



## Top Priorities

**Property Tax Backfill:** Honor the state's commitment to fund local governments with the property tax backfill implemented by the legislature as a part of the commercial and industrial property tax rollback. Reduction or elimination of the backfill will reduce local government revenue and result in a residential and agricultural property tax increase and/or diminished local services.

**Mental Health and Disability Services:** Implement a stable long-term funding mechanism for the regional mental health and disability services (MH/DS) system that allows regions to satisfy increasing mandates and expectations for services. Local property taxes cannot adequately provide for expanded regional responsibilities. To that end we request the following:

- Provide needed funding to counties/regions to ensure stability in the MH/DS delivery system due to the increased demand as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state mandates for additional services.
  - If the state does not provide essential revenue, allow counties to exceed their current maximum per capita levy of \$47.28 to fund new services.
  - If the state does not advance remedies for the lack of funding, provide counties/regions flexibility in the implementation of recent mandates and do not penalize them if circumstances prevent the implementation of those services. Specifically, the recent mandates are those related to:
    - New services for complex mental health needs.
    - The second set of services for children's mental health: crisis stabilization residential beds, inpatient, and crisis stabilization community-based services.
- Delay or eliminate the requirement that counties can only carry forward a 40% fund balance.
- Review current Iowa statutes and administrative rules pertaining to access centers to ensure they meet the needs of the patient, mental health region, and county law enforcement. In addition, there should be an exploration of ways to streamline the involuntary commitment process.

**Emergency Medical Services:** Support passage of legislation intended to provide better coverage and adequate funding of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in unincorporated areas by allowing county Boards of Supervisors to declare EMS an essential service and the ability to put in place a specifically designated voter-approved property tax to fund its operation. These state funds should be available for life-saving training and equipment to rural first-responder personnel in areas without ambulance service, and regardless of their affiliation with an EMS system.

**Social, Criminal & Racial Justice Reform:** Review and implement the recommendations of the Governor's FOCUS Committee on Criminal Justice Reform, develop and implement policies for law enforcement on anti-racial profiling, and pass additional legislation to address needed hate crime statutory classifications.

**IPERS:** Oppose any legislative change to the Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS) that reduces benefits for past, present or future public employees. The IPERS system is financially healthy and IPERS benefits attract and retain a quality workforce.

**Derecho Recovery & Investment:** Establish a Derecho Recovery & Investment Fund to "Releaf Iowa" for the 23 counties included in state and federal disaster declarations for the significant task of reestablishing tree canopy destroyed by the derecho. The fund would operate similarly to the Community Attraction & Tourism (CAT), River Enhancement Community Attraction & Tourism (RECAT), or other programs like Vision Iowa or Enhance Iowa that require significant local government investment to leverage state appropriations. The state should promulgate rules and regulations to encourage the use of Iowa's public and private nurseries for this "Releaf Iowa" community replanting initiative.

**Pandemic Relief:** Establish a \$1 Billion Pandemic Relief Fund that guarantees robust investment in everyday Iowans, local governments, schools, small business owners, and workers who have suffered economically and personally from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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### Linn County Board of Supervisors

## Additional Priorities

**Unfunded and Underfunded Mandates:** Address instances of cost-shifting State expenses to local property tax payers. Reimburse local governments for state approved tax credits. Allow county departments to charge fees that cover the cost of providing services.

**County Bonding:** Encourage fiscally prudent project planning by allowing counties the same ability that cities have to issue bonds for public buildings when the principal amount of the bond, rather than the project cost, does not exceed statutory limits.

**County Zoning:** Provide counties the ability to apply zoning regulations objectively, uniformly and consistently to the construction of new homes. Oppose efforts to expand the types of land exempt from county zoning regulations.

**Fraud Protection:** Establish a new office of Home Improvement Fraud to address contractor misconduct and home improvement scams, which rank among the top complaints made to the Iowa Attorney General's Office. Contractor misconduct and scams highlighted the need for fraud protection following the derecho storm of 2020.

**Childcare and the Workforce:** Address childcare and workforce shortages by developing investments and incentives to increase the availability of quality childcare that promotes the healthy development of children and allows additional people to join the workforce. This deficiency is especially acute in small rural communities.

**Early Childhood Iowa:** Restore Early Childhood Iowa funding to previous levels to support a comprehensive and integrated early care and education system.

**Fair Chance Hiring:** Remove any questions about criminal records from applications for public employment, housing, public benefits, insurance, loans, and other services and encourage individualized assessment of the circumstances of any past convictions.

**Conservation Programs:** Invest in Iowa's natural and cultural resources by providing the allowable annual appropriation of \$20 million in the Resource and Enhancement (REAP) fund and continuing to fund the DNR Rivers Program.

**Iowa's Water and Land Legacy:** Enact a state sales tax increase for the funding of the Iowa Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund as per the Iowa Constitution. The state should distribute the trust fund through a formula that maintains the integrity of the constitutional amendment, similar to the language found in Iowa Code Chapter 461. The Sustainable Funding Committee developed the funding formula that was the basis on which Iowans voted to establish the Trust Fund in 2010.

**Public Improvement Project Delivery Methods:** Provide public entities the option to use alternative project delivery methods to construct public improvements.

**Public Measure Ballot Schedule:** Remove the prohibition from including public measures on a general election ballot. Allowing this practice saves election costs and increases voter participation.

**Public Safety Communication:** Address needed policy changes and technology updates, and provide funding to improve public safety interoperability and 911 communications between public safety agencies.

**Vehicle Cross Titling:** Allow County Treasurers to "cross title," or issue vehicle titles regardless of the owner's home county. This practice allows vehicle buyers and sellers to conduct business in any County Treasurer's office.

**Cannabis Legalization:** Legalize the distribution, sale, and use of marijuana products pursuant to regulatory and taxation systems designed to ensure appropriate use for both recreational and medical purposes. Among other purposes, a portion of the tax revenues raised from legalization should be earmarked for education, substance abuse treatment, and as a seed monies for communities of color that have been historically impacted by harmful drug policies. In addition, legalization must include pardons/expungement for people previously convicted of crimes of distribution, possession, or use of marijuana products.

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