



Corridor

MARCH 2020



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NORTH IOWA CORRIDOR SETS PRIORITIES FOR 2020 IOWA LEGISLATIVE SESSION

CURRENT LEGISLATION IN SUPPORT OF FUTURE READY IOWA AND INVEST IN IOWA are of top interest to North Iowa Corridor Economic Development Corporation.

Future Ready Iowa is a state initiative to get Iowans the education and training they need to be ready for jobs and careers to improve their lives. The Invest in Iowa Act is Governor Kim Reynolds' proposal for tax reform and investments to improve the state's quality of life and economic competitiveness.

North Iowa Corridor (NIC) partners with the Iowa Chamber Alliance (ICA) and Professional Developers of Iowa (PDI) to drive their common priorities at a state level, according to Chad Schreck, NIC President and CEO.

The ICA is a non-profit coalition of 16 chambers of commerce and economic development corporations in Iowa, including Mason City. PDI is a non-profit organization of more than 320 economic development professionals in the state.

NIC is closely watching legislation currently being discussed in Des Moines that includes programs to encourage better training for workers. Items under consideration would:

- Provide financial assistance to encourage apprenticeship sponsors to maintain programs in high-demand occupations;
- Create an Iowa Child Care Challenge Program that offers a matching grant for organizations building or rebuilding a child care facility;
- Create a Workforce Diploma Pilot Program that qualifies eligible institutions to assist students who are beyond school age to obtain a high school diploma;
- Expand eligibility for the Future Ready Iowa Skilled Workforce Last-Dollar Scholarship;
- To change the Senior Year Plus Program and Post-secondary Enrollment Options, in order to allow either part-time or full-time enrollment.

The governor introduced her Invest in Iowa Act on Feb. 5. It has three major components, including:

- Tax reforms including lowering individual income tax, lowering the highest tax rate, and reducing number of tax brackets, among other changes;
- Allocations for the Iowa's Water and Land Legacy (WILL) that address water quality and conservation;
- Steps to ensure sustainable funding for mental health services.

Iowa Chamber Alliance and Professional Developers of Iowa align with NIC's continued commitment to the Future Ready Iowa plan to build Iowa's talent pipeline. Future Ready Iowa set a goal for 70 percent of Iowa's workforce to achieve education or training beyond high school by 2025. On the homefront, the Vision North Iowa plan spells out a local strategy to meet that goal.

Anyone with specific items of concern for the 2020 legislative session is encouraged to contact the NIC office in Mason City at (641) 423-0315.

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