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**House of Representatives**

State of Iowa

*Eighty-Fourth General Assembly*

STATEHOUSE

**Des Moines, Iowa 50319**

**COMMITTEES**

Ethics

Local Government

Natural Resources

Transportation

**WEEKLY REPORT – January 19, 2012**

The opening session of the second year of the Eighty-Fourth General Assembly took place on Monday, January 9, 2012. The opening remarks by the minority leader and speaker were routine formalities.

On Tuesday, January 10, Governor Branstad addressed a joint session of the House and Senate. Governor Branstad is recommending appropriating \$6.244 billion, a \$245 million increase, (a four percent increase) over FY 2012. Due to the collective bargaining agreement, the Governor is recommending a \$6.5 million supplemental appropriation for prisons. The FY 2012 budget is \$6.004 billion under the Governor's proposal because of fluctuations in the budget. Most departments will experience downsizing and a reduction in the number of employees because of not funding the salary bill and recommending status quo budgets. The Governor's budget recommendations are seven million dollars less than the ongoing revenue of \$6.251 billion for FY 2013.

On Wednesday, January 11, another joint session was held when Chief Justice Mark Cady addressed the House and Senate members regarding the state of the Courts. In his message he warned that the judicial system now operates with a smaller work-force than it had in 1987. This is despite the fact that over the same period of time the number of cases filed in the courts has increased. For FY 2013 the Courts have requested a budget of \$163.3 million, an increase of \$9.2 million from FY 2012. He highlighted the ways Iowa's Courts System works to keep Iowans safe. The Chief Justice focused on the similarities between the Justice System and the other two branches of Government.

On Wednesday, January 18, Major General Tim Orr presented the Condition of the Iowa National Guard Address. He stated that nearly all personnel were home for the holidays and for the first time since 2001, the Iowa National Guard does not have any units currently deployed overseas. However, many wounded soldiers are still recuperating from wounds and others are seeking civilian employment. Nearly 1,000 soldiers and airmen were called to duty last year to battle flooding on the Missouri River that devastated some communities in western Iowa. Thus he stated that the National Guard has never lost sight of its most critical mission – homeland defense and support. General Orr did not make any requests of the Legislature, and did not ask for additional funds for the Guard.

Please feel free to contact me regarding issues that are or will be before the Legislature. My e-mail address and phone numbers are in the above letterhead.