



2021 LEGISLATIVE REPORT

BY IOWA POLICY AND OPINION LAB

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1. About IPOL

1.1 About IPOL

The Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab (IPOL) is a collaborative research group led by Professors Fred Boehmke in Political Science and Kajsia Dalrymple in Journalism and Mass Communication. Student research affiliates in IPOL collaborate to study policymaking and public opinion in Iowa. This includes examining policy choices in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches and collecting data on public opinion among Iowans.

IPOL seeks involvement from students with a wide variety of perspectives and experiences. No prior research experience is necessary, just an interest in learning more about the research process and a willingness to participate in and contribute to the group's progress. Student research affiliates work through training modules to get up to speed on the basics of social science research. We expect and hope that many students stay involved with IPOL for multiple semesters and will obtain and seek out useful skills in research and data analysis over time. IPOL relies on peer mentoring so that more experienced students will help guide and support the work of newer students.

1.2 Acknowledgement and Gratitude

IPOL is supported by the University of Iowa's Public Policy Center, including through funding obtained from a Path Forward proposal through the Provost's Office of Engagement and as part of the IowaRise proposal funded through the University of Iowa's Strategic Initiatives Fund in conjunction with the UI Public-Private Partnership (P3).

1.3 Fall 2021 IPOLers

In fall 2021, IPOL featured five research groups focusing on different public policy topic areas. Within their topic area, student research affiliates in these groups examine Iowa state government policymaking efforts and current public opinion among Iowans on public policy challenges and possible solutions. The **COVID-19** group studies policymaking, opinions, and behaviors related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The **Health** group focuses on the more general, non-COVID-19, health policies. The **Environment** group researches public opinion and policymaking on various

environmental issues and concerns such as how best to use Iowa's natural resources. The **Race and crime** group analyzes issues related to policing and race. Lastly, the **Social** group examines gender and social issues, including lgbtq+, abortion, and immigration.

COVID-19: Olivia Bull, Elisabeth Oster, Mariah McKenna, McCullough

Environment: Thomas Dainty, Makenna Gregurek, Oskar Kaut, Natalie Leathers, Samantha Johnson

Health: Rylee Wilson, Chloe Weidl, Olivia Friederick

Race and Crime: Marissa Good, Stephanie Gutierrez, Sam Avery, Sahithi Shankaiahgari

Social: Alex Hefel, Lane Shirrell, Molly Fischer, Dylan Harvey, Zoe Lagessie

1.4 Alumni

Alumni Noelle Hass, Madison Rush, Carolina Herrera, Liam Kaboli, Thomas Sanchez, Kyle Starkey, Elizabeth Story, Amelia Thoreson, Sierra Wicks

1.5 More about Us?

 Website: <https://ipol.lab.uiowa.edu/>

 Email Us: ipol-info@uiowa.edu



2. About This Report

This report summarizes research done by IPOL and its thematic student research groups over the last year. We focus on policymaking activity by the Iowa state government and on public opinion data generated through our own random sample survey of Iowans and from other sources employing similar methods. While we take a broad look at government activity and public opinion, this report is not intended to be a comprehensive description of Iowa policymaking and opinion. Rather, we focus on particular issues that we believe are topical or otherwise of interest to our members.

Our report is divided into two main chapters that seek to take very different perspectives on policymaking in Iowa the last year. We summarize those here.

2.1 Overview of Legislative Activity

We start with a high-level view of which topics were addressed in bills introduced or enacted during 2021, which included the 89th General Assembly. To do so we rely on the topics provided by the Iowa legislature itself to describe the issues addressed by all pieces of legislation. These topics allow us to identify which topics appeared more frequently in proposed or enacted legislation and which appeared rarely.

To put a longer-term perspective on the relative prevalence of these issues, we have collected similar data from prior legislative sessions.

2.2 Notable Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

We follow our high-level overview up with a more in-depth look at specific bills within our five topic areas of interest. Each team of students reviewed legislation relevant to their topic area by searching the Iowa Bill Book for relevant terms and by reviewing legislation with relevant tagged topics. They then narrowed their lists of notable bills down to just a few. These bills were chosen because they seemed important, or topical, or otherwise of interest to the groups. Based on this research, each group provides an overview of activity in their topic area followed by a summary of each of the notable bills.

When possible, we match the summaries of notable bills to public opinion collected during 2021 on the same topic. We rely on two random sample surveys of about 1000 Iowans, described in detail in Appendix 5.1, for which we wrote questions about policy issues that had already appeared in bills or that seemed likely to be the topic of legislative activity in order to assess Iowan’s support and opposition to that issue or to a policy targeted to address it.

3. Overview of Legislative Activity in 2021

3.1 Overview

We first explore which topics were discussed during 2021 legislative session. To examine this, we collected tagged topics from all introduced bills in the 89th General Assembly from the Iowa Legislative Bill Book as of August 31, 2021. We obtained these topics for all bills via web scraping, a technique to automatically extract data from a website. Collecting this information for all introduced bills offers us a broad sense of what the legislature itself reports working on during the session. In order to provide context on current activities, we collected similar data for a few sessions prior to this one.

The screenshot shows the Iowa Legislature Bill Book interface. The top navigation bar includes links for SENATE/HOUSE, LEGISLATORS, LEGISLATION, COMMITTEES & SCHEDULES, IOWA LAW & RULES, LEGISLATIVE AGENCIES, PUBLICATIONS, CAPITOL TOURS & RESOURCES, and LOBBYIST INFORMATION. The main content area displays details for House File 34, introduced on 01/12/2021. The bill is titled "HOUSE FILE 34 BY LOHSE" and is described as "A BILL FOR" creating new resident and graduate tax credits. The text of the bill is: "1 An Act creating the new resident and new graduate tax credits, 2 available against the individual income tax, and including 3 retroactive applicability provisions. 4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:". The left sidebar contains sections for Bill History, Fiscal Notes and NOBA Information, Related Information, Track Versions, Related Documents, Search in, Sections Affected, and Tagged Topics.

Figure 3.1: An Example Page from the Iowa Legislature Bill Book

As shown in Figure 3.1, Iowa Bill Book provides detailed information about each bill such as bill history, versions, and associated tagged topics. We wrote a web scraper with Java that considers the forms and structures of Iowa Bill Book web page in order to collect these various pieces of information about each bill. This produces a total of 12,080 topics mentioned representing 1,353 unique tagged topics. This section provides different visualizations of bill topics and illustrates which topics were more acted on most frequently in the legislature; we further distinguish bill topics in terms of all bills and enrolled bills.

3.2 Which Topics Were Discussed?

Using the tagged topic data, we first created a Word Cloud. Word Clouds offer a way of visually representing text data; terms that appear more frequently in the list of tagged topics will be larger in the visualization so that the viewers can easily get the idea of important words even with a single glance.

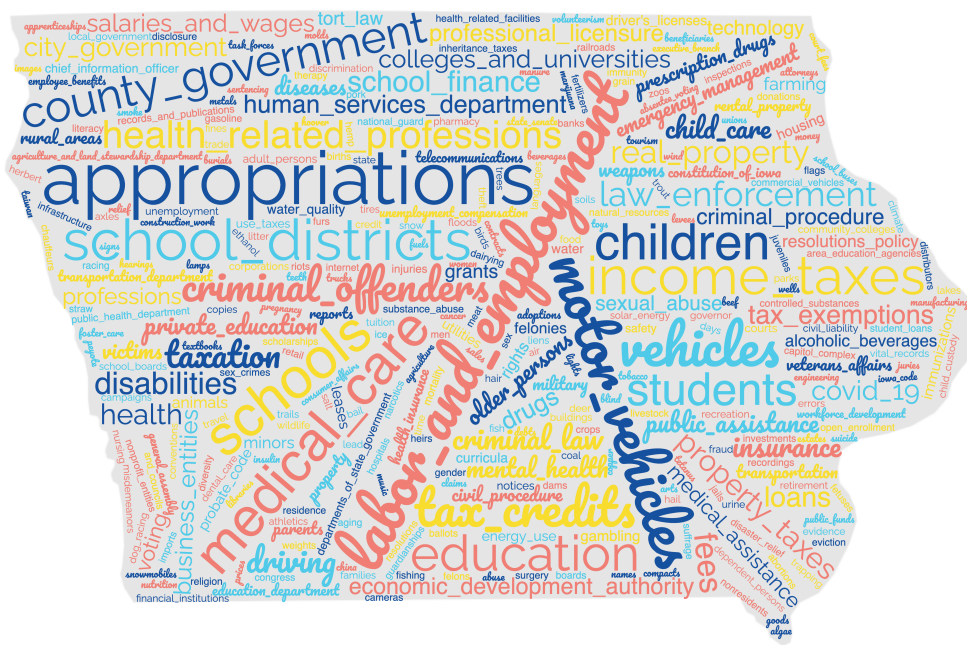


Figure 3.2: Word Cloud of Bills Introduced in the 89th General Assembly

As such, in Figure 3.2, larger font sizes indicate more frequently used topics for bills in the latest legislative session; *Appropriations* was the most frequently shown topic, followed by *labor and employment*. Education and health-related topics were also notable in Figure 3.2. Introduced bills included topics such as *school districts*, *education*, *schools*, and *school finance*, which are broadly under education policy area. For health, topics such as *medical care*, *health related professions*, and *COVID-19* appeared in the figure.

Figure 3.3 presents the top 15 most frequent tagged topics in the 89th General Assembly. *Appropriations* was the most frequently used tag, appearing in about 150 different bills. Education-related topics were also frequently discussed in the legislature (e.g., *schools*, *school districts*, *education*, and *students*). Government operations were also common among the top 15 (e.g., *appropriations*, *income taxes*, *tax credits*, and *county government*).

Figure 3.4 examines the trend in these top 15 topics over time by showing their frequency in prior sessions. It shows a stacked bar plot of the top 15 topics from the 2021 session going back to the 85th General Assembly when the Iowa Bill Book included tagged topics information for each

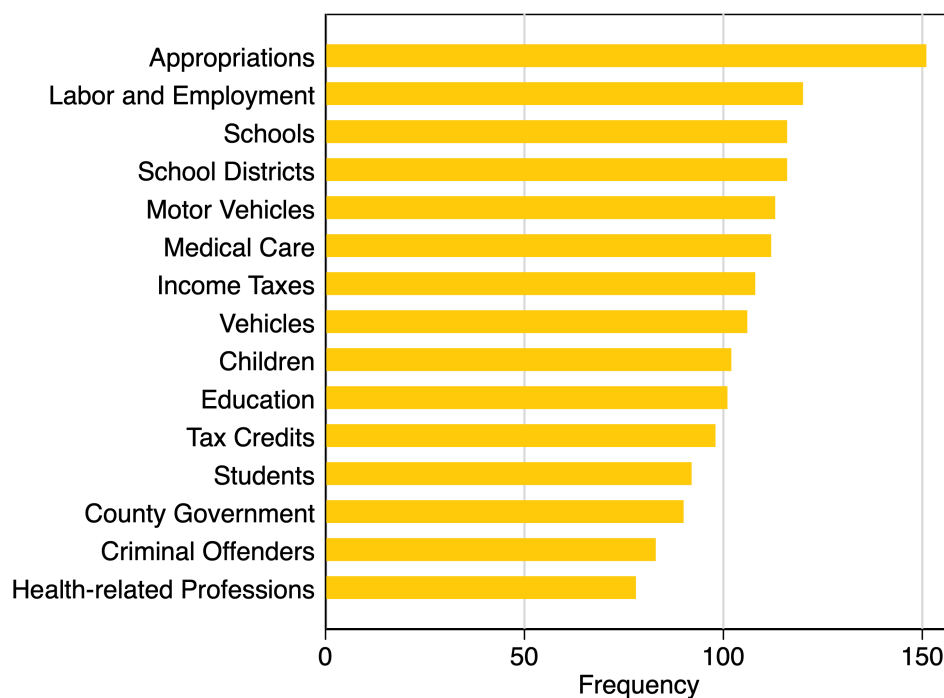


Figure 3.3: Frequencies of Top 15 Topics from Bills Introduced in the 89th General Assembly

introduced bills. As shown in the Figure 3.4, overall there are increasing trends of these top 15 frequent topics over sessions; however each topic has its own up and down trends over legislative sessions. For instance, education related topics appeared more frequently the sessions between 85th and 88th in comparison to the most recent session. Appropriations, the most frequently appeared topic in the 89th General Assembly, got slightly less attention in the previous sessions.

Introduced bills, however, may not fully convey the most important topics since most bills are not enacted and therefore do not change policy. We therefore report the most frequent topics among enrolled bills as of August 31, 2021 (1,320 topics under 703 different categories). Similar to Figure 3.2, *appropriation* appears with larger font in Figure 3.5. Education related topics were still notable among enacted bills. Figure 3.5 includes topics such as *education*, *school districts*, *students*, *school finance*, and *teachers*; these categories were also shown in the figure 3.2 as well. While we see many of the frequently addressed topics among introduced bills, there are some new recognizable topics as well. For example, property related topics (e.g., *real property* and *property taxes*) are more notable in the Figure 3.5. Vehicle topics (e.g., *motor vehicles*, *vehicles*, and *driving*) are also identifiable among enacted bills.

Figure 3.6 gives more detailed information about top 15 topics among enacted bills in 2021 legislative session. As discussed, some new topics were identified when focusing on enrolled bills (e.g., real property, property taxes, criminal offenders, and mental health). In terms of broadly defined topics, however, we can see that introduced and enacted bills show similar trends; educational topics are dominating among frequently addressed topics.

