

Iowa Valley Community College District 2019 Legislative Updates

By Cindy S. Schulte, IVCCD Director of Governmental Affairs



Week of March 18, 2019

ACTIVE LEGISLATION

SF245 – *Skilled Workforce Shortage Tuition Grant Program Eligibility and Reporting Requirements* – The bill strikes language in the Iowa Code that eliminates the quarterly reporting process on July 1, 2019, and provides references to a list of high-demand jobs by the Iowa Department of Workforce Development. The bill provides that if a **community college** no longer identifies an industry as having a shortage of skilled workers or the Iowa Department of Workforce Development no longer identifies the industry as a high-demand job, an eligible student who received a skilled workforce shortage tuition grant for a career-technical or career option program based on that identification shall continue to receive the grant until achieving a postsecondary credential, up to an associate degree, as long as the student is continuously enrolled in that program and continues to meet all other eligibility requirements. SF245 was floored managed by Senator Edler (R-State Center) and passed out of the Iowa Senate on 3/18.

SF481 – The bill creates a High-Demand Occupation Tax Credit program which will be available for **community college** graduates with credentials that qualify the graduate for a high-demand job. A

qualifying credential includes a postsecondary certificate, a diploma, or a degree that is not more than an associate degree. The tax credit earned by a qualified graduate is equal to the gross tuition and mandatory fee total paid by the graduate. The credit is limited to no more than \$5,000 for an academic year and no more than \$10,000 over the taxpayer's lifetime. SF481 passed out of the Senate Ways & Means Committee on 3/19.

HF546 – *SAVE Fund Extension* – The bill extends the sunset date by 20 years on the statewide penny sales tax that provides funding for school infrastructure and property tax relief. HF546 provides new regulations on the use of SAVE funds for athletic facilities, which will require school district boards planning on using the funds for those purposes to first hold a public hearing in their school districts so that the public can petition to stop the use of the funds for that purpose. Between \$1-\$5 million will be used each year for schools to create “**career academies**” and to provide new science labs, computer labs, and technical labs for the skilled trades professions. HF546 prioritizes security efforts in all attendance centers by using the funds to provide secure entrances, cameras, and other safety enhancements. The bill passed out of the House and was referred to the Senate Ways & Means subcommittee of

Senators Feenstra, Dawson and Quirmbach on 3/19.

HF648 – *Sports Betting* – The bill allows for sports betting on professional and **collegiate level sporting events** through a licensed casino and legalizes internet fantasy sports contests. This week, the House Ways & Means Committee voted the bill out of committee with an amendment which places a limitation on **collegiate sports betting**. The amendment places a ban on commercial sports betting on in-state collegiate individual bets. Another amendment adopted by the committee was to take .25% of tax revenue from sports wagering to the Iowa Department of Public Health for problem gambling programs and clarify that bets shall not be taken on individual performances of **athletes under the age of 18** during Olympic sanction sports. Prior to Jan. 1, 2021, an individual will have to register in person at a casino prior to conducting mobile sports wagering. HF648 moves to the House Regular Calendar for Debate.

LEGISLATION PENDING SIGNATURE BY GOVERNOR

SF274 – *College Campus Free Speech* – The bill requires the Board of Regents and the boards directors of **community colleges** to adopt policies regarding free speech on campuses. SF274 requires that the policies include

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specific provisions regarding the proper function and role of the institutions of higher education, the freedoms to be afforded students, and the use of public areas of campus for public forums. The bill passed out of the House and Senate and was sent to the Governor's Office on 3/15.

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LEGISLATION SIGNED BY GOVERNOR

SF512 – *Licensure Reciprocity for Military Spouses and the Injured Veterans Grant Program* – The bill increases the spendable portion of the Iowa Lottery transfer to the Veteran's Trust Fund from \$500,000 to \$600,000 and directs licensing boards in the State to develop by Jan. 1, 2020, an expedited **licensing process** for military spouses who are already licensed in similar professions or occupations in another state. SF512 helps military spouses transfer their **professional licenses** when assignments change and they are required to move to another state, which will enable the spouse to quickly get back into the workforce. Currently, Iowa licensing boards have already implemented protocols for expediting licensure for members of the military. SF512 was signed into law by Governor Reynolds on 3/22.

For more information about the activity during the 2019 legislative session please contact: