



Weekly Legislative Update

Week 2: January 19-23, 2026

Bill Filing Deadline Closed

Today—Friday, January 23—was the **individual bill filing deadline**. As of close of business today, individual legislators can no longer request new bills. The window has closed.

After today, only committees or legislative leaders can introduce new bills. The focus now shifts from bill introduction to bill advancement through committees.

We scanned every bill filed this week to identify anything affecting Iowa's homeschool families. **We're now tracking 21 bills** across four categories: threats, opportunities, monitor, and HSAP-specific.

What We're Watching

● The Constitutional Threat

SJR 2005 - Who Has Authority Over Your Children's Education?

A constitutional amendment was introduced this week stating "all Iowa youth have a right to a comprehensive education that exceeds national standards."

Why this is dangerous:

This isn't about improving education—it's about who has authority over children's education. By writing "comprehensive education that exceeds national standards" into the Iowa Constitution, this amendment would:

- Make government, not parents, the arbiter of what counts as "comprehensive" education
- Create constitutional basis to override Iowa Code 299A protections for IPI and CPI
- Give future legislatures a blank check to mandate curriculum, testing, and oversight
- Turn parental authority from God-given rights into state-granted privileges

Constitutional amendments are nearly impossible to reverse. Once this language is in our state constitution, it would take another constitutional amendment to remove it.

We think this won't pass with the current legislative majority.

Why we're telling you anyway: This shows what opponents of homeschool freedom want to accomplish. This is what's at stake. This is why Homeschool Iowa exists—to protect parental authority from those who believe government should define what constitutes adequate education.

Government doesn't educate children—parents do. We will never accept constitutional language that inverts this proper order.

Status: Introduced, subcommittee assigned (Rozenboom, Schultz, Townsend).

Key Opportunity Bills

HF 824 - Custody Protection (Gustoff)

Rep. Bill Gustoff (our former lobbyist and current champion) introduced legislation to protect homeschooling families in custody disputes. The bill creates a legal presumption that children stay in their current educational setting during divorce proceedings—explicitly including homeschooling under both IPI and CPI.

Why this matters: Some judges discriminate against homeschooling families in custody cases. This bill recognizes homeschool as a legitimate educational choice that deserves protection.

Status: Subcommittee met Thursday morning (Gustoff, Wheeler, Wilburn).

HF 2087 / SF 2093 - Disaster Emergency Protections

These companion bills limit government overreach during disaster emergencies and include critical language: **"Children who are exempt from immunization for religious reasons are exempt from vaccination/immunization requirements during disaster emergencies."**

This prevents future governors from overriding religious exemptions during health emergencies. Many homeschool families use religious exemptions for immunizations.

The bills also limit disaster declarations to 60 days (with 60-day extensions) and prohibit emergency orders from interfering with religious or constitutional rights.

Status: Both bills introduced this week, awaiting subcommittee assignment.

HF 2124 - Electronic Educational Systems

This bill requires the Department of Education to develop standards for electronic data systems for "all schools" and modernize disbursement systems.

Why we're watching: The "all schools" language could potentially include CPI reporting systems and Form A filing under Iowa Code 299A.2. We're still evaluating whether this represents an opportunity or a concern.

Status: Subcommittee assigned (Gehlbach, Bradley, Gosa).

● Other Opportunity Bills

HF 2113 - Minor Driving Permits: Allows minors whose SMRL was suspended to get instruction permit.

HF 2106 / SF 2062 - Student Speech: Protects religious/political speech rights for dual-enrolled CPI homeschoolers.

SF 2066 - Sex Ed Parental Consent: Requires written parental consent for sex ed seminars for dual-enrolled CPI students.

● Monitor Bills

SF 2060 - Religious Exclusions: Strikes religious exclusions from various Iowa Code sections—could affect the 422.12 tuition/textbook tax credit homeschool families use. Our attorney is reviewing.

SF 2094 / HSB 610 - Computer Science Requirement: Adds computer science to HS graduation requirements with DOE-approved coursework lists.

SF 2084 / HSB 608 - Your Life Iowa Access: Requires schools to include mental health resource info on student ID cards.

SF 2003 / HF 2121 - Gender Theory Prohibition: Expands current K-6 prohibition to grades 7-12.

HF 2012 - Iowa Tuition Grants: Changes to tuition grant program.

SF 2092 - School Health Plan Grants: DOE competitive grants for emergency response plans.

HF 2123 / SF 2072 - Anti-DEI Penalties: Enforcement mechanisms for anti-DEI policies.

SF 2090 - School Executives & Audits: Financial oversight changes for school districts.

What Happens Next

Starting Monday, January 26, we enter the **Committee Work Intensive Period** (Weeks 3-5). This is when subcommittees review bills and full committees decide which bills advance.

Your voice matters most during committee work. Once a bill leaves committee, it's much harder to change.

The first major deadline is **Friday, February 20—the First Funnel**. Bills must pass out of their chamber-of-origin committee by that date or they're generally dead for the session.

How You Can Help

1. Know Your Legislators

Identify your State Senator and State Representative at www.legis.iowa.gov/legislators/find.

2. Watch for Action Alerts

Over the next four weeks, we'll tell you which bills need your voice, which committee members to contact, and what to say.

3. Support the Work

Your Homeschool Iowa membership funds the lobbying and legal work that protects homeschool freedom. Encourage your homeschooling friends to become Homeschool Iowa members as well.

The Bottom Line

A constitutional amendment was introduced that would make government—not parents—the ultimate authority over education. We're also tracking custody protections, religious freedom defenses, and other bills affecting Iowa homeschoolers.

Committee activity ramps up Monday. We're watching, and when your voice is needed, we'll let you know.

For Iowa families and homeschool freedom,

Jeremy Vos

Homeschool Iowa Lobbyist