



4-star forward Davis commits to Iowa State men's basketball

SPORTS, 1B

The Des Moines Register

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Iowa public pension leaders out

1 resigns, 1 fired following misconduct investigation

Stephen