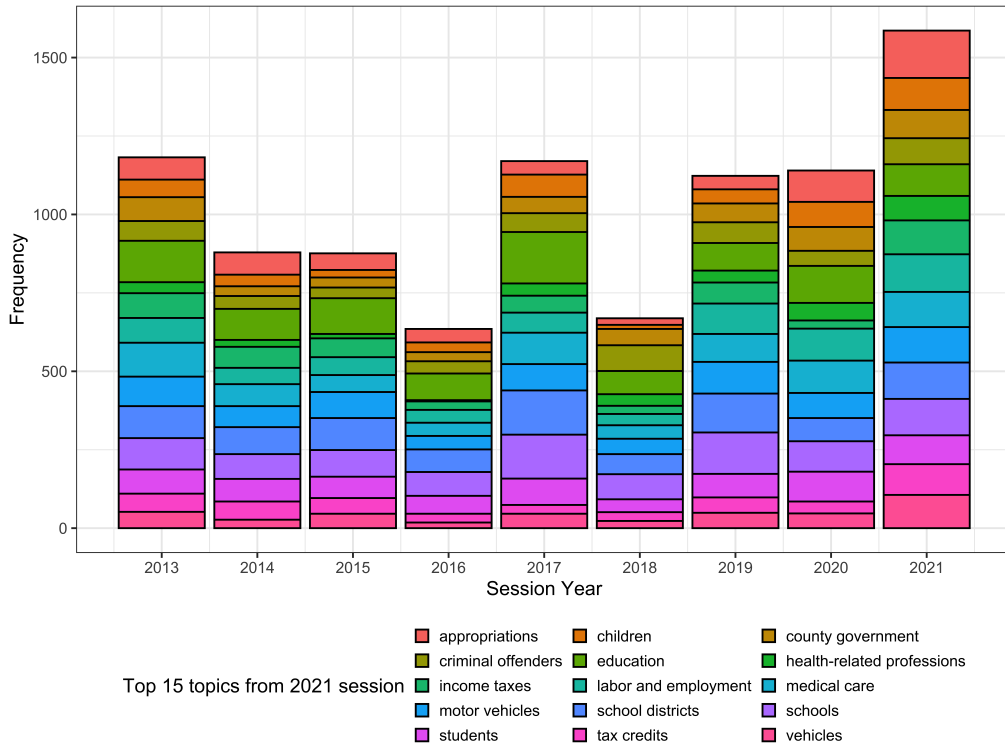


Figure 3.4: Overtime Frequencies of Top 15 Topics from Bills Introduced in the 89th General Assembly

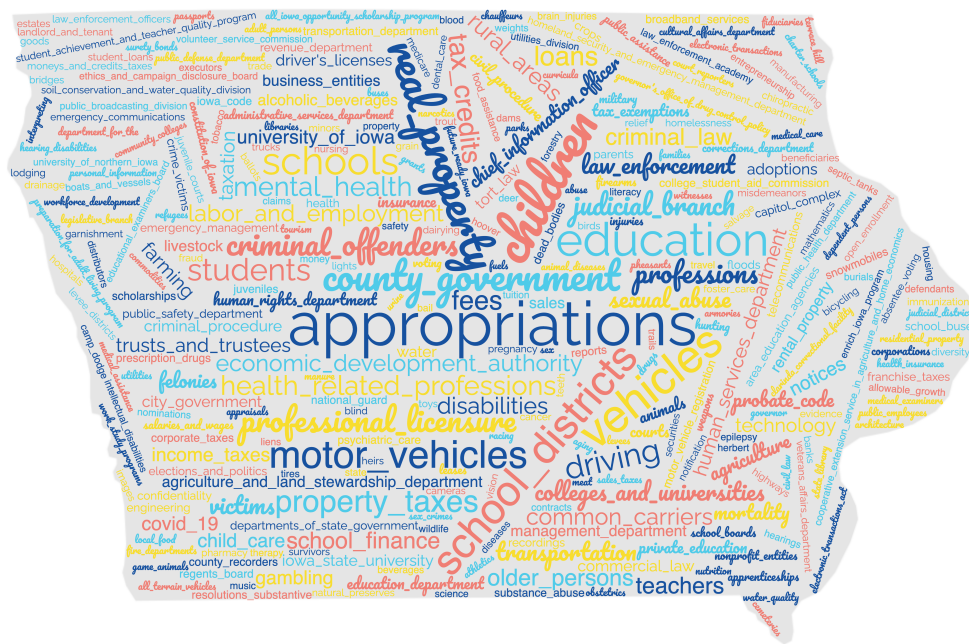


Figure 3.5: Word Cloud of Enrolled Bills in the 89th General Assembly

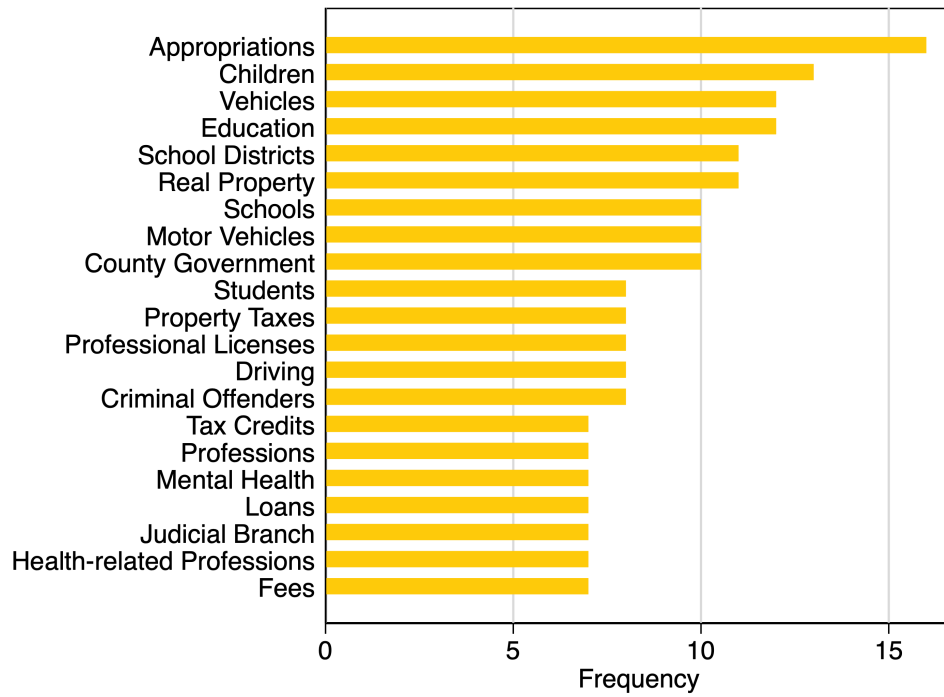


Figure 3.6: Frequencies of Top 15 Topics from Enrolled Bills in the 89th General Assembly

