

# Iowa State Association of Counties **2016** Top Priorities

- **Delinquent Court Debt**
- **Distracted Driving**
- **E911 Funding**
- **Food Safety**
- **Mental Health and Disability Services**

## **Delinquent Court Debt**

**PROBLEM:** In the closing hours of the 2015 session the Iowa Legislature amended the statutes dealing with the collection of delinquent court debt. Those changes will dramatically decrease collections by the county attorney in future years resulting in the loss of millions of dollars to the county General Fund.

**SOLUTION:** Amend the statutes dealing with delinquent court debt to allow county attorneys to collect delinquent court debt beginning on day 31 and allow for the collection of any delinquent court debt that had been previously assigned to a private collection designee.

## **Distracted Driving**

**PROBLEM:** Distracted driving, inexperienced and impaired driving, as well as other factors result in hundreds of deaths on Iowa's roadways each year. While there is no simple solution to reduce the number of highway fatalities, there needs to be an enhanced effort on the awareness of the dangers of distracted and impaired driving.

**SOLUTION:** ISAC supports defining distracted driving in relation to the use of a hand-held electronic device as a primary offense.

## **E911 Funding**

**PROBLEM:** Local Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) are struggling to fund dispatch operations and provide emergency 911 services on the amount of funding they receive from the E911 surcharge revenue. As a result, local taxpayers are subsidizing the cost of delivering emergency 911 services today.

**SOLUTION:** ISAC supports a new E911 surcharge funding proposal for PSAPs that increases the amount going to emergency 911 service delivery.

## **Food Safety**

**PROBLEM:** In the past 37 years, the Legislature has only increased food licensing fees twice. Both times, the increase was not enough to cover the cost of operating the program. Because of the low fees, many counties have returned the food program to the Department of Inspection and Appeals (DIA) which has forced DIA to take back other contracts to obtain additional license fees to afford inspecting the returned jurisdictions. In 2009 DIA inspected 23 counties and now DIA inspects 52 counties. Because of the low fees, DIA has lowered its inspection frequency two times in the past three years. Inadequate and irregular license fee increases are starving Iowa's food safety system and have the potential to put the health and lives of the consuming public at risk.

**SOLUTION:** Increase food licensing fees to fully fund food safety program activities in compliance with Iowa Code. DIA should be authorized to administer the food licensing fees through the Iowa Administrative Code. There should be an automatic fee adjustment mechanism established to annually increase fees by the percentage increase in the consumer price index.

## **Mental Health and Disability Services**

**PROBLEM:** Counties are continuing to face long term funding challenges in the regional mental health and disability services (MH/DS) system. As current mental health funding from property tax collection is a frozen dollar amount in each county and with the state no longer providing equalization funding, a financial inequity is emerging in regions that have counties that cannot raise their levies accordingly to meet the service demands of their region. Further, as regions are committed to the full components of MH/DS redesign and want to provide additional core services, they are reluctant to do so without sustainable funding.

**SOLUTION:** ISAC recommends that the Legislature update the MH/DS levy cap by establishing a new statewide per capita target that allows county boards of supervisors to adjust the individual county levies based on the region's budget needs.

# Iowa State Association of Counties 2016 Top Priorities

## 2016 Legislative Policy Committee

The 2016 ISAC Legislative Priorities were developed by the ISAC Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). This committee is composed of two representatives from each affiliate and is chaired by Peggy Rice, Humboldt County Auditor and ISAC 2nd Vice-President. The committee has worked together to create a short and cohesive set of legislative objectives for ISAC to pursue in 2016.

At the end of August the committee convened to hear legislative policy proposals from each affiliate. The committee worked hard for two days discussing implications of any changes. Between the August and September meetings at which the legislative objectives were adopted by the committee, staff and committee members performed research on any questions that needed to be answered or clarifications that needed to be made.

The 2016 Legislative Objectives, Policy Statements and ISAC Top Priorities recommendations were presented to the ISAC Board of Directors, which voted on October 16 to recommend them to the full membership. The full membership approved the legislative package during the General Session at the ISAC Fall School of Instruction in November 2015.



### 2016 ISAC LPC Committee Members

**Committee Chair:** Peggy Rice, Humboldt County Auditor and ISAC 2nd Vice-President

#### Assessors

Dale McCrea, Muscatine County  
Deb McWhirter, Butler County

#### Auditors

Ken Kline, Cerro Gordo County  
Dennis Parrott, Jasper County

#### Community Services

Lori Elam, Scott County  
Shane Walter, Sioux County

#### Conservation

Dan Cohen, Buchanan County  
Matt Cosgrove, Webster County

#### County Attorneys

Darin Raymond, Plymouth County  
Matt Wilbur, Pottawattamie County

#### Emergency Management

Thomas Craighton, Franklin County  
Mike Goldberg, Linn County

#### Engineers

Lyle Brehm, Tama/Poweshiek County  
Dan Eckert, Dickinson County

#### Environmental Health

Eric Bradley, Scott County  
Brian Hanft, Cerro Gordo County

#### Information Technology

Micah Cutler, Franklin/Hardin County  
Jeff Rodda, Polk County

#### Public Health

Doug Beardsley, Johnson County  
Lynelle Diers, Wapello County

#### Recorders

Megan Clyman, Davis County  
Kris Colby, Winnebago County

#### Sheriffs and Deputies

Lonny Pulkrabek, Johnson County  
Jared Schneider, Washington County

#### Supervisors

Carl Mattes, Humboldt County  
Burlin Matthews, Clay County

#### Treasurers

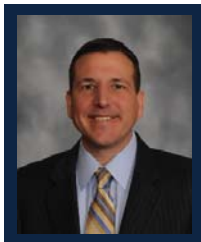
Kelley Busch, Union County  
Tracey Marshall, Cass County

#### Veterans Affairs

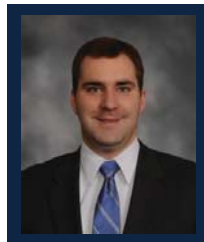
Gary Boseneiler, Johnson County  
Jerry Hansen, Montgomery County

#### Zoning

Joe Buffington, Henry County  
Josh Busard, Johnson County



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