

MY VOICE IN IOWA



ANDY WARREN, State Director
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NFIB Lands Seats on Two Influential Interim Committees

According to Iowa small-business owners, two of the most important challenges facing small businesses today are the cost of health insurance and increasing commercial property taxes. We're pleased that the state's leading small-business advocacy group, NFIB, will play an important role on two state interim study committees to address these issues.

Interim study committees give state legislators the opportunity to closely study issues while the Legislature is out of session. They also have the flexibility and time to consult with experts and take a comprehensive look at what other states have tried. Our role on both committees is to effectively communicate the challenges small-business owners face regarding health insurance and commercial-property taxes.

NFIB Has Voice In Property-Tax Study

WE'VE BEEN TAPPED by legislative leadership to represent commercial-property taxpayers on a two-year legislative interim study committee, which will perform a review of Iowa's property-tax system and make recommendations concerning property-tax simplification and equity.



Tom Zucker of Zucker Enterprises and NFIB State Director Andy Warren discuss Iowa's property-tax system. Zucker will represent NFIB on the Legislative Property Tax Study Committee.

However, the committee is scheduled for both the 2007 and 2008 interims with recommendations due to the Legislature in January 2009. Given this timeline, any commercial property-tax reform or reduction during the 2008 session would seem unlikely.

Created by SF 601, the committee will consist of 10 legislators and nine public members representing various interested parties. Tom Zucker, president of Zucker Enterprises and an Iowa Leadership Council member, was appointed to the committee to represent all commercial-property taxpayers. Other private groups will be representing agriculture, residential and industrial-property taxpayers.

The chance to represent all commercial-property taxpayers during this two-year interim is a signal that even though we disagree with legislative leaders on some issues, they still want our participation and insight on commercial-property taxes.

NFIB Member Appointed to Health-Care Commission

THE COMMISSION ON Affordable Health Care has been meeting monthly since July. Co-Chair Sen. Jack Hatch says his goal is "a near-universal health-care system," which is not quite the goal of the legislation that created the commission.



Barb Kniff, president of KLK Construction in Pella, is the NFIB representative on the 2007 Commission on Affordable Health Care.

The commission's charge, outlined in House File 909, is to "review, analyze and make recommendations on issues relating to the affordability of health care for Iowans." A subsequent meeting of the Commission on Affordable Health Care featured a discussion of what is meant by the term "universal."

While we have long supported reducing health-care costs, the solutions exist in market-based economics and personal responsibility.

We have supported private health savings accounts, Small-Business Health Plans and tax credits for small businesses that provide health insurance to employees. Also, we have consistently fought against health-care mandates, which the Iowa insurance commissioner testified are responsible for 10-15 percent of health-care premium costs.

If you would like to attend one of the commission meetings, the schedule is available at www.NFIB.com/IA.

* BE INVOLVED

It is crucial that we collect as much information and feedback from our members as possible. Share your thoughts, comments, suggestions and challenges with State Director Andy Warren. Contact him at andy.warren@nfib.org or call 515-243-4723