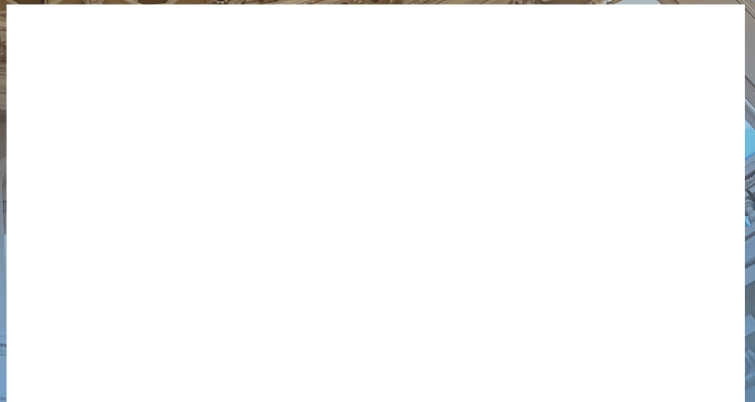




The  
**Iowa County**  
Magazine

**March 2025**  
Iowa's  
Congressional  
Delegation



**YOU'RE ALMOST DONE** WITH A  
LANDSCAPING PROJECT. YOU'VE ONLY  
GOT **5 YARDS OF ROCK** TO PUT IN 3 BEDS.  
BUT THE NEWBIE **ACCIDENTALLY TORE A**  
**HYDRAULIC HOSE,** LEAVING YOU WITH 5  
YARDS OF ROCK TO SHOVEL BY HAND.  
THAT'S WHEN YOU **CALL YOUR ZIEGLER**  
**REP.** HE LINES UP YOUR REPAIR BY 2 PM  
SO YOU CAN **COMPLETE THE**  
**PROJECT ON TIME.**

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# The Iowa County

March 2025 \* Volume 54, Number 3

The Iowa County: The official magazine of the Iowa State Association of Counties  
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Full Plate of Policy Priorities on the Menu <i>Senator Chuck Grassley</i>	4-5
A Word from Senator Joni Ernst <i>Senator Joni Ernst</i>	6-7
Congress Has Its Plate Full for 2025 <i>Congressman Randy Feenstra</i>	8-9
Putting America and Iowa First <i>Congresswoman Ashley Hinson</i>	10
A Thank You Before the Next Adventure <i>Kristi Harshbarger</i>	11
ISAC Spring Conference Educational Seminars	12
TSB Program Update <i>Joel Rohne</i>	13
ISAC Golden Eagle Nominations Now Being Accepted <i>Rachel Bennett</i>	14
2024 NACo Fall Board Meeting <i>Richard Crouch</i>	15-16
<b>Calendar of Events</b>	<b>17</b>



#### **ISAC's Mission:**

To promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa.

#### **ISAC's Vision:**

To be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.

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\*\* The views and opinions expressed in articles authored by anyone other than ISAC staff are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of ISAC.

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# Full Plate of Policy Priorities on the Menu

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## Keep in touch, my door is always open.

A new Congress opened for business in January, fresh off the heels of an election in which voters sent a resounding message to Washington, D.C.: wake up and smell the roses. President Donald Trump’s historic comeback confirmed his agenda aligned with public sentiment: Restore law and order, stop inflationary spending, and govern with common sense.

It calls to mind the sweeping mandate voters delivered in the 1994 elections, prompting then - President Bill Clinton to declare in his State of the Union address the “era of big government is over.”

Back then, Congress got to work to right-size the government. We balanced the federal budget, tackled unfunded federal mandates, enacted welfare reform, and passed my Congressional Accountability Act to make Congress live under the same laws as everybody else.

Fast forward three decades, voters delivered another clear mandate last November to stop government overreach and restore peace and prosperity.

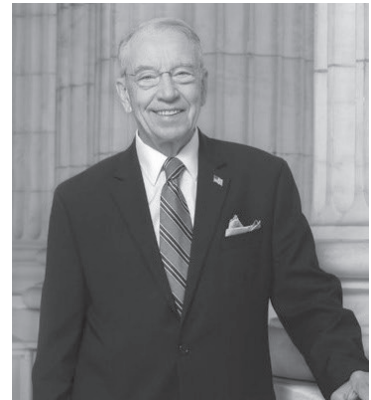
As Iowa’s senior United States Senator, it’s an honor to represent Iowans and leverage my high-ranking leadership positions on behalf of our great state. My approach to the job hasn’t changed. I work across the aisle to deliver for Iowa, and I work tirelessly to keep in touch with my constituents. This year I’ll start my 45th consecutive year holding question-and-answer sessions with Iowans in all 99 counties. Hearing from Iowans at the grassroots informs my work on your behalf at the policymaking tables in Washington.

For example, I supported the bipartisan infrastructure law in 2021 because of the overwhelming pleas I consistently heard from local, county, and state leaders across our state. Iowa’s bridges ranked dead last for structural safety. Our economy and daily life are dependent on access to roads, rails, waterways, air travel, and the internet. Whether the Highway or Aviation trust funds, the Army Corps of Engineers or federal connectivity programs, Iowa’s infrastructure relies on decisions made in Washington. I make sure Iowa has a seat at the table.

Since the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act’s enactment, I’ve been pleased to see communities across our state receive vital funding and Iowans benefit from their tax dollars returning home.

Seven Iowa counties last fall got a boost from a [\\$44 million investment](#) to replace eight bridges, including the Arc of Justice bridge in Cedar Rapids. Iowa airports are able to [modernize terminals](#) and secure improvements for passengers and commercial activity with passage of the [Airport Improvements Program](#), including resources for small community airports.

Looking ahead in 2025, I’ve got a full plate of policy priorities on my legislative and oversight menu. Here’s a look at key issues I’m pushing from my committee assignments.



Senator Chuck Grassley  
United States Senator for Iowa  
[grassley.senate.gov](http://grassley.senate.gov)

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# Full Plate of Policy Priorities on the Menu

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**Senate Judiciary Committee** – I’ve served on this Committee since 1981 and in January took over once again as chairman. The Committee handles nominations to the federal bench, including the Supreme Court, and has legislative jurisdiction over immigration, crime, controlled substances, antitrust, and more. Among my many Judiciary priorities, I’ve [partnered with local law enforcement](#) to fight organized retail theft. In January, I introduced [legislation to protect law enforcement](#) from secondary exposure to lethal narcotics. This bill would provide resources to state and local governments to keep first responders safe on the job when they put their lives on the line to uphold public safety.

**Senate Finance Committee** – This tax-writing Committee has an urgent job ahead to prevent a \$4 trillion tax hike on Americans if Congress doesn’t extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which is set to expire on December 31. I’m working to prevent this crushing tax increase on hardworking families, family farmers, and small businesses, that also would undercut economic growth. For example, I’m co-sponsoring the Main Street Tax Certainty Act to make permanent the 20% pass-through business tax deduction. Small businesses are the economic engine of local economies across our state, creating jobs, boosting local revenue, and strengthening civic vitality. In addition, I’ll continue leading efforts in the Committee to preserve, improve, and expand access to health care close to home, including for [telehealth](#), [maternal care](#), [mental health](#), and [veterans](#), as well as lowering prescription drug costs. I’m glad more [medical residency positions](#) are coming to Iowa thanks to a law I [wrote in 2020](#).

**Senate Agriculture Committee** – As the only crop farmer in the Senate, I’m proud to champion the needs of Iowa farmers and biofuel workers. While work is underway this Congress to write and pass a new five-year Farm Bill, I’ll continue my focus of [ensuring the farm safety net meets the needs of our family farmers](#) and rural communities.

**Senate Budget Committee** – Article I of the Constitution gives Congress the power of the purse. We’ve got to do a better job tightening the purse strings and [stopping improper federal payments](#) that waste taxpayer dollars. I’ll continue using my seniority on the Budget Committee to fight for fiscal discipline and return to regular order legislating on annual appropriations.

Whether it’s infrastructure, workforce, public safety, housing, or health care, I count on the input I hear from local leaders like you. Thank you for your public service and tireless advocacy to improve the quality of life and economic opportunities for your neighbors. I look forward to partnering with you in the 119th Congress and beyond.

My door is always open. Keep in touch.

# A Word from Senator Joni Ernst

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Growing up on a farm in rural southwest Iowa, my mom often talked about the importance of service to our community.

Building a life on that foundation led to 23 years of serving in the military and ultimately guided me to another form of public service: local government. I got my start in politics as Montgomery County auditor, where I served for six years.

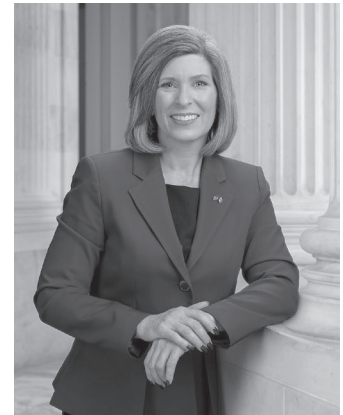
Much of what I learned and experienced during my time as a county official gave me a true appreciation for local government and still informs my work in the nation's capital now.

Because local government is truly where the rubber meets the road, I rely on officials across our state as I make informed policy decisions in Washington – a town that truly needs a dose of Iowa common sense.

If you're familiar with some of my work in the United States Senate, you'll know that a top priority for me over the last decade has been to make Washington "squeal" by cutting reckless government spending, slashing bureaucratic red tape, and getting rid of burdensome regulations.

While Washington has doubled down on wasteful spending and shamefully prioritized bureaucrats over the people they should be serving, I've fought to cut the pork and bring federal workers back to the office (or sell off empty office buildings). In 2024, my oversight forced the government to sell over a billion dollars' worth of unused office space and exposed Internal Revenue Service (IRS) agents who owe more than \$50 million in back taxes.

