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2007 Iowa Legislative Session Means More Advocacy from Iowans with Disabilities

DES MOINES, Iowa – January 18, 2007 – The 2007 Iowa Legislature brings with it a new governor, new house and senate leadership and critical issues that are of interest to many Iowans. But Iowans with disabilities are watching this year's session with special interest.

With a proposed cigarette tax that could generate up to \$135 million for a health care proposal that would increase health care access for many Iowans with disabilities, and with \$25 million needed to cover Iowa's mental health funding shortfall, Iowans with disabilities will likely follow the 2007 legislative session closely. The counties experiencing the most immediate effects of the funding shortfall serve nearly 50 percent of the entire population of Iowans with disabilities, which could mean a significant impact to services.

To help Iowa's nearly 450,000 people with disabilities stay up-to-date with legislative action that may significantly impact their lives, Iowans with Disabilities in Action (ID Action) launches its first 2007 issue of InfoNet tomorrow. InfoNet is an electronic and print publication that focuses on policy planning and decision-making of interest to those Iowans and their families.

"2007 will be an interesting legislative year that will certainly impact Iowans with disabilities," says ID Action Project Manager Rik Shannon. "Our goal with InfoNet is to give this traditionally silent audience a voice by providing them with information they can use to grow their capability and confidence as effective advocates."

Available online at www.infonetiowa.com or by mail, InfoNet is free and published bi-weekly during the legislative session. The online version is updated in between issues to reflect important policy news.

ID Action, a project of Iowa's Disabilities Council, advocates for improving the system of support and services so that all Iowans with disabilities have the freedom to make their own choices, exercise their rights as citizens and participate fully in society.

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