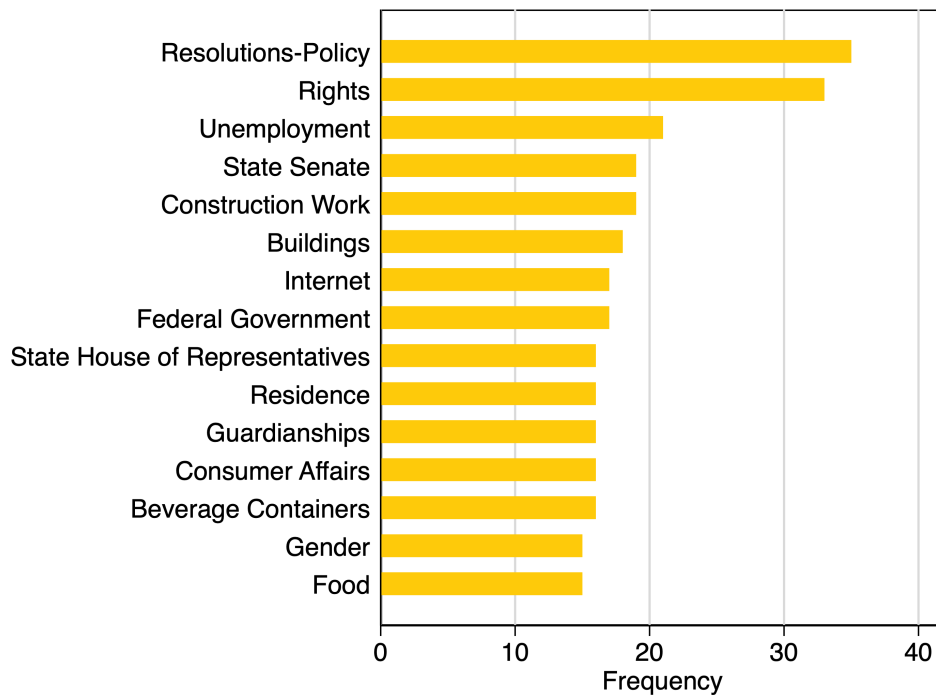


Figure 3.7: Frequencies of Top 15 Topics from Not Enacted Bills in the 89th General Assembly



4. Notable Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

4.1 Overview

We provide a more in-depth look at specific bills within each IPOL research group's topic area (COVID-19, Health, Environment, Social, and Race and Crime). We used the Iowa legislative Bill Book as primary data source with news items¹ and LegiScan as auxiliary sources. Each student researcher first explored the legislative Bill Book and found a set of bills they are interested in; each group then discussed and identified key bills within its focus area before selecting a final set of bills. These may include both enacted and introduced but not enacted bills. For the selected bills, our members worked to obtain more detailed information such as its purpose, actual texts, sponsors, and introduced and/or enrolled date.

The remainder of this section will provide identified key bills from our topic groups. Each subsection will start with overall findings about the topic, followed by bill description. Table 4.1 lists all the selected bills.

COVID-19	Health	Environment	Social	Race and Crime
HF 889	HF 283	SF 482	HF 228	HF 802
SF 160	HF 835	HF 32	HF 426	HF 756
HF 602	SF 532	HF 555	HF 802	HF 861
HF 895	HF 15	HF 860	HF 15	HF 356
SF 519	HF 58	SF 52	HF 334	HF 43
HF 688	HF 263		HF 712	HF 178
HF 689				
HSB 246				

Table 4.1: Identified Key Bills from the 89th General Assembly

¹Figure 3.1 provides an example page.

4.2 COVID-19

The COVID-19 group focused their efforts on researching bills for this legislature by looking at how many people the bill affects and by how topical the bill is. With COVID-19 being relatively new, but currently one of the most prominent issues in the world, there were few enrolled bills, yet those that were enrolled have a big impact on Iowa. The topics they sought to address included vaccines, school regulations, mask mandates, and other very important and controversial COVID-19 issues. Additionally, the bills that were introduced are also very important, however they tend to follow a different trend than those that were enrolled.

The COVID-19 pandemic became a guiding and driving force for the 2020 legislative session as emergency rule making around funding, liability, and education mainly centered on mitigating transmission. In comparison, the 2021 legislative session so far has resulted in five enrolled bills. Currently, it shows a trend away from COVID-specific legislation. Compared to previous mitigation efforts, the two most prominent enrolled bills relating to vaccination proof and in-person schooling serve to prevent any legislation relating to COVID prevention and safety. All other enrolled bills focus on economic recovery and financial allocations due to pandemic circumstances. In addition, all bills currently passed either received Republican legislator sponsorship or general committee sponsorship in which the Republican party was the majority membership.

Examining introduced bills tells a more interesting story about the COVID 2021 legislation climate in Iowa. The COVID-19 group found that aside from some additional bills to require in-person events on a larger scale that may prove harder to pass, a clear party division is evident between enrolled and not enrolled bills. Multiple introduced bills were sponsored by every Iowa Representative representing the Democratic Party. One of these bills introduced legislation for drive-through vaccine clinics, in contrast to an enrolled bill cutting state funding to entities requiring proof of vaccination. Two Democratic-sponsored, introduced bills revealed a theme of mistrust between parties, requesting oversight committees on pandemic response and COVID federal spending. Analyzing COVID-19-related legislation for the 2021 session signals party divide on how to handle COVID in the state of Iowa as well as a trend towards protection against COVID restrictions, rather than the 2020 session's trends of passing similar restrictions.

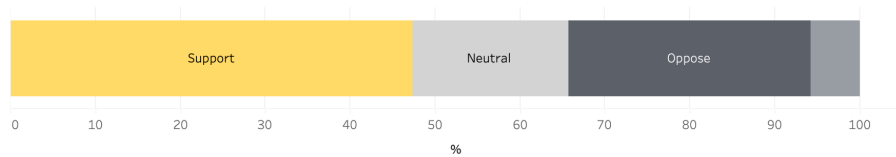
Table 4.2: COVID-19 Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

Bill	Description
HF 889	<p>An act sponsored by House Majority Leader Matt Windschitl (R) and Senator Jack Whitver (R) that prohibits local governments and businesses from requiring people to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination for entry onto premises. It disqualifies certain firms with such vaccine mandates from getting state grants or contracts. Entities may put a COVID-19 screening protocol in place, however, if no vaccination proof is required. This is perhaps the most important COVID-19 related bill of this session as it's had direct, noticeable consequences for businesses, cities, public universities, etc. Although many enrolled bills pass unnoticed by larger populations, this bill has directly impacted COVID mandates.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (05-20-2021) Effective on 05-20-2021 Tagged topics: covid-19, diseases, immunizations, passports</p>

Table 4.2 – COVID-19 Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
SF 160	<p>An act sponsored by The House Education Committee; Rep John Landon (R) and Senator Garre Gobble(R) and this bill prevents school districts from offering fully remote schooling for the 2021-2022 school year. Every student must be given the opportunity for full-time, in-person instruction.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (01-29-2021) Effective on 06-30-2021 Tagged topics: covid-19, education, private education, public health disasters, school buses, school districts, schools, students</p>

Public Opinion Spotlight: 100% In Person Learning Option



Question text: “Now we want to ask your opinion on specific ideas that have been considered during the current session. Some of these have already passed the legislature, others may still be under consideration, and others may not receive further consideration. For each topic, please let us know if you support or oppose it.” ITEM: “Require schools to offer a 100% in person option during the pandemic”

Source: Hawkeye Poll Survey, April 2021. See appendix for details. N=991. Far right box reports respondents answering “Don’t Know” or “Refused”.

HF 602	<p>An act sponsored by the House Education Committee and Senator Henry Stone (R). This bill allows school districts to move money from their general fund to the student activity fund to replace money that was lost when activities stopped because of the pandemic. Since schools often have rules around what money can be spent on what, this allows a little more freedom for the school to pay for student activities when they lost revenue from selling sport event tickets and other things in 2020.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (05-10-2021) Effective on 05-10-2021 Tagged topics: covid-19, extracurricular activities, funds transfers, school budgets, school districts, school finance, schools, students</p>
HF 895	<p>An act sponsored by The House Appropriation Committee and The Senate Appropriation Committee. This bill sets up an Iowa COVID-19 fiscal recovery fund and Iowa COVID-19 capital projects fund, a new section to monetary appropriations, which is separate from general funds, and can only be used for economic impacts relating to COVID.</p>

Table 4.2 – COVID-19 Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
	<p>Status: Signed by Governor (06-08-2021) Effective on 06-08-2021 Tagged topics: appropriations, block grants, child care, community action agencies division, community development, community development block grants, covid-19, economic development authority, education department, federal funds, governor’s office of drug control policy, home energy assistance, homelessness, human rights department, human services department, labor and employment, mental health, money, perinatal care, pregnancy, public health department, salaries and wages, substance abuse, transportation department, university of iowa</p>
SF 519	<p>An act sponsored by Senator Zach Wahls (D). This bill would establish a state pandemic response review committee. The committee would meet every four years to make sure there is an established pandemic response. Most predominately, it would evaluate Iowa’s COVID-19 response, “including mistakes and failures.”</p> <p>Status: Introduced (03-02-2021) Referred to Senate State Government Committee Tagged topics: covid-19, diseases, public health disasters</p>
HF 688	<p>An act sponsored by Rep. Todd Prichard (D), Rep. Dave Williams (D), Rep. Brian Meyer (D) plus 31 cosponsors². This bill would allow for an appropriation from the Iowa coronavirus relief fund to all local boards of health to establish and run the COVID-19 vaccine drive-through clinics.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-24-2021) Referred to House Human Resources Committee Tagged topics: appropriations, covid-19, diseases, immunizations, public health department, public health disasters</p>

²Full list of sponsors: Todd Prichard (D), Rep. Dave Williams (D), Rep. Brian Meyer (D), Rep. Christina Bohannon (D), Rep. Ross Wilburn (D), Rep. Dave Jacoby (D), Rep. Art Staed (D), Rep. Molly Donahue (D), Rep. Mary Wolfe (D), Rep. Steve Hansen (D), Rep. Monica Kurth (D), Rep. Jennifer Konfrst (D), Rep. Bruce Hunter (D), Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell (D), Rep. Tracy Ehlert (D), Rep. Jo Oldson (D), Rep. Kirsten Running-Marquardt (D), Rep. Sharon Steckman (D), Rep. Charlie McConkey (D), Rep. Lindsay James (D), Rep. Kristin Sunde (D), Rep. Kenan Judge (D), Rep. Rick Olson (D), Rep. Sue Cahill (D), Rep. Timi Brown-Powers (D), Rep. John Forbes (D), Rep. Dennis Cohoon (D), Rep. Chris Hall (D), Rep. Marti Anderson (D), Rep. Eric Gjerde (D), Rep. Mary Mascher (D), Rep. Cindy Winckler (D), Rep. Phyllis Thede (D), and Rep. Liz Bennett (D).

Table 4.2 – COVID-19 Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
HF 689	<p>An act sponsored by Rep. Todd Prichard (D), Rep. Monica Kurth (D), Rep. Kristin Sunde (D) plus 31 cosponsors³. This bill would create an oversight committee of state spending of federal funds relating to the COVID-19. It would meet every six months to review spending made by the office of the governor and state agencies with funds under the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-24-2021) Referred to House State Government Committee Tagged topics: covid-19, diseases, executive branch, expenditures, federal funds</p>
HSB 246	<p>An act sponsored by House State Government Committee. This bill would require state universities to hold in-person spring graduation commencement ceremonies and allow at least two attendees per student. COVID-19 prevention protocols are allowed.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-24-2021) Pending in House State Government Committee Tagged topics: eremonies, colleges and universities, covid-19, iowa state univer- sity, regents board, university of iowa, university of northern iowa</p>

³Full list of sponsors: Rep. Todd Prichard (D), Rep. Dave Williams (D), Rep. Brian Meyer (D), Rep. Christina Bohannon (D), Rep. Ross Wilburn (D), Rep. Dave Jacoby (D), Rep. Art Staed (D), Rep. Molly Donahue (D), Rep. Mary Wolfe (D), Rep. Steve Hansen (D), Rep. Monica Kurth (D), Rep. Jennifer Konfrst (D), Rep. Bruce Hunter (D), Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell (D), Rep. Tracy Ehlert (D), Rep. Jo Oldson (D), Rep. Kirsten Running-Marquardt (D), Rep. Sharon Steckman (D), Rep. Charlie McConkey (D), Rep. Lindsay James (D), Rep. Kristin Sunde (D), Rep. Kenan Judge (D), Rep. Rick Olson (D), Rep. Sue Cahill (D), Rep. Timi Brown-Powers (D), Rep. John Forbes (D), Rep. Dennis Cohoon (D), Rep. Chris Hall (D), Rep. Marti Anderson (D), Rep. Eric Gjerde (D), Rep. Mary Mascher (D), Rep. Cindy Winckler (D), Rep. Phyllis Thede (D), and Rep. Liz Bennett (D).

4.3 Health

The health group focused on bills in the legislature this session that were the most impactful and noteworthy bills. There were relatively few bills enrolled in the health category this session, which may be due to the impact overshadowing other issues in the health sphere. The bills that were enrolled tended to be smaller, regulatory changes, while more impactful legislation tended not to make it to the governor's desk. Some topics that showed up in health this year were mental health, insurance coverage of insulin, and sex education.

As stated above, when it came to enrolled bills there were few to choose from. Most of the bills examined have only been introduced. Out of the bills that were enrolled, the group focused on health bills that could produce the most change in Iowa. Some examples of this would be the criminalization of defrauding a drug/alcohol test, changes that are in favor of people with disabilities when it comes to their trust accounts, and new requirements for mental health professionals working in schools.

The group noticed that relatively controversial bills tended to remain introduced and not become enrolled. Some examples of controversial topics include regulating sex education in public schools and healthcare costs, and generally aligned with more Democratic values. Because the Republican party holds the majority in both the Senate and House, it seems logical that bills not reflecting their values would not be successful in the end. Bills that reflected republican or bipartisan values, however, would often go on to be enrolled.

Table 4.3: Health Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

Bill	Description
HF 283	<p>An act sponsored by the House Judiciary Committee. This bill criminalizes defrauding a drug or alcohol test. Specifically, the bill states that anyone who defrauds a drug test (added subsection about manufacturing or distributing synthetic urine) will be convicted of a simple misdemeanor for the first offense and a serious misdemeanor for each following offense.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (03-08-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: alcohol testing, criminal law, drug testing, misdemeanors, urine</p>
HF 835	<p>An act sponsored by the senate committee on education. This bill creates new requirements for mental health professionals serving in schools. It requires any professional working on mental health in a school to get a statement of professional recognition for behavior analysts.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (05-10-2021) Effective on 05-10-2021 Tagged topics: beneficiaries, dependent persons, disabilities, iowa able savings plan trust, trusts and trustees</p>

Table 4.3 – Health Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
SF 532	<p>This relates to the trust of people with disabilities. It is important because this bill amended the terminology for people and allows them to have more control over their money. This act states that an “account owner” means an individual who is the designated beneficiary under a participation agreement under this chapter for the payment of qualified disability expenses on behalf of the designated beneficiary. A “participation agreement” means an agreement establishing an account with the trust. This helps the person with disabilities have more say over their trust and keep them involved.</p> <p>Status: Signed by governor (05-20-2021) Effective on 05-20-2021 Tagged topics: behavior analysis, counseling, mental health, professional licensure, professions, teachers</p>
HF 15	<p>An Act providing for access to feminine hygiene products in public school restrooms. This act will make the board of directors of a school district ensure that feminine hygiene products can be accessed by students free of cost in at least half of the restrooms in school buildings. It will be there for students in grades six through twelve. The girls will also be educated on the subject and the supply of feminine hygiene products is refilled regularly. “Feminine hygiene products” means sanitary napkins, tampons, or other similar items used for feminine hygiene.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-12-2021) Tagged topics: bathrooms, health, school districts, students, women</p>
HF 58	<p>An act sponsored by Sen. Rob Hogg (D) and Sen. Liz Mathis (D) requiring schools to include information about dating violence and consent to sex education programs. This bill would add requirements about teaching students age-appropriate information about dating violence and voluntary consent to standards already required for education about human growth and development and sexuality.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-12-2021) Tagged topics: buses, education, school buses, school districts, schools, unemployment, unemployment compensation</p>
HF 263	<p>An act sponsored by Sen. Committee on Human Resources. This bill caps the amount of co-pay an insurance company can charge for long-term and short-term insulin at \$100 per month. The bill does not prohibit an insurance company for charging less than this per month.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-09-2021)</p>

Table4.3 – Health Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
	Tagged topics: diabetes, drugs, health insurance, insulin, insurance, prescription drugs

4.4 Environment

The environment group focused on enrolled legislation relating to environmental topics and subtopics within the Iowa Legislature for the 89th General Assembly. Environmental legislation included a wide variety of topics and subtopics, such as: agriculture, energy use, water quality, natural resources, pollution, waste management, and general appropriations bills. Thus, it seems that environmental legislation within the state of Iowa did not pertain to one specific topic (ex. climate change), rather, it encompassed a plethora of topics, predominantly those having large implications on Iowa's economy.

A rather swift conclusion drawn by the group was that the 89th General Assembly seemed to have a significantly small amount of enrolled bills regarding the subject matter, making it difficult to find and analyze bills. While prior General Assemblies had seen a large influx of environmental legislation covering a vast array of topics, our findings were rather limited. We concluded that this could be due to the priority of legislation related to health, safety, and social justice concerns prevailing in the legislature in response to Iowa's social and economic hardships in response to global phenomena (such as the COVID-19) pandemic.

However, with the legislation we did analyze, the group was able to come to some conclusions. After analyzing legislature covering topics such as appropriations, pesticide use, and natural gas sales, a connection appears between the importance of certain environmental components and the health of Iowa's agriculture industry. The importance of the relationship between these two topics was manifested within each piece of legislation. For example, legislation concerning the regulation of pesticide use served the primary purpose of protecting Iowa's crops and fields from harm applicable by pesticides. Legislation concerning appropriations for government entities involving agriculture, natural resources, and environmental protection were heavily devoted to providing funding to ensure the health and safety of Iowa's agricultural industry. While agriculture seemed to be the predominant motivator behind environmental policy within the state, legislation that did not have an inherent connection to Iowa's agriculture was still present, such as a bill regulating the sale of natural gas, which most likely served the goal of promoting general environmental and public welfare.

Environmental legislation offers a look into the values of legislators on issues such as water quality, air quality, preserving our environment and other matters like sustainable agriculture or hunting. While much focus is on climate change as a major environmental danger, pollution and poor care for the environment cause a number of issues that have direct effects on the people of Iowa: worse health outcomes, a loss of aesthetic beauty which attracts many to Iowa, economic damages to agriculture and increased government costs due to higher maintenance needs for infrastructure like roads, pipes, and more. Given the importance of the environment and maintaining it for those who come after us, looking to our legislatures for action is a natural response. It will be interesting to observe Iowa's legislature in the near future, taking into account how cultural influences and political leaders influence the state's environmental policy.

Table 4.4: Environment Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

Bill	Description
SF 482	<p>An act for the regulation of pesticides, providing penalties for those that violate the terms and requirements set forth by the bill, sponsored by Senate Agriculture Committee. A large aspect of the bill is the effect it will hopefully have on reducing pesticide drift. The bill allows for the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship to pursue civil penalties of up to \$500 against private applicators of pesticides and weedkillers when they drift onto neighboring properties and cause damage to other’s crops and property. This is of importance due to the persisting issue of pesticide drift and its resulting damages in Iowa agriculture, and the lack of action taken in the past against those responsible in such instances.</p> <p>Status: Signed by governor (03-22-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: agriculture, crops, farming, pesticides, real property</p>
HF 555	<p>An act sponsored by the House Commerce Committee and the Senate Commerce Committee. This bill bans counties and cities from adopting or enforcing any sort of regulation on the sale of propane and natural gas. Under this bill, the use of natural gas or propane by a public utility, retail, or wholesale provider cannot be impeded by any means by a city or county government. Additionally, the purchase of natural gas or propane by any business or individual customer may not be restricted.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (04-12-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: city government, county government, energy use, natural gas, propane, sales</p>
HF 32	<p>An act for the reduction of road salt usage on highways and streets by government bodies with jurisdiction over roads and increasing the use of organic additives to prevent a decline in road treatment quality. This act was sponsored by Representative Jon Thorup (R). The act has it so that the decline is “at a rate of five percent per winter season for five winter seasons”, and any shortcomings are added to the percentage that must be reduced by the next season. The organic additives specify the inclusion of midwestern-grown renewable crop byproducts as one such additive. These government bodies would file yearly reports with the Department of Transportation (DOT) on their road salt usages compared to the season before. The DOT would then compile the results and submit it to the chairpersons of the Senate and the House of Representatives committees on transportation as well as the legislative services agency.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-12-2021) Tagged topics: highways, ice, salt, snow, water quality</p>

Table 4.4 – Environment Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
HF 860	<p>This bill allocates funding and makes statutory changes to various state government entities involved with agriculture, natural resources, and environmental protection. The bill was sponsored by House Appropriations Committee and states that a total of \$18,538,194.00 will be appropriated for supporting the department for the 2021 fiscal year. Of this total, \$288,000 must be transferred to Iowa State University for use in the university’s grape and wine institute. The bill also requires that the department shall submit a report each quarter of the fiscal year detailing the expenditure of money appropriated to support the department’s administration, regulation, and programs – making this a recurring bill. Analysis of this bill allows for a comprehensive look into how the state is allocating funding, and thus combating, environmental issues.</p> <p>Status: Signed by governor (06-02-2021) Effective from 07-01-2021 to 06-30-2022</p> <p>Tagged topics: agriculture, agriculture and land stewardship department, air quality, animal diseases, animal feeding operations, appropriations, dairying, dams, disabilities, dog racing, environment first fund, erosion, farming, fish and game protection fund, floods, forestry, fuels, grain, horse racing, hungry canyons alliance, iowa geological survey, iowa resources enhancement and protection program, iowa state university, livestock, local food, loess hills, midwest grape and wine industry institute, natural resources, natural resources department, occupational disease, pari-mutuel wagering, parks, petroleum storage tanks, racing, snowmobiles, soil and water conservation, soil conservation and water quality division, storage tanks, underground storage tanks, university of iowa, veterinary diagnostic laboratory, water, water quality</p>
SF 52	<p>A bill proposing to ban the sale and use of pesticides containing a compound belonging to the neonicotinoid class of chemicals. The bill also makes penalties and provisions applicable. A person may not engage in any step of the neonicotinoid application process including distribution, selling, or purchasing. The current sponsor of this bill is Senator Pam Jochum (D). The bill explains neonicotinoids are derived from nicotine. They are seemingly less harmful to vertebrates due to their increased selectivity to insect acetylcholine receptors in the brain, but they are particularly harmful to bees, which means that this class of chemicals has considerable impacts on the environment and plant life by proxy of harming bees.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-12-2021) Tagged topics: chemicals, crops, pesticides, pollution</p>