These wins were the result of a decade of hard work looking to save money when it felt like just about everyone else was looking the other way. However, right now, momentum is driving a shakeup of the status quo in Washington. As founder and chair of the Senate Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Caucus, I am working hand-in-hand with President Donald Trump's DOGE to cut trillions and save taxpayer dollars. With my county auditor mindset and armed with 10 years of exposing waste, fraud, and abuse through



Senator Joni Ernst  
United States Senator for Iowa  
[ernst.senate.gov](http://ernst.senate.gov)

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my “Squeal Awards,” I’ve provided DOGE with the blueprint to drain the swamp. After all, as my good friend Governor Kim Reynolds has said, in Iowa, we were doing DOGE before DOGE was cool!

Thanks to President Trump’s leadership, we are already making progress. After my telework report revealed only 6% of telework-eligible federal workers report in-person full-time, the president signed an Executive Order calling bureaucrats back to the office and back to work for the American people.

I’ve proposed \$2 trillion in spending cuts to save hard-earned taxpayer dollars including auditing the IRS, pulling the plug on billion-dollar boondoggles for gravy trains that never leave the station, bagging the swag promoting government programs and agencies at a cost of \$1.5 billion a year, and changing the composition of coins so we stop losing money making money.

In addition to my work on the DOGE Caucus, I’m also very passionate about my role on the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. As the Committee’s chair, I work to bring the voices of mom-and-pop shops and innovators on Main Streets across Iowa to the highest levels on Capitol Hill.

Small businesses are the backbone of our communities, and in Iowa, they make up over 99% of all our employers. Last Congress, I was proud to recognize a Small Business of the Week in each of Iowa’s 99 counties, make it easier for small businesses to work with the federal government by replacing confusing contracting jargon with plain language, and recover billions of taxpayer dollars from defaulted COVID loans.

After the last four years of price hikes and miles of red tape, I am excited to increase transparency and reform the broken Small Business Administration (SBA) to actually serve Main Street.

I’ve hit the ground running by introducing a measure to extend the life of a watchdog to recover more than \$200 billion stolen from taxpayers during COVID. I am excited to announce the measure just recently passed out of the Committee. I am working with the Trump Administration to right-size SBA and restore prudent decision making at the agency, and leading bipartisan legislation to expand access to child care for small businesses and families. And, that’s just the beginning.

As I dedicate myself to backing small businesses and cutting Washington’s wasteful spending, my roots as a Montgomery County auditor, and the powerful impact of local government still guide my fight on behalf of Iowans.

# Congress Has Its Plate Full for 2025

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Representing Iowa's 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in the United States House of Representatives, I'm honored to serve Iowans in 36 counties across Northwest, Northcentral, and Southwest Iowa. When I first ran for Congress, I pledged that I would travel to every county in my district at least twice every year, which I've dubbed my 36 County Tour. This biannual excursion takes me to farms, hospitals, libraries, schools, universities, pharmacies, airports, military bases, and many other locations so that I can take Iowans' concerns and priorities back to Capitol Hill. As we kick off the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress and the new Trump Administration, we have a full plate of legislative work ahead of us, and I'm committed to advancing policies that Iowans support and benefit our families, farmers, businesses, and communities.



Congressman Randy Feenstra  
Iowa's 4th Congressional District  
[feenstra.house.gov](https://feenstra.house.gov)

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First, as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee – which has jurisdiction over tax, trade, and healthcare policy – I am working closely with my colleagues to extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act before its expiration at the end of this year. I even welcomed the chairman of the Committee, Representative Jason Smith of Missouri, to the Iowa State Fair last August for a full Committee hearing where we heard from Iowans that these tax cuts must be extended for the good of agriculture, the business community, and our economy at large.

Failure to keep this law in place is not an option. Should these tax cuts expire, the average American taxpayer would face a 22% tax hike, 26 million small businesses would see a top tax rate of 43.4%, the death tax exemption would be slashed, and the child tax credit would be cut in half. That's why I've supported legislation to maintain the 20% tax cut for small businesses on Main Street and keep the doubled standard deduction for our families. I've also called for the increased child tax credit and income tax cuts to remain untouched. Furthermore, I have introduced legislation to permanently repeal the death tax on our family farms and family-owned businesses and led a bill to help small businesses offer up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave to their employees. We will continue to work diligently to extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act to let Iowans keep more of their hard-earned money and promote economic growth in our communities.



## Congress Has Its Plate Full for 2025

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Another important legislative topic, particularly for Iowa, is the Farm Bill. Last year, my colleagues on the House Agriculture Committee and I passed the Farm Bill out of committee on a bipartisan basis. It fully funded foreign animal disease prevention and response efforts; increased reference prices for corn, soybeans, and other commodities; doubled funding for trade programs like the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program; and supported precision agriculture technologies. I also had 10 bills that I led included in the Farm Bill that would, in part, lower the cost of crop insurance for young and beginning farmers, keep China away from our farmland, build refrigeration infrastructure to ship perishable Iowa agricultural products worldwide, improve rural broadband speeds, and deliver fair prices for our livestock producers when disease or severe weather strike. I am eager to get a five-year Farm Bill authorized and have President Trump sign it into law as soon as possible.

Finally, as a former city administrator for my hometown of Hull and as a past Sioux County treasurer, I know the importance of responsive and proactive government at the local level. I have worked to maintain that same high priority of constituent service at the federal level. This year alone, my office has helped Spencer Community Schools secure nearly \$2 million for flood recovery efforts and assisted Palo Alto County Drainage Districts to receive more than \$300,000 after nearly six years of delays to repair damages sustained from flooding in 2019. Our office also helped Nor-Am Cold Storage – an incredible family-owned business – cut through government red tape to ensure that their customers could export refrigerated goods and products – including Iowa-made meat – to the European Union. This approval from United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) will protect more than 50 good-paying jobs in Cherokee and ensure that goods like beef, pork, and poultry can be exported. I encourage our local county officials and all Iowans in the 4<sup>th</sup> District to contact my office at [Feenstra.House.Gov](mailto:Feenstra.House.Gov) or 202.225.4426 with any requests for federal assistance. We stand ready to help in any way that we can and find solutions to real problems.

The year ahead for Congress is consequential. We need to pass the Farm Bill, extend the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, and get our national debt under control. I look forward to working with our partners at the local, state, and federal level to deliver legislative victories for Iowa's families, farmers, businesses, and communities – both small and large.

# Putting America and Iowa First

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In November, Americans overwhelmingly rejected the Washington status quo because our country was going in the wrong direction. While traveling across the district on my 22 County Tour, I heard the same concerns from families, farmers, and small business owners: Washington is broken. That's why I have made it my mission to make Washington run a whole lot more like Iowa – where we budget responsibly, support law enforcement and public safety, and find common ground to get things done. Iowa commonsense – and my commitment to accessibility and transparency – will continue to guide me as your representative.

Too often in Washington, decisions are made by federal bureaucrats who have never balanced a small business budget, stepped foot on a family farm, or faced the unique challenges of rural communities. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have advocated to slash wasteful spending while ensuring Iowa receives resources for targeted investments. By bringing the voices and perspectives of Iowans to Congress, I have successfully secured investments in childcare centers, clean drinking water infrastructure, and affordable housing while working to end abuses of taxpayer dollars and overreaching mandates. As a member of the newly formed Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Caucus, I will continue working to ensure taxpayer dollars are respected and that as many federal resources as possible come back to Iowa.

Additionally, the perspective of rural America is often overlooked in Washington. Many of my colleagues in Congress seem to think that food comes from the grocery store, and I've made it a top priority to ensure that the needs of rural America are front and center. While the previous Administration was hell-bent on out-of-touch electric vehicle mandates or trying to regulate puddles and ditches on Iowa land, I focused on the real issues facing our farmers. In addition to pushing back against such government overreach, I also worked to strengthen crop insurance, expand the use of biofuels over foreign energy sources, and ensure our adversaries – like Communist China – can't buy our sacred land.

Every Iowan deserves to feel safe in their home, their workplace, and their neighborhood. Unfortunately, four years of open borders allowed tons of illegal drugs into our country and left everyone vulnerable. In response, I have worked directly with Iowa communities to tell the story of how open border policies impacted our state – we pushed back, stood up, and were victorious in securing new leadership that put the safety of Americans before anything else. I am grateful to have such a strong partner in Governor Kim Reynolds as we work to ensure illegal immigrants with criminal records no longer put our communities at risk, and to ensure Iowa law enforcement has the necessary resources to protect our communities.

I came to Congress to defend taxpayer dollars, to champion the needs of rural America, and to improve the safety and security of our communities. By staying connected to Iowans – through my frequent in-person town halls and 22 County Tour – I have successfully delivered for Iowans. I will continue to travel to every corner of our district and bring Iowans' stories, perspectives, and concerns to Congress as I work to ensure America – and Iowa – are put first.



Congresswoman Ashley Hinson  
Iowa's 2nd Congressional District  
[hinson.house.gov](https://hinson.house.gov)

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# A Thank You Before the Next Adventure

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My last day at ISAC will be March 14, at the ISAC Spring Conference. This summer, I will be starting in a new position with a local university, where I will continue to find ways to support local government and access to justice across our state. While I will miss everyone at ISAC, I am incredibly excited for this unique opportunity.

When I was asked to draft a farewell article for this month's magazine, I knew I would first have to go back and read my welcome article – published in the June 2011 issue. I often tell a story about that first article, because the response to it made me realize early on in my time at ISAC that our members are a special group worthy of the best efforts from ISAC staff. In that initial article, I talked about how I enjoyed gardening but was struggling to get anything to grow in the clay soil at my new home. A few weeks later, I received a booklet from a member on gardening in clay with a handwritten note wishing me luck. This was one of the first of many experiences I have had in my time at ISAC that has solidified my belief in the goodness of county officials and professionals across Iowa. You pay attention to the needs of others, you take the time to make connections, and you make a difference.



Kristi Harshbarger  
ISAC General Counsel  
[kharsbarger@iowacounties.org](mailto:kharsbarger@iowacounties.org)

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Also in my welcome article was a summary of my legal experience prior to ISAC, which I characterized as a broad legal background. Little did I know that I would spend every workday for the next 13 plus years further broadening that experience. I had the opportunity to learn and grow because of the plethora of areas in which counties are involved – even now I frequently discover another subject area in which counties are impacted or have an impact. All of you as county officials and professionals work tirelessly to make your communities better and do the right things for your constituents in a multitude of ways, and I am so grateful to have had the chance to play some small role in that.

I have grown up in my time at ISAC – personally by having both my babies and being able to have a challenging and engaging career while being the mom I want to be for my family, thanks to the flexibility and support afforded to me from the ISAC association. And professionally, thanks to the members of ISAC entrusting me to assist them with their legal questions. It has been a privilege to witness our members reaching out to ISAC staff for assistance and to learn alongside all of you through the challenges that counties have faced over the last thirteen years. Some of my most memorable projects involved providing guidance for situations that had not been addressed before, such as during the pandemic and in the initial development of MH/DS Regions. Thank you for trusting me, and I know you will be in good hands in the future with Beth Manley, ISAC's current Compliance Officer, as she steps into the role of ISAC's next General Counsel.

One of my goals from my welcome article was to visit more of Iowa's communities and meet more of the great people that live and work throughout our state. I didn't keep close enough track of my travels with ISAC to know if I covered all 99 counties, but if I didn't, I wasn't far off. The opportunities to travel as a part of my work with ISAC will definitely be among my fondest memories. Traveling allowed me to meet and learn from so many of you and also from others across the county through my work with NACo. I have had numerous mentors and role models during my time at ISAC that have taught me about local government, our organization and leadership. I have found inspiration from members, Board members, and ISAC staff. And, I would be remiss if I didn't take the chance to thank Bill Peterson for his 40 plus years of leadership at ISAC. I'm not sure he is still reading the magazine now that he is off enjoying retirement, but I am a better person because of his guidance and leadership and I'm guessing that is true for many of you as well.

*Continued on page 16.*

# ISAC Spring Conference Educational Seminars

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## ISAC Spring Conference March 13-14, 2025 ISAC Educational Seminars

**Thursday, March 13**

9:00 am - 10:15 am

ISAC Educational Seminars

### **1) Iowa Congressional Staff Panel – Meeting Room 302-305**

This panel discussion, moderated by ISAC Executive Director Andrea Woodard, will discuss the importance of Congressional staff throughout Iowa and the important services that they can provide to county officials and your constituents. Staff members will explain how Congressional offices function from the boots on the ground to those in the Capitol.

Speakers:

- John Hollinrake – Deputy State Director for Senator Ernst
- Carol D. Olson – State Director for Senator Grassley
- Emily Schwickerath – District Director for Congressman Feenstra
- Brittney Zumbach Carroll – District Director and Senior Advisor for Congresswoman Hinson
- Wes Enos – Deputy Chief of Staff for Congressman Nunn

### **2) Civility, Difficult Discussions, and Working with the Public – Meeting Room 306-307**

In a time of media bubbles and deep political division, the virtues and practices of civility are in trouble. Led by Scott Samuelson from Iowa State University, this presentation will explore what civility really is and how we can revive it. Attendees will look at ways of dealing with incivility, increasing one's own civility, creating the conditions for civility with others, and having difficult conversations about topics that matter to communities.

Speaker: Scott Samuelson, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach

There is so much happening with technology and county government that it is tough to know where to start...

- 1. ISAC Software and Data Task Force:** So not a great name, but it is a great group of county members who are dedicating their time and knowledge. ISAC heard from many of our members about the ongoing frustrations with software support, lack of choice, and continuity in Iowa with software providers. ISAC decided to form a Task Force to identify ideas on how we can come together and define software needs and expectations of those providers. We are in the process of putting together an request for proposals (RFP) that will include all of those identified needs and propose that ISAC stand up the first-tier of support for the software package. This will allow the software provider to have an Iowa-centric support system and will provide continuity of services for Iowa counties. We hope to have the RFP ready by April or May.
- 2. Tech Teams:** We have had many counties reaching out to us and asking about the Tech Team Assessment for their county. This program has been running since 2011, and we have visited over 48 counties over the years. We have really enjoyed getting to know those county officials and professionals and assisting them as they deal with the ever-changing, ever fun world of technology in county government. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns about computers, cyber, or artificial intelligence (AI). We are ready to help!
- 3. Backup As a Service:** ISAC is in the process of setting up a backup service for counties that are looking for a low cost, off-site, and secure location for backing up county data. We are still evaluating many different ways to set this up, but we hope to have more information for you all in the near future.
- 4. New IT Director Meetings:** ISAC has started a Slack channel and monthly call for new county IT Directors! We are really excited to see so many new faces are joining county government, and we want to provide those folks with as many resources as possible to get them up to speed. If you have new technology professionals, please have them contact me, and we can add them to a group that is always ready to educate and share stories.
- 5. CJIS Requirements:** For those in the sheriff and county attorneys offices, the Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) requirements were updated in October of last year, and one of those changes was multifactor authentication at the system level. We have had many discussions on how to address these new requirements so please reach out to your county IT, or myself, and we can assist you in getting CJIS compliant before those audits start coming in.



