

2016 ADVOCACY SCORECARD



United Way Advocacy Agenda

2016 Outcome

EDUCATION

United Ways of Iowa advocates for investments to support 3rd grade reading proficiency. These include state investment in the expansion of Iowa Reading Corps and adequate funding for intensive summer learning.

Summer Reading: The Legislature postponed the implementation of the Summer Reading Program to the summer of 2018; the Legislature did not put funding toward this program despite United Ways of Iowa's efforts. The Summer Reading Program, now delayed, requires school districts to provide an intensive summer reading program for any student between their third and fourth grade year who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Iowa Reading Corps: No action in the 2016 session.

INCOME

United Ways of Iowa advocates for investments that enable Iowans to obtain and sustain employment. These include funding for child care assistance to offset the "cliff effect", public/private transportation solutions and continuation for adult basic education programs.

Child Care Assistance Changes Through Child Care Development Block Grant (non-legislative): On July 1, 2016, several positive changes will go into effect that help low-income working families enrolled in Child Care Assistance (CCA): 1) Increase eligibility from six to 12 months. 2) Provide 12 months of additional CCA coverage when a family's income exceeds the program limit (cliff effect). 3) Allow a three-month job search for families. 4) Allow families to remain eligible for CCA when there is a temporary change in work/education during the 12-month certification period.

Continued Investment in Adult Basic Education and Supportive Programs: The Legislature will continue to invest a total of \$12.5 million for adult basic education, workforce navigators, sector partnerships and apprenticeships. Governor Branstad signed into law. Non-legislative win: United Way of Central Iowa will lead a work group with the Department of Education to determine alternative pathways for earning a high school equivalency diploma.

Career and Technical Education (CTE): This bill will modernize Iowa's CTE programs and codify many of the recommendations of the CTE Task Force. The goal is to close the skills gap and assist high school students seeking a technical career. High schools and community colleges will play a key role in implementing the initiatives. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Bill: This bill requires Iowa Workforce Development and other state agencies to develop a four-year comprehensive workforce plan. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Iowa Emergency Food Purchase Program: \$100,000 was appropriated to the Iowa Food Bank Association—contingent upon a dollar-for-dollar private match—for food purchase and distribution to food-insecure families and individuals. Governor Branstad signed into law.

HEALTH

United Ways of Iowa advocates for policies that create a more comprehensive approach to mental health services for all Iowans, particularly in the area of children's mental health.

First Five Program: An increase of \$976,231 was provided for the First Five Program. The goal of this program is to ensure the healthy mental development of young children. This is significant new money for a very key, successful initiative. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Children's Mental Health: \$300,000 was appropriated to DHS for contracting for two planning grants for the development and implementation of children's mental health crisis services. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Children's Mental Health and Well-Being Advisory Committee: Continues the efforts of the Children's Mental Health and Well-Being work group. The advisory committee and DHS will guide the implementation of the work group's recommendations. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Mental Health Funding Formula: Extends the current county-based mental health funding formula for one additional year. Does not make adjustments to the cap. Governor Branstad signed into law.

Polk County/Eastern Iowa Mental Health Region: Polk County Mental Health Region was appropriated \$2.5 million, and the Eastern Iowa Mental Health Region was awarded \$500,000 as a temporary measure to help with the region's funding shortage. The legislation requires the regions to work with DHS to complete a three-year sustainable cash-flow funding plan for the delivery of mental health and disability services. Governor Branstad signed into law.