



Iowa Institute for  
Cooperatives

# CO-OPVIEWS

News and information for the benefit of Iowa cooperatives.

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## Live From The Hill

*Rebecca Boyer, Director of Government Affairs*



It has been a busy couple of months since the 2022 Session of the Iowa Legislative Events began on January 10. The current session started off with various leaders from the two chambers discussing priorities and moved into introducing bills and passing laws. During the last session, there was an additional surplus presented to the state reserves, which has tax reforms at

the top of everyone's minds at the statehouse. While I expect childcare and education to be hot topics during the spring session, I'll be following these other listed issues closely for IIC's member cooperatives.

### BIOFUELS ACCESS STANDARD

In the annual Condition of the State address, Governor Kim Reynolds laid out her plans for the coming session including a proposal for a biofuel access standard. This proposal is different than the contentious one discussed last legislative session. HF 2128 would make retailers with E-15 compatible infrastructure sell E-15 on at least one gas pump by 2026. There are two exemptions in this bill. A class 1 waiver would be granted to retailers with tanks installed underground before 1985, double-wall fiberglass tanks installed before 1991, and single-wall fiberglass tanks installed before 1996. The second exemption in HF 2128 is based on the cost to upgrade equipment. If the cost to upgrade the retail site is more than what the site could secure in Renewable Fuel Infrastructure Program (RFIP) grants, a class 2 waiver will be granted. The Senate has currently passed the bill out of Agriculture Committee.

### TAX POLICY

While Governor Reynolds proposed reducing Iowa's income tax to 4% flat tax over the next five years, Iowa legislators took it a step further reducing it to 3.9% flat personal income tax

by 2026. The bill also includes lowering corporate tax rates to an eventual 5.5%. Additionally, the plan exempts retirement income, including cash rent payments made to retired farmers. The bill passed both the Senate and the House, and the Governor has signed it.

The bill does not include the Senate's proposal of a change to Iowa's sales tax. Under the proposed Senate plan, the local option sales tax penny most places in the state use would become a statewide sales tax. It would have essentially changed the sales tax in Iowa from a 6% statewide plus 1% local to a 7% statewide sales tax. The increase in sales tax would have triggered funding for the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund that passed over a decade ago, but remains unfunded because it was tied to a sales tax increase. The first 3/8 of a sales tax increase goes into this fund to help pay for voluntary water quality initiatives, soil conservation, and other natural resources.

### OTHER LEGISLATION WE'RE WATCHING

We have been, and will continue to, track legislation important to our members. The proposed HSB 655 would allow vehicles transporting corn, soybeans, hay, straw, silage, stover, or manure to haul up to 90,000 pounds on state and county roads, not interstates, so long as they abide by posted weight restrictions on bridges and highways. This bill would create a year-round exemption that mirrors the harvest proclamation the governor signs every fall. HF 2329 would allow financial institutions to use prize linked saving accounts to encourage people to save money.

*You can count on  
IIC to provide our  
members with current  
legislature events  
and updates that are  
important for the  
cooperative industry  
to be involved with.*

# Harnessing Human Capital

## Access Personnel Management Resource with IIC's Webinar Library

The Iowa Institute for Cooperatives prides itself in helping cooperative members succeed. One of our primary focuses this past year was to provide members additional support and resources, such as our new Webinar Library. These webinars have been developed around a variety of topics important to the management and success of cooperatives in any industry.

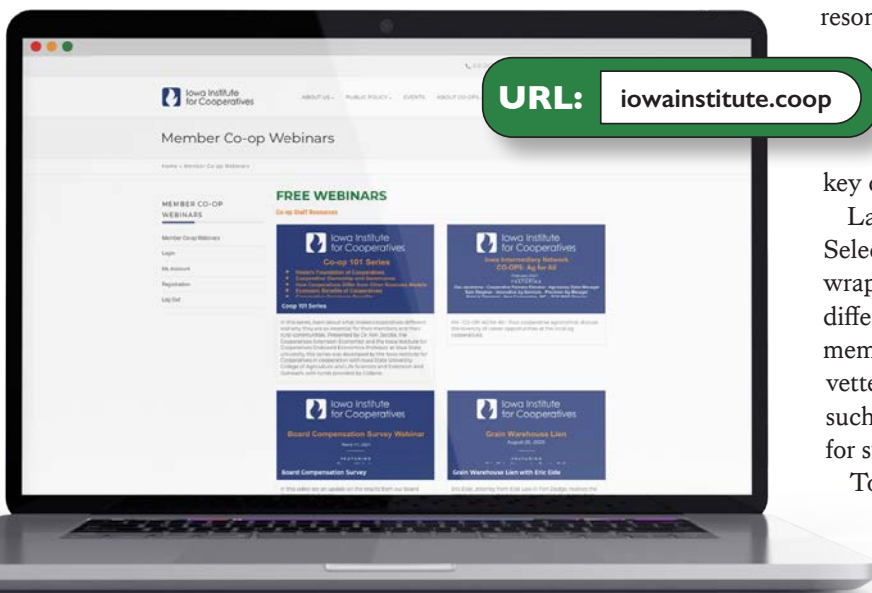
In our recent Human Capital Series found in the online

library, Jay Lux, Vice President of Organizational Development at FCCS, dives into various talent management strategies. In this webinar, learn various hiring and retention tactics, as well as how to develop programs for employee engagement and performance benchmarking. It also showcases the outcome of those cooperatives who put these tactics in place, and the benefits of doing so.

"Succession begins long before the needs arise." This quote resonates from the second video in the series, Cooperative Succession Planning. If you are curious about what values and qualities you should look for in new and current employees as you plan for future operational needs, this webinar covers several key considerations.

Lastly, the series of videos regarding Executive Selection and the importance of a diverse hiring panel wrapped up. By crafting a panel of individuals with different skillsets outside of your organization's board members, qualified candidates can be more soundly vetted. In managing the selection of new executives in such a way, your cooperative organization will be set up for success well into the future.

To view this Human Capital Series, or to check out additional webinars, please head to [iowainstitute.coop](http://iowainstitute.coop) under the "Resources" tab to find our Webinar Library.



## IIC Welcomes A New Board Member

Join us in welcoming a new addition to Iowa Institute's Board of Directors. The board consists of member directors, manager directors, regional members, and sector-specific members who all represent different regions and industries across Iowa.

Meet Greg Hanshaw. Greg is the newest member of Iowa Institute's Board of Directors and will serve as the Iowa Credit Union League Representative. Currently, he is the President and CEO of Community 1st Credit Union, headquartered in Ottumwa with 20 locations across southern Iowa. Greg has a long history of serving his community on various boards. He currently serves on the Iowa Credit Union League Board of Directors which governs Iowa's Credit

Union financial cooperatives.

Greg and his wife, Julie, have been married for 40 years and enjoy staying active. Their two children are located in Kansas City, Missouri, and Phoenix, Arizona. Together, they are the proud grandparents to eight grandchildren. Greg, a University of Iowa alum, is also a music enthusiast who enjoys playing the drums and the trumpet in various groups. Catch Greg at a St. Louis Cardinals baseball game - he is a huge fan!

As a new board member, Greg is most looking forward to building new relationships and serving an organization with like-minded values and goals. Greg strongly believes in continuing to support and advocate for Iowa's cooperatives.



### GREG HANSHAW

Iowa Credit Union  
League Representative,  
President/CEO,  
Community 1st Credit Union

# A New Path

IIC Welcomes Rick Kievits As New Director of Development



‘The Road Not Taken,’ the popular poem by Robert Frost, can likely best summarize the life of Rick Kievits thus far. The new Director of Development’s insatiable need to do more, to do better, and to help others along the way to be their best has led him down a less worn path few might choose to take. While a career serving Iowa’s cooperatives may seem an unexpected juncture for Rick, most unplanned routes seem to have the greatest impact.

