



The next two weeks will be hectic as legislators scramble to pass bills in at least one of the standing committees prior to the **FIRST FUNNEL DEADLINE** of March 9, 2007. Bills that have not made it through one committee by the date are considered dead for the 2007. The funnel deadline does not apply to bills assigned to a ways and means committee, appropriations committee, oversight committee, or are initiated by Governor Culver.

One bill of significant importance to the League is HSB 213, a bill that modifies certain provisions of the **ACCOUNTABILITY** legislation that passed last year. The first subcommittee meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 25. The bill would allow 28E entities the option to post supplementary information on a web site in lieu of publishing in the newspaper. Certain basic information would still be required to be published. Cities should contact their legislators on the House Local Government Committee to ask for their support of HSB 213. A modified version is expected to be filed in the Senate next week.

Two subcommittees were held this week to discuss the **STATEWIDE CABLE FRANCHISE** bill. The League is opposed to SSB 1208, although we are working toward a compromise that would retain local control, but would streamline the process. Several amendments were offered in subcommittee, including an opt-out provision for incumbent providers, and establishing the Iowa Utilities Board as the state agency rather than the Secretary of State's Office. There is concern that the amendments create even greater complexity in the legislation than the version introduced. The bill is expected to be debated next week in the Senate Commerce Committee.

On Monday, the League will present information to a House Ways and Means Subcommittee study group chaired by Rep. Phil Wise that is considering changes to Iowa's **COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TAX**. The meeting will begin at 11:45 AM in Room 103 at the Capitol.

The League is urging passage of HS 223, which makes technical corrections to the **COMPETITIVE BID LAWS** that were passed in 2006. The bill is assigned to the House State Government Committee and a Senate companion bill is expected to be filed with the Senate Local Government Committee soon.

The first movement has occurred on a bill to restore the distribution of \$8.8 million of the **BANK FRANCHISE TAX** to cities and counties. HF 440 passed the House Local Government Committee. The House Appropriations Committee must consider funding the bill before it is eligible to move to the floor. The Senate Ways and Means Committee is expected to act soon on the Senate companion bill, SF 83. The League supports both of these bills.

On Wednesday, League staff testified in support of HSB 89, a bill that enables **LOCAL CONTROL OF SMOKING** in public places through the adoption of ordinances by cities or counties. Earlier in the week, the Senate Local Government Committee passed SSB 1162, the Senate companion bill. Iowa is one of only 17 states that have not taken steps to enable control of smoking in public places. All states that now have statewide bans began by authorizing local control.

On Thursday, The League testified in support of establishing an interim committee to coordinate a broad review of Chapters 21 and 22 of the *Code of Iowa*. These two chapters address the **OPEN MEETINGS AND OPEN RECORDS** laws.

Public hearings will be held soon throughout the state about a proposal for new road revenues, promoted by the Iowa Department of Transportation and other groups including the League. The proposal calls for additional revenue measures to go into a new fund, Investment Moves the Economy in the 21st Century Fund, also known as **TIME 21**. It is hoped that new measures would eventually generate \$200 million annually with 60 percent going to the state, 20 percent to cities and 20 percent to counties. State funds would have to be spent on construction or major renovation to the commercial-industrial network and interstates. Counties and cities would be required to spend funds on arterials. Although cities would not be required to apply for funds, their use would be restricted to major streets. Updated information on the public hearings is available on the League's website at [www.iowaleague.org](http://www.iowaleague.org).

