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## IN THIS ISSUE

- [Legislative session to convene](#)
- [IHA's position on emergency medical services](#)
- [Focus on EMS](#)
- [Where we've been](#)
- [Talking points](#)
- [Health Policy Oversight Committee meets](#)

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### Legislative session to convene

Monday, Jan. 11, legislators will gather to begin the 2021 legislative session. This session is scheduled for 110 days, throughout which IHA will provide updates in Legislative Bulletin publication, biweekly podcasts, videos, IHA's Facebook page, Twitter account and LinkedIn

account (web addresses are below). IHA also will mobilize hospital advocates through action alerts when legislators need to hear about hospital issues. **Advocates can sign up for email or text message IHA action alerts at [ihaonline.org/takeaction](http://ihaonline.org/takeaction).**

IHA social media:

- Facebook page - [facebook.com/iowahospital](https://facebook.com/iowahospital)
- Twitter account - [twitter.com/iowahospital](https://twitter.com/iowahospital)
- LinkedIn account - [linkedin.com/company/iowa-hospital-association](https://linkedin.com/company/iowa-hospital-association)

IHA's government relations team looks forward to an exciting session.

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## IHA's position on emergency medical services

The Iowa Legislature should allow counties to declare emergency medical services (EMS) an essential service without a special election and end the five-year sunset on such declarations. This policy gives local governments control over their EMS needs. Instead of creating a one-size-fits-all policy, this policy allows counties to determine their needs and create a sustainable funding mechanism without relying on the general assembly for an appropriation. The policy also would give Iowans more opportunities to become EMTs at a lower cost.

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## Focus on EMS

Rural Iowans are suffering from longer wait times for EMS. The process that county boards of supervisors must navigate to declare EMS an essential service is inefficient and costly. IHA supports a policy that expands rural access to EMS by allowing local governments to adopt a permanent system to fund EMS in their communities and expand training opportunities for Iowans wanting to become emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

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## Where we've been

In 2020, the Iowa House of Representatives amended and passed SF 2283, which would have allowed counties to declare EMS an essential service and expanded EMT training opportunities. The bill passed with only one nay vote. The Iowa Senate did not vote on the amended bill.

SF 2283 would have:

- **Created local control** by allowing counties to decide how county funds are used.
- **Ensured transparency** by requiring boards of supervisors to create advisory councils to establish counties' EMS needs, requiring boards of supervisors to ratify declarations during the next general election and allowing citizens of each county to petition for a reverse referendum to eliminate the tax.
- **Expanded training** opportunities by allowing more types of entities to apply for authorization to open and manage EMT training programs.
- **Reduced government bureaucracy and saved money** by eliminating the requirement that county boards of supervisors spend public money to hold special elections on the tax and eliminating the five-year sunset on the essential services declaration.
- **Saved lives** by allowing counties to more easily raise revenue and expand EMS access in their counties.



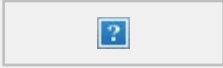
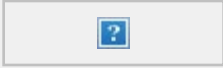
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## Health Policy Oversight Committee meets

The Health Policy Oversight Committee met Dec. 21, 2020, to hear from Department of Human Services Director Kelly Garcia and her staff about issues affecting health policy in 2020 and 2021. The committee oversees Medicaid managed care, ensuring effective and efficient administration of the program, addressing stakeholder concerns, monitoring program costs and expenditures, and making recommendations to the Iowa General Assembly.

Garcia outlined the status of Iowa Total Care claim audits, managed care rates, and the medical loss ratio for each managed care organization. She also indicated the department is looking at ways to leverage more federal funds and not leave funds on the table. Department staff gave legislative and program implementation updates about a number of topics, including pharmacist immunizations, 1915(b) waivers, uniform prior authorization, waiver of monthly budget caps, and the health home Office of Inspector General Audit.

Representatives of Iowa Total Care and Amerigroup also presented their outreach initiatives in the state and managed care organization updates. Committee members, including senators and representatives, had an opportunity to ask questions.



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