



Iowa Republicans: Real Solutions for Iowa's Families

Republicans take the lead on offering bold solutions to Iowa's problems

ISSUE GROUP #1 **Iowa Family Budget Initiatives**

Iowa's fiscal house is a mess and Governor Culver and his cohorts in the Democratically-controlled Iowa House and Senate have repeatedly ignored the problem and have, instead, pursued a path of spending and borrowing that are making the mess even worse.

Republicans have real solutions to help solve Iowa's budget crisis and protect the very family budgets that will be at risk if bold action is not taken quickly. Here is what Republicans will do if Iowa voters give them the opportunity:

Constitutional Limit on State Spending

Iowa Republicans will propose and support an amendment to the Iowa Constitution to limit state spending to no more than 99% of state revenue. The current budget limitation law doesn't work and, just last year, Democrats authorized nearly 70 loopholes in the current law to allow their outrageous spending increases.

Only an amendment to the Iowa Constitution is immune from legislative loopholes. Limiting spending to 99% of revenue ensures a balanced budget and the annual deposit of money into a rainy day fund. In the meantime, Iowa Republicans pledge to pass NO budgets that exceed the 99% limit.

Iowa families must live within their means--Iowa state government should be no different.

Supermajority Vote to Approve New State Debt

This year Governor Culver and majority Democrats in the Iowa House and Senate passed legislation that puts Iowa taxpayers on the hook for a \$1.7 billion debt. The average Iowa family's share of that debt is more than \$2,000.

This debt was passed without a single Republican vote and was done despite statewide polling that showed 70% of Iowans opposed this debt scheme. Iowans need greater protection from runaway state debt and these decisions should require more than a simple majority vote—especially when the repayment of the debt may extend for more than two decades and impact taxpayers too young to vote or not even yet born.

Iowa Republicans propose requiring a 2/3 supermajority vote of both houses of the Legislature to authorize new state borrowing. Never again should one party have the sole authority to create these long-term debt burdens.

At the local level a 60% vote of the people is required to adopt new debt to ensure there is widespread community support for the projects to be funded. At the state level a 2/3 supermajority vote of the Legislature will help guarantee the same kind of broad support for similar state efforts.

Republicans support pay-as-you-go budgets as the best method for funding state programs. However, if borrowing is occasionally necessary to meet critical needs, Iowa Republicans want to ensure the support for that borrowing extends beyond the short term political objectives of any one party and meets the needs of a broad spectrum of Iowans. A 2/3 supermajority vote helps accomplish that goal.

Sunset Authorization of Every State Program

During these difficult economic times, every Iowa family has been forced to gather around their kitchen table and examine every aspect of their personal spending. They ask difficult questions and set new spending priorities to ensure their essential needs are met. Unfortunately, this same discussion rarely occurs within state government.

Iowa Republicans propose a systematic process wherein EVERY program funded by state government will be sunset (de-authorized) by a date certain unless the Governor and Legislature reauthorize that program. This will force a thorough top-to-bottom review of every existing program funded by state government to determine whether the program is effectively and efficiently meeting the needs for which it was created, or if the need even continues to exist.

Those programs that are no longer relevant or functioning at a high level will be eliminated, reorganized, or the resources diverted to other priorities--just the way Iowa families eliminate spending that no longer meets their personal needs.

Incremental budgeting practices have led to a bloated and expensive state government that is both unsustainable and a drain on Iowa taxpayers. Iowa Republicans will streamline state spending and state programs in a way that protects taxpayers from excessive state spending and ensures better delivery of state services to those in need.

Iowa Republicans: Real Solutions for Iowa's Families is a joint project of the Republican Party of Iowa and the Republican Iowa House and Senate Caucuses. Through this project Iowa Republicans will promote a series of bold solutions to the problems facing our state in areas ranging from the budget to education, the environment and energy, family, health care and transparency.

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