



**UNITED WE FIGHT.
UNITED WE WIN.**

LIVE UNITED

September 8, 2019

Advocacy Letter Writing

United Way of Central Iowa
www.UnitedWayDM.org



LEGISLATIVE AGENDA 2021



P Policy **S** Support **S** Fiscal Ask **S** Maintain Funds **REV↑** Revenue Increase **REV↓** Revenue Decrease **E** Educate Role **L** UWCI Lead **O** OpportUNITY

EDUCATION

United Way of Central Iowa supports policies to increase the number of Iowa children reading proficiently by the end of third grade, a key indicator of high school graduation.

P
O
S
S Support efforts to ensure quality, accessible and equitable education opportunities for virtual and in-person learning.

P
S
S Support expansion of the child, dependent care, and early childhood development tax credits to allow more Iowans to benefit from these programs.

INCOME

United Way of Central Iowa advocates for policies that enable Iowans to upskill and sustain employment to increase income.

Support the recommendations of the Iowa Skills2Compete Coalition including:

E
L
O Lead efforts to increase affordable access to quality child care and promote stabilization in the child care workforce through increasing Child Care Assistance income limits and provider reimbursement rates.

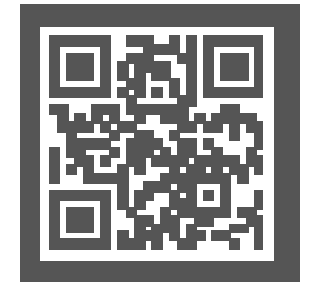
E
P
S Support efforts to develop equitable access to broadband across central Iowa.

P
S
O Support returning citizens from incarceration through practical approaches to reentry into the community.

E
S
S Maintain current investments in adult basic education, PACE programs, pathway navigators, industry sector partnerships, and GAP tuition assistance at \$12.5 million. Expand PACE programs to include apprenticeships and other work-based learning opportunities.

E
S Support the Future Ready Iowa initiative to help Iowa's workforce grow through new investments that build on the solid foundation of programs and funding currently in place.

REV↑
L Lead efforts to expand engagement with the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training program (SNAP E&T).



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Advocacy in a Pandemic

Limited opportunities for public input with the legislature

Virtual advocacy: virtual meetings, emails, social media actions

Direct communications from constituents

unitedwaydm.org/letters-to-legislators

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211 Iowa is a free statewide information and referral service available to residents in all 99 counties.

Iowans can call, text, use the mobile app, or 211Iowa.org website any time of day on any day of the year to get connected to essential resources and programs that can help them meet their current need.

211 Iowa has served as the state's official COVID-19 hotline since March of 2020 and now serves as vaccine navigators.

81 percent increase in call volume since March 2020.

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Mental Health System

Iowa's mental health system currently operates as patchwork of systems, programs, and providers – causing a shortage in availability or complete lack of necessary services in all areas of the state.

The Governor and Legislature established the foundation for a new mental health system in Iowa in 2019. The next step was to establish an adequate and sustainable funding stream.

Impacts of the pandemic on the system

Continued need to develop a stable funding stream and work on services to be offered statewide.

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Food Security

People of all walks of life, from children to seniors, struggle with food security or being able to afford fresh fruits, vegetables, and healthy protein on a limited food budget.

The pandemic only made the issue greater, as thousands of Iowans found themselves needing to make tough choices on their already tight food budgets or seeking food from local nonprofit resources due to a job loss.

A Nonprofit food bank and pantry sales tax exemption is estimated to reduce state sales taxes by no more than \$250,000 per year and could be used to buy 1.2 million pounds of food to support Iowans.

Over 305,000 Iowans struggle with food insecurity everyday. Including 1 in 7 children.

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Broadband Access

Iowa ranks 45th in the nation in broadband (high-speed internet) access.

The pandemic has shifted how we work and learn.

Dead zones, high initial or ongoing costs prevent many families and students from having internet access.

Derecho impact highlights need for infrastructure investment

Funding being considered by legislature, will require a long-term investment.

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Child Care “Cliff Effect”

Childcare is the largest expense for the typical Iowa family: \$1,035 per month outpacing housing by 45 percent

Quality, affordable childcare remains a problem for Iowa and our workforce.

Pandemic impact: 10 percent of Iowans can't attend work due to childcare issues.

**HF302/SF283 addresses the “cliff effect”
Key deadline next week**

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Sending Your Letters

**Iowa State Capitol
1007 E Grand Ave
Des Moines, IA 50319**

Then send a note to let us know what letters you mailed:
Anna Schaber, Volunteer Engagement Specialist
anna.schaber@unitedwaydm.org

Your Name
Number of Letters Sent
Legislators Contacted

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Thank You!

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