Joel Rohne  
ISAC TSB Program Manager  
[jrohne@iowacounties.org](mailto:jrohne@iowacounties.org)

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There is so much more to cover, but I didn't want to bore anyone too badly! We have a plethora of new county professionals this year, and if technology is giving you fits and keeping you from a good night's rest, please reach out to myself or any of the team here at ISAC, and we will do our best to help. Good technology is something that you never think about, and bad technology is all you ever will think about.

# ISAC Golden Eagle Nominations Now Being Accepted

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Since 2010, ISAC has honored individuals as ISAC Golden Eagles during the Annual Conference General Session. The ISAC Golden Eagle was created to recognize and honor individuals who have provided extraordinary public service to county government through ISAC and/or NACo. Golden Eagle Honorees are selected from nominations submitted to the ISAC Golden Eagle Committee, that consists of ISAC Board of Directors and staff members. The Committee will then submit its recommendation to the ISAC Board for approval. The ISAC Golden Eagle honoree(s) will be recognized during the 2025 ISAC Annual Conference General Session.



Rachel Bennett  
ISAC Member Relations Manager  
[rbennett@iowacounties.org](mailto:rbennett@iowacounties.org)

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Those eligible for induction include: current or former elected and appointed county officials; business or civic leaders; ISAC preferred vendors; persons providing assistance to counties as trainers, consultants or advisors; and/or former members of ISAC staff. \*Current ISAC Board members and staff are not eligible.

Honorees will be selected based on their service rendered to county government through ISAC and/or NACo. Such service may include: leadership in ISAC and ISAC-affiliated boards; service to NACo; service on state or national boards or commissions; service to counties in training, education and development of local leadership; advocacy for counties and good local government; and assistance and support to counties.

Past honorees include:

- 2010 – Jane Halliburton, former Story County Supervisor and ISAC Board member
- 2011 – Governor Kim Reynolds, former Clarke County Treasurer
- 2012 – J. Patrick White, ret. Johnson County Attorney and ISAC Past President
- 2013 – Mike Wentzien, former Supervisors Lobbyist
- 2014 – Richard Heidloff, former Lyon County Treasurer and ISAC Past President
- 2015 – Sue Vande Kamp, former Story County Recorder
- 2016 – Linda Langston, former Linn County Supervisor and NACo Past President
- 2017 – Wayne Clinton, former Story County Supervisor and ISAC Board member
- 2018 – Harlan Hansen, former Humboldt County Supervisor and ISAC Past President
- 2019 – Marge Pitts, former Clay County Auditor and ISAC Past President
- 2020 – No Golden Eagle
- 2021 – Lonny Pulkrabek, former Johnson County Sheriff and ISAC Past President
- 2022 – Melvyn Houser, former Pottawattamie County Auditor and ISAC Past President
- 2023 – Joan McCalmant, former Linn County Recorder and ISAC Past President
- 2024 – Burlin Matthews, former Clay County Supervisor and ISAC Past President

To nominate qualified individuals to be honored as an ISAC Golden Eagle, please complete the form that's available on our website, [www.iowacounties.org](http://www.iowacounties.org), under the Programs tab, and return it to: Iowa State Association of Counties, Attn: ISAC Golden Eagle, 5500 Westown Parkway, Suite 190, West Des Moines, IA 50266 or [rbennett@iowacounties.org](mailto:rbennett@iowacounties.org).

Please return submissions before May 23, 2025. A Golden Eagle is not guaranteed to be honored annually. If you have any questions regarding the ISAC Golden Eagle, please direct to [rbennett@iowacounties.org](mailto:rbennett@iowacounties.org) or 515.244.7181.

I had the honor of attending the NACo Board of Directors Meeting on December 4-7, 2024, in Sonoma County, California where experts, local leaders, and community advocates gathered from across the United States to address the growing challenges of local governments. Discussions centered on solutions, best practices, and the broader impact of water scarcity on communities, businesses, and agriculture. In addition to the sessions, attendees participated in tours and discussions on innovative local solutions to community development and disaster recovery.



