

Legislative Update

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Senate staff updates that chamber's voting board with the names of newly elected Senators (Photo by The Capitol Group)

Laser Incidents Focus of New Legislative Proposal

Legislation to allow for local law enforcement to better protect pilots from lasers is set to be introduced at the Statehouse.

According to a memo sent to lawmakers, the Iowa National Guard is reporting that their aircraft “have increasingly become targets of laser incidents from personnel on the ground.”

The memo from the State’s Department of Public Defense also tells lawmakers that “without greater deterrent...incidents will continue to rise...increasing risk to aircraft and crew.”

IPAA members have also reported increased incidents of lasers being pointed at and on and into aircraft.

Specifically the proposed legislation would change current law to provide that it is an assault for a person to intentionally point a laser emitting a visible light beam toward an aircraft.

The bill also would define “aircraft” as any contrivance intended for and capable of transporting persons through the airspace

2023 Iowa Legislative Session Timetable

The 90th Session of the Iowa General Assembly is set to begin on Monday, January 9. Here are the key procedural dates that guide the flow of the legislative session:

January 9 - First day of the session

February 10 - Last day for individual lawmaker bill requests to be made.

March 3 - First “funnel” - This is the date by which a bill must be approved by a standing committee of its house of origin to remain eligible for further consideration that year. Appropriations, Ways and Means and Government Oversight committee bills are the exceptions to the “funnel” rules, as they are exempt from procedural deadlines.

March 31 - Second “funnel” - This is the date by which a bill has to be approved by a committee in the opposite chamber - meaning a House File must be approved by a Senate committee and a Senate File by a House committee to remain eligible for further consideration this year.

Appropriations, Ways and Means and Government Oversight committee bills are the exceptions to the “funnel” rules, as they are exempt from procedural deadlines.

April 28 - the 110th calendar day of the session. It is also the day on which daily lawmaker “per diem” ends.

Jefferson Fink Joins The Capitol Group

This legislative session Jefferson Fink joins The Capitol Group team at the Statehouse.

Jefferson graduated from Drake University Law School in 2016 and earned Legislative Practice, Constitutional Law and Civil Rights Certificates.

Fink holds a Master of Arts in Political Science from Iowa State University. While at ISU he wrote and published his thesis, “Law, Politics, and the Creation

of Public Policy: How the Two Can Come Together and Create Better Public Policy.”

For the last five years Fink has been a member of the Sellers, Foxhoven, Galenbeck and Nelson Law Firm. There he earned a reputation as a masterful litigator specializing in professional licensure defense.

Bill Fink, father of Jefferson, served in the Iowa Senate from 1993 to 2003.

Bills of Interest

(HF - House File, HSB - House Study Bill, SF - Senate File, SSB - Senate Study Bill)

