pace (kate.pace@gmail.com). [Click here](#) to read the full report. ■