4.5 Social

The social issues group focused on some of the biggest issues taking place in Iowa this year. Having such a broad topic meant a lot to look for — ranging from LGBT issues to women’s health to immigration. It came as a surprise that many of these issues were difficult to find. Instead, enrolled bills were usually smaller in scale and typically dealt with more local rather than national issues. It was in legislation that was not passed that revealed the larger issues.

Of the enrolled bills, a major topic was that of issues involving diversity. With the Republican party controlling both the Iowa House and the Senate, these bills were often passed along party lines with not much bipartisan support. For example, House File 802 was one of the enrolled bills that caused a lot of controversy. This dealt with diversity and racial equity trainings in government agencies and schools and would prohibit mandatory trainings that discriminate on the basis of race or sex. It passed in the House on a 53-35 vote with Democrats concerned that it would eliminate teaching portions of history and Republicans arguing that it ends ‘divisive’ teachings. This was a common theme among enrolled bills with many issues lacking bipartisan support.

More interesting bills emerged in legislation that was introduced but never enrolled. These bills were more diverse in regard to different political parties and ideologies. An example of this is House File 15 which would make feminine hygiene products free in public school restrooms. While this bill is yet to be passed, it is interesting to look at the makeup of the bill. Being sponsored by a Democratic congressman, it is likely to face heavy opposition against the majority and has a small chance of being enrolled.

Table 4.5: Social Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

Bill	Description
HF 426	<p>Outlines detailed instructions for how to conduct sexual assault kits in sexual assault cases and also establishes and automated tracking service to sexual assault evidence collection kits. This is important as it keeps tabs on where sexual assault evidence collections kits are and who handles them throughout the entire process. The bill was sponsored by House Judiciary Committee.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (05-19-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: crime victims, evidence, sexual abuse, victims</p>
HF 802	<p>This is an act sponsored by House Judiciary Committee, which states that there must be diversity and racial equity trainings at schools, public universities, and government agencies.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (06-08-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: colleges and universities, discrimination, diversity, racial groups, school districts, sex</p>
HF 228	<p>An act sponsored by The House Education Committee; Rep John Landon (R) and Senator Garre Gobble(R) and this bill prevents school districts from offering fully remote schooling for the 2021-2022 school year. Every student must be given the opportunity for full-time, in-person instruction.</p>

Table4.5 – Social Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description										
	<p>Status: Signed by Governor (05-10-2021) Effective on 05-10-2021 Tagged topics: diversity, open enrollment, school districts, students</p>										
Public Opinion Spotlight: Educational Voucher Programs											
<table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <caption>Public Opinion Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Opinion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Support</td> <td>38%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oppose</td> <td>35%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Don't Know/Refused</td> <td>7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Opinion	Percentage	Support	38%	Neutral	20%	Oppose	35%	Don't Know/Refused	7%
Opinion	Percentage										
Support	38%										
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<p>Question text: “Now we want to ask your opinion on specific ideas that have been considered during the current session. Some of these have already passed the legislature, others may still be under consideration, and others may not receive further consideration. For each topic, please let us know if you support or oppose it.” ITEM: “Establish state funding for students in struggling public schools who wish to attend a private school” Source: Hawkeye Poll Survey, April 2021. See appendix for details. N=991. Far right box reports respondents answering “Don’t Know” or “Refused”.</p>											
HF 15	<p>This bill is sponsored by Rep Dave Jacoby (D), which states that feminine hygiene products must be available in public restrooms without cost. Specifically, they will be made available in school restrooms, grade 6-12, and will be refilled frequently. Students will be educated that feminine hygiene products will be available to them in at least half of the bathrooms within their school.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-12-2021) Pending in the House Education Committee Tagged topics: bathrooms, health, school districts, students, women</p>										
HF 334	<p>The “Save Women’s Sports Act” is sponsored by Rep Jeff Shipley (R), which determines students involvement in sports based on biological sex. School sports can only be designated as men, women, or co-ed teams and this bill allows for genital checks conducted by a physician when a student’s gender is disputed.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-02-2021) Referred to House Human Resources Committee Tagged topics: athletics, recreation, sex, students</p>										
HF 712	<p>This act is relating to the construction of child care facilities by providing developers with sales and use tax refunds. The bill was sponsored by House Ways and Means Committee.</p>										

Table4.5 – Social Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
	Status: Introduced (03-09-2021) Tagged topics: buildings, child care, children, construction work, day care services, franchise taxes, income taxes, insurance companies taxes, moneys and credits taxes, sales taxes, tax credits, tax refunds, use taxes

4.6 Race and Crime

During the 2021 legislative session, bills relating to the category of law and crime occupied a significant percentage of Iowa bills passed (16.4%). Due to the increased coverage of the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020, the topic of race and crime policy continues to be discussed and implemented within Iowa legislation in 2021. When looking for specific bills of importance, the race and crime group focused on finding bills that are part of a topic that appeared frequently in the Iowa bill book and are “hot” topics of debate today. As a result, our research focused broadly on three main categories: prisons, gun control, and race in education. Legislation within the prison category tended to focus on funding, policing measures/equipment, and felon rights; bills surrounding gun control typically centered on permits and penalties; and legislation that discussed race in education focused on divisive aspects of school curriculum.

Table 4.6: Race and Crime Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session

Bill	Description
HF 802	<p>An Act sponsored by the House Judiciary Committee that prohibits training on “divisive” topics within racism/sexism bias training. The bill prohibits “divisive” topics from being taught in school curriculum as well. It also includes a disclaimer that none of the bill should be taken as an affront to first amendment rights.</p> <p>Status: Signed by Governor (06-08-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: colleges and universities, discrimination, diversity, racial groups, school districts, sex</p>
HF 756	<p>An Act sponsored by the House Public Safety Committee that pertains to weapons permits. The bill notably states that peace officers can carry a firearm on school grounds even if they are not certified or performing official duties, citizens don’t have to carry or present a valid permit for weapons (if they cooperate), and emergency care providers are allowed to carry weapons.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (04-02-2021) Effective on 07-01-2021 Tagged topics: firearms, weapons</p>
HF 861	<p>This is an Act sponsored by the House Appropriations Committee, which allocates funding to various pieces of the Judicial branch. Notably, it provides funds for the office of the Attorney General, and for the corrections department. We note that the spending on prisons is incredibly high (with multiple prisons having total fund from \$30-60 million), while spending on inmate addiction and mental health treatment are low (merely \$28,065 for the year). Additionally, the civil rights department appears underfunded and understaffed in comparison to the various criminal divisions. Finally, the bill calls for the creation of a department of cybercrime within the criminal investigation department. The aim of this organization is to stop crimes such as child exploitation and cyber intrusion.</p>

Table 4.6 – Race and Crime Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

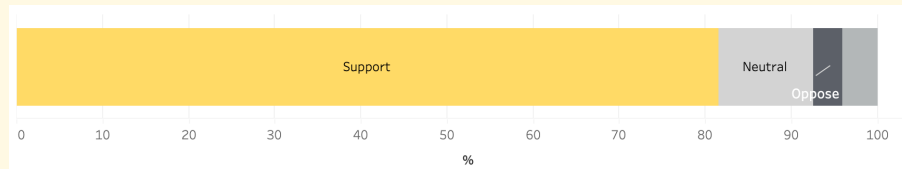
Bill	Description								
	<p>Status: Introduced (06-08-2021)</p> <p>Tagged topics: anamosa state penitentiary, appropriations, attorney general, civil rights commission, clarinda correctional facility, consumer advocate (utilities), corrections department, crime victim compensation, crime victims, criminal and juvenile justice planning division, criminalistics laboratory, emergency communications, fire departments, fort dodge correctional facility, fort madison state penitentiary, gambling, homeland security and emergency management department, indigent defense, inmates, iowa prison industries, judicial districts, law enforcement academy, levee districts, mental health, mitchellville correctional facility, mount pleasant correctional facility, narcotics, newton correctional facility, oakdale correctional facility, parole board, poverty, public defense department, religion, rockwell city correctional facility, state public defender, substance abuse, victims</p>								
<p>HF 356</p>	<p>A bill for an act relating to law enforcement profiling by standardizing collection and centralizing the compilation and reporting of officer stop and compliance data, providing for officer training, creating a community policing advisory board, providing for penalties and remedies, and including effective date provisions. This bill is sponsored by Rep Mary Mascher (D).</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-02-2021)</p> <p>Tagged topics: ethnic groups, law enforcement, law enforcement officers, profiling, racial groups</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Public Opinion Spotlight: Stop Data</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Public Opinion Data</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Opinion</th> <th>Percentage</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Support</td> <td>55%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neutral</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Oppose</td> <td>20%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Question text: “In this section we want to focus on issues related to policing and criminal justice. In the last year many states, including Iowa, have considered a wide variety of reforms in these areas. For each of following proposals, please let us know whether you support or oppose it for Iowa.” ITEM: “Collecting information on who police stop in order to reduce racial profiling by law enforcement.”</p> <p>Source: IPOL Survey, February 2021. See appendix for details. N=1,000. Far right box reports respondents answering “Don’t Know” or “Refused”.</p>	Opinion	Percentage	Support	55%	Neutral	25%	Oppose	20%
Opinion	Percentage								
Support	55%								
Neutral	25%								
Oppose	20%								

Table 4.6 – Race and Crime Bills from the 2021 Legislative Session (Cont.)

Bill	Description
HF 178	<p>An act prohibiting employers and employment agencies from seeking the criminal record or criminal history from applicants for employment under certain circumstances. The purpose of this was to remove obstacles to employment for individuals with criminal record and allow them to grow economically and socially. An employer cannot inquire about the criminal record until the applicant’s interview is being conducted or until later. However, it does not prohibit an employer from notifying applicants what offenses will disqualify an applicant from employment.</p> <p>Status: Introduced (01-22-2021) Referred to Labor H.J 184 Tagged topics: criminal history, criminal offenders, employment agencies, labor and employment, task forces</p>

HF 43	<p>A bill for an act requiring certain peace officers, including tribal law enforcement officers, to wear and use a body camera and providing remedies. This bill is sponsored by Rep Bruce Hunter (D).</p> <p>Status: Introduced (02-02-2021) Tagged topics: body cameras, confidentiality, law enforcement, law enforcement officers</p>
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Public Opinion Spotlight: Body Cameras



Question text: “Now we want to ask your opinion on specific ideas that have been considered during the current session. Some of these have already passed the legislature, others may still be under consideration, and others may not receive further consideration. For each topic, please let us know if you support or oppose it.” ITEM: “Require police officers to wear body camera.”
 Source: Hawkeye Poll Survey, April 2021. See appendix for details. N=991. Far right box reports respondents answering “Don’t Know” or “Refused”.



5. Appendix

5.1 Information on Survey Data

5.1.1 IPOL Survey from January and February 2021

Dates: January 13, 2021 to February 3, 2021.

Sample: 1000 voting-age residents in Iowa, margin of error +/-3.2

Respondent Identification: All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity.

Weighting: Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and party identification. Alternate weighting schemes, such as by age, sex, and education produced substantively similar results.

About: The poll was designed by the Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab, comprised of University of Iowa faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students. The Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab is co-directed by Profs. Frederick J. Boehmke in Political Science and Kajsa Dalrymple in Journalism and Mass Communication. The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, and collaborated with the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick J. Boehmke. The University of Iowa Public Policy Center provided support for this poll as part of its PolicyRISE initiative to expand experiential research for UI students.

The Iowa Social Science Research Center (ISRC) contracted with a web panel vendor, Ipsos Observer, to field the survey to a demographically representative sample of 1,000 respondents. Respondents invited to complete the web survey were Iowa adults, aged 18-120 years, recruited for participation via web panel. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and urbanicity.

For more information, please visit the IPOL website.

5.1.2 Hawkeye Poll Survey from March and April 2021

Dates: March 23 to April 12, 2021.

Sample: 991 voting-age residents in Iowa, margin of error +/-3.2%.

Respondent Identification: All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. 902 responses were completed by web and 89 were

completed by phone. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set for the web data collection on the following demographics: sex, age, and party identification. No quotas were set for the phone data collection.

Weighting: Reported results are weighted by age, sex, and party identification.

About: This poll was conducted by the Hawkeye Poll Cooperative, comprised of University of Iowa faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students in the political science and sociology departments. The poll is a teaching, research, and service project, which uses the facilities of the Iowa Social Science Research Center directed by Frederick J. Boehmke, professor of political science and faculty advisor for the poll. The Department of Political Science, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and the University of Iowa Public Policy Center support the poll; financial support was provided through a Student Technology Fee award (#1290-91).

The Iowa Social Science Research Center (ISRC) assisted with data collection. Responses were gathered by phone (89) and by web (902). For the phone portion, the ISRC obtained a random sample of Iowans consisting of 40% household landline numbers and 60% mobile phone numbers. All respondents who stated they were over age 18 and willing to participate in the survey were included. After training, students in the class used the ISRC's computer-assisted interviewing resources to complete the calling and interviews. No quotas were set for the phone component. For the web portion, the ISRC contracted with a respected web panel vendor to field the survey to a demographically representative sample of 902 web respondents. Respondents invited to complete the web survey were Iowa adults, aged 18-120 years, recruited for participation via web panel. To obtain a census-representative sample, quotas were set on the following demographics: sex, age, and party identification.

For more information, please visit the Hawkeye Poll website.