Richard Crouch  
Mills County Supervisor  
NACo Board Representative  
[rcrouch@millscountyiowa.gov](mailto:rcrouch@millscountyiowa.gov)

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#### Key Topics Discussed:

- 1. National Water Shortages and Solutions:** A major topic of discussion was the ongoing water crisis impacting various regions of the United States, particularly California. Solutions to address water conservation, reuse, and the role of private water reserves were explored. The importance of water retention practices, like those utilized by owners of private lakes selling water to local communities, was highlighted.
- 2. Community-Based Solutions – Food Truck Park:** Attendees toured a unique food truck park developed to create a space for food trucks while supporting local brick and mortar businesses. This community-centered initiative has not only boosted local commerce but has also become a gathering place for community leaders to discuss local concerns and needs. Since its inception, the area has attracted new homes and businesses, leading to a revitalization of the community.
- 3. Bay Area Fishing and Crabbing Concerns:** Led by NACo President James Gore, attendees participated in a tour of the local bay to engage with local fishermen and crabbers about the challenges they face, particularly the effects of water shortages on the industry. These conversations provided insights into the livelihoods of those reliant on local bodies of water for their work.
- 4. California’s Winery Industry:** California’s world-renowned wine industry was showcased with a tour of a local winery, where participants learned about the challenges wineries face, including water scarcity and other operational difficulties. The tour allowed attendees to gain a deeper understanding of the agricultural sector’s vulnerabilities.
- 5. Fire Recovery and Community Resilience:** Thursday’s bus tour focused on areas that had suffered devastating fires in the past but are now on the path to recovery. These areas now feature new housing, shopping centers, evacuation centers, and redesigned emergency protocols. The conference emphasized how coordinated community efforts, coupled with updated building standards and permitting processes, have enabled successful rebuilding efforts.
- 6. Challenges for Multi-Generational Farms:** A session focused on the struggles faced by multi-generational farms as they navigate ongoing water shortages and product shortages. Attendees heard first-hand accounts from farmers on how they are working to stay operational amidst these ongoing challenges, with a focus on adaptation and sustainability.

# 2024 NACo Fall Board Meeting

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## Group Brainstorming Session:

At the conclusion of the meeting, the group broke into smaller sessions to brainstorm ideas for improving local government practices. Three key priorities emerged:

- **Improved Communication:** Enhance communication between jurisdictions to ensure timely and effective responses to issues.
- **More Inviting Meetings:** Change the format of government meetings to encourage participation from a wider range of stakeholders.
- **Round Table Discussions:** Hold more roundtable discussions involving people who are directly impacted by local decisions.

## Final Session – Leadership and Farewell:

The final session featured Grant Veeder, former Black Hawk County Auditor, ISAC Past President, and NACo Board member, who is known for incorporating limericks into his speeches. However, in his last appearance before retiring, Mr. Veeder shared that this would be his final conference. His leadership and expertise in county governance will be greatly missed by his peers, and his contributions were acknowledged with deep appreciation. Best wishes were extended to him for a fulfilling retirement.

The conference provided valuable insights into water-related challenges and the innovative solutions being implemented across the country. From water conservation to community-driven initiatives and recovery from disasters, it highlighted the importance of collaboration and creative problem-solving. The connections made during this event will help foster a continued exchange of ideas and strategies to address pressing issues facing communities nationwide.

## A Thank You Before the Next Adventure

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Finally, I am not exaggerating when I say working with the staff at ISAC has been the honor of my life. They are dedicated and hardworking and truly just wonderful people that I have had the pleasure of having in my life – you are all lucky to have them on your side.

In true lawyer fashion, I can't part without a bit of advice. If you remember anything from me, let it be: 1) county government leadership is horizontal, there isn't a CEO of a county; and 2) always talk to your county attorney first. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you.



# 2025 Calendar

**March 2025**

- 1-4 NACo Legislative Conference  
(Washington Hilton, Washington, D.C.)
- 12 ISAC Legislative Reception  
(Hilton Des Moines Downtown)
- 13-14 ISAC Spring Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice  
Credit Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

**April 2025**

- 1-2 Public Health Conference of Iowa  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)
- 13-16 ISSDA Spring Civil School  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)

**May 2025**

- 7 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(Virtual)
- 7-9 CoZo Spring Conference  
(Hilton Garden Inn Iowa City Downtown University)
- 14-16 Iowa Treasurer's May School  
(Gateway Hotel & Conference Center, Ames)
- 21-23 Western Interstate Region (WIR) Conference  
(Pennington County, South Dakota)

**June 2025**

- 4-6 ICIT Conference  
(The Meadows Event and Conference Center)

- 18 ISAC Scholarship Golf Fundraiser  
(Toad Valley Golf Course, Pleasant Hill)
- 18-20 ICRA Summer School  
(West Des Moines, Iowa)
- 19 ISAC Board of Directors Meeting  
(ISAC Office)
- 25-27 ISACA Summer Conference  
(Hilton Garden Inn West Des Moines)

**July 2025**

- 11-14 NACo Annual Conference and Exposition  
(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

**August 2025**

- 20-22 ISAC Annual Conference  
(Veterans Memorial Community Choice Credit  
Union Convention Center, Des Moines)

**September 2025**

- 16-19 ISSDA Fall Jail School  
(Holiday Inn Des Moines Airport)

If you have any questions about the meetings listed above or would like to add an affiliate meeting to the ISAC calendar, please contact Kelsey Sebern at [ksebern@iowacounties.org](mailto:ksebern@iowacounties.org).

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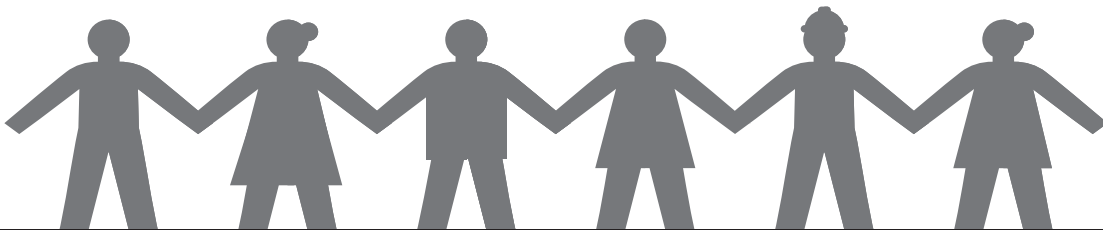
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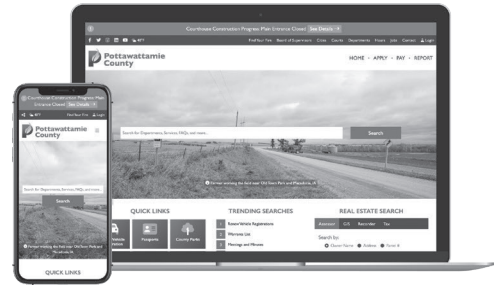
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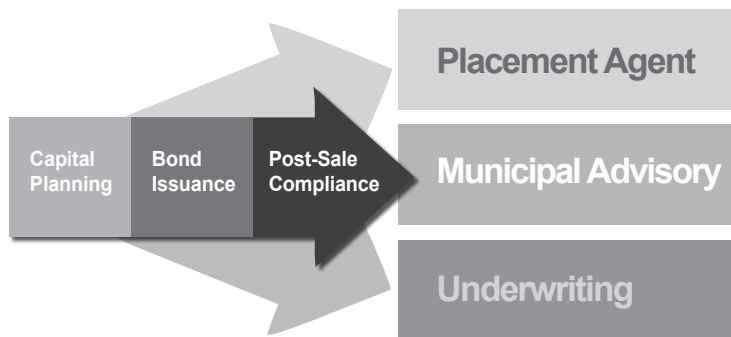
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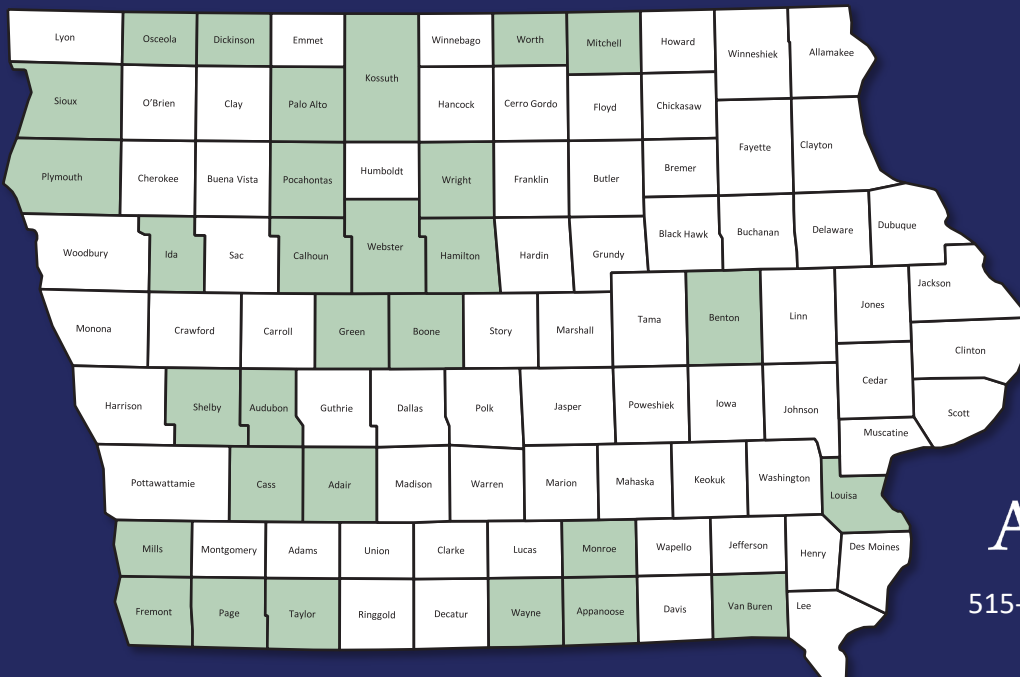
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