

Major Legislation

Where the sales tax rate was the burning controversy in 1957, reapportionment became the over-riding issue in 1959. Upon adjournment, the assembly had not agreed on a plan. But the extended and, oft-times, heated debate did much to bring about a greater public understanding of the difficulties involved in restoring to Iowa the fair representation that is basic to our form of government.

In some respects the reapportionment failure overshadowed adoption of much major legislation.

Here's the session box score:

	<i>House Bills</i>	<i>Senate Bills</i>	<i>Joint Resolutions</i>		<i>Total</i>
			<i>House</i>	<i>Senate</i>	
Introduced	767	584	27	19	1,361
Withdrawn	87	58	0	1	146
Lt. Gov. did not sign	0	1	0	0	1
Indefinitely postponed	60	1	1	0	62
Failed to pass	12	9	0	1	22
Passed by both houses, concurrency refused	1	0	0	0	1
Filed, then withdrawn	1	0	0	0	1
Substitution made for	1	3	0	0	4
Sent to Sec. of State	0	0	0	1	1

MAJOR LEGISLATION

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Governor signed	226	186	4	4	420
Law without Governor's signature ..	2	5	0	0	7
Governor vetoed	0	4	0	0	4
Tabled	4	4	0	0	8
Passed over veto	0	0	0	0	0
New laws	228	191	4	4	427

Bills not otherwise listed died in committee. In addition to the above, 43 (14 House, 29 Senate) concurrent resolutions were introduced, of which 36 (14 House, 22 Senate) were passed. Also, the House passed 10 of its 11 one-house resolutions and the Senate both of the one-house resolutions introduced there.

A far-reaching joint resolution adopted was the proposed amendment for nonpartisan election of the judiciary. It must be adopted in identical form by the 1961 legislature and approved by the people before it can take effect.

A moneymaking step forward was taken when the legislature repealed the law holding the State Treasurer liable for losses incurred in the sale of securities purchased to invest idle state funds. On assurance this would be done, State Treasurer M. L. Abrahamson lost no time investing several millions of dollars in government bonds — money that had been lying idle for as long as twenty-five years. Estimates were that the state will receive from \$500,000 to \$700,000 a year interest at the current investment rate.

The legislature also shortened the ballot by pro-

viding that the three-member Commerce Commission hereafter shall be appointed by the Governor, with Senate approval, and by lengthening terms of all county officers, except attorney and supervisors, from two to four years, with approximately half to be elected every two years.

Still dealing with counties, the legislature passed a law permitting any county to merge two or more offices — county attorney and engineer excepted — with voter approval to cut costs and increase efficiency.

The Assembly tackled the speed limit issue headon. Limits of 75 miles per hour in the daytime and 65 at night were set for the new interstate highways; 70 in the daytime for primaries (with the 60 nighttime limit retained), and 60 daytime, 50 nighttime on secondaries. The speed limit for buses (excepting school buses) was raised from 50 to 60. Moreover, the traffic point system was legalized.

Highly important to communities was the action making a two-year change in the formula for distributing the road use tax fund and in creating a study committee to recommend permanent changes. Adopted in 1949, the formula funneled 42 per cent of the fund to primary highways, 35 per cent to secondaries, 15 per cent to farm-to-market roads, and 8 per cent to cities and towns, on a population basis. The temporary change will skim 2 per cent off the top of the fund for cities and

towns, and distribute the balance on the 1949 formula.

Space prohibits listing all major legislation passed but here is a sample, which includes measures to:

Establish an agricultural marketing division.

Increase the highway patrol strength from 275 to 300 men.

Increase the cigaret tax from three to four cents per package; lower from twenty-one to eighteen the minimum age for purchasing cigaretts.

Increase the corporation tax rate from 2 to 3 per cent.

Appropriate: \$36,580,722 a year for operation and \$16,242,300 for two years for building needs to Board of Regents institutions; \$18,335,000 and \$5,125,000 to Board of Control institutions; \$23,821,000 a year for school aids; \$14,705,145 a year for operation of state departments; \$1,492,650 for two years for capital improvements to the Conservation Commission; \$437,000 for two years for improvement and repair of the Capitol.

Prohibit sale of new or used cars on Sunday.

Require the Highway Commission to construct and maintain state institutional park roads.

Increase maximum truck heights from 12 feet 6 inches to 13 feet 6 inches.

Authorize payment to utilities from primary road fund the "non-betterment" costs of relocating facilities forced by interstate construction.

Permit the Board of Regents to issue revenue bonds to finance certain buildings and to pledge student fees to retire bonds.

Permit supervisors to set up county zoning regulations.

Create a joint bipartisan committee to study public assistance programs in Iowa.

Change election date for local and county boards of education from second Monday in March to second Monday in September.

Repeal notice-to-depart law and reduce time for acquiring legal residence from two to one year to qualify for poor-fund support.

Increase maximum unemployment compensation benefits from \$30 weekly for 24 weeks to \$44 for 26 weeks, depending on a family size status.

Increase workmen's compensation benefits on a new family status plan formula.

Allow retired persons to earn up to \$1,200 a year without losing rights under state retirement system.

Repeal requirement calling for notarized signature of worker's spouse to permit deduction of union dues from paychecks.

Appropriate up to \$450,000 a year to pay retirement allowances to teachers who retired before July 1, 1953, after at least twenty-five years of service.

Prohibit elections to change form of municipal government oftener than every four years, instead

of every two years, after change has been rejected once.

Provide for continuous succession to fill legislative, executive, and judicial offices in event of enemy attack.

Set up regulations for water skiers.

Rewrite corporation laws.

Increase from \$2,500 to \$5,000 installment loan ceiling for banks with repayment time extended from thirty-seven months to five years.

Increase from \$300 to \$500 ceiling on small loans with maximum interest on unpaid balance in excess of \$300 set at $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per month.

Governor Loveless did not use his veto pen as often as in 1957, when he disapproved fourteen bills. This time he rejected only four, all originating in the Senate, while allowing seven (2 House, 5 Senate) to become law without his signature. He vetoed these bills:

S.F. 3 — relative to arrest of shoplifters, on grounds that it was drawn in such a way as to violate basic human rights.

S.F. 150 — permitting Attorney General to assign full-time assistants to various state departments, on grounds that the head of one department should not be allowed to select employees for other departments.

S.F. 171 — gradually to advance the deadline when children may start to kindergarten and first grade on grounds, among others, that it consti-

tuted an unwarranted interference in what "is essentially a local matter."

S.F. 458 — entitling patrons and non-members to share in benefits of cooperatives, on grounds that it was "an unwise attempt to alter the basic principles upon which agricultural cooperatives were founded and developed."

Lasting 116 days, from January 12 through May 7, when clocks were stopped and members went home, it was the longest regular session in Iowa history. Working days totaled 77. Actually, the session did not end until May 13, allowing six days for paper work. Thus, it was on May 13 that Lieutenant Governor McManus and Speaker Lisle rapped the session to a close at 2:05 p.m. — although legislative clocks showed 5 p.m. and journals registered the day as May 7.

Even then, however, there was more business. Belatedly, it was discovered that the House had overlooked taking up a Senate-approved legalizing act involving sewer bonds at Bettendorf. A mail ballot of House members was favorable to passage, but this maneuver fell through when Speaker Lisle announced he would not be able to sign the bill, as required by law, "in the presence of the House" which was adjourned.

Later yet, it was discovered that Lieutenant Governor McManus inadvertently had missed signing a bill permitting a voting machine tax levy. The Attorney General ruled it could not become law.