Rick’s journey began at the young age of 17 when he ventured from the Netherlands to Iowa as part of a high school exchange program. Even though Iowa was chosen for him based on his interests, Rick found himself loving the Iowan culture and environment, and decided to stay.

While the exchange program got him to Iowa, Rick shares, “Soccer provided me the opportunity to stay.” Rick played soccer for four years in college, transitioning from Iowa Western Community College in Council Bluffs to Northern Iowa Area Community College in Mason City, before finishing his collegiate career at Morningside University, in Sioux City.

Aside from his appreciation and growing knowledge of Iowa, Rick had limited experiences leading him to agriculture - that is until he met his wife, Ashley. The two first met on the soccer field at Morningside, but it was through his relationship with Ashley, the Iowa farm native, his interest in agriculture began.

“It’s kind of embarrassing how little I knew about farming,” admits Rick. “Before Ashley, I didn’t know the difference between corn and soybeans.”

Rick began working at Heartland Co-op, and used his passion for learning and desire for networking to discover more about the cooperative structure.

“I was the one pushing the mail cart around the office,” states Rick, “and I would start having conversations with people when I would stop at their office and just start asking questions about what they were working on. It was there I really started to learn

and appreciate agriculture.”

It was also at Heartland Co-op that Rick had the opportunity to go back to school and earn his Masters in Accounting. However, after graduation and two years into a successful job as an accountant, Rick could feel the pull to further stretch himself professionally.

“On paper, my accountant career looked great,” states Rick. “But something was missing. I needed something more, something that would make a difference for other people.” On expressing his desire for change, a friend approached

Rick about a position that had become available at IIC. The position as Director of Development had the potential to lead Rick down a path that could make that positive impact, and he jumped at the opportunity.

“Whether it’s helping others learn a new skill, or connecting them with the right people, whatever they need to be a better leader and successful - I thrive on that kind of work,” shares Rick.

In his new role at IIC, Rick is focused on visiting all member cooperatives, and is beginning to build strong relationships.

Moreover, Rick is there to listen. “Each co-op has their own unique strengths and opportunities for growth. Right now, we know that retention of good employees is a hot topic in all industries and the ones that are doing it well have quality leaders. I look at what I can do to help our leaders and their teams reach their full potential and build a strategy around that.”

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*Rick Kievits is eager to meet with IIC members and develop support that helps them achieve their needs. Members are encouraged to contact Rick by emailing [rkievits@iowainstitute.coop](mailto:rkievits@iowainstitute.coop) or by calling (515) 292-2667.*



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## IIC Event Highlights

February was a productive month of workshops, meetings, and conferences. Through events like these, our goal is always to offer meaningful opportunities for members to connect and network with one another.

On February 15, 55 board presidents and managers attended our Board Presidents' Conference, Co-op Managers' Meeting and Legislative Reception. The next morning, 25 board members, co-op managers and staff joined us in Des Moines for Co-op Day at the Capitol. This was a great way for members to speak directly to their legislators about issues impacting our industries.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN FUTURE EVENTS, VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT [IOWAINSTITUTE.COOP/EVENTS](http://IOWAINSTITUTE.COOP/EVENTS).

### Snapshots from IIC's Day at the Capitol on Feb 15.

*Top left:* Iowa cooperative board members and staff were introduced as special guests; *L to R*, Ed Westra and Hank Vander Waal of Hull Cooperative, Kevin Rugaard, FSC Harlan and Brian Thilges, Land O' Lakes. *Bottom left:* Jason Schwenneker, Northern Country Co-op; and Ron Balek Viafield share in a conversation with Iowa Representative Jane Bloomingdale. *Bottom right:* Marcus Spotts, North Iowa Cooperative Board Member, updates Iowa House Member Shannon Lathem on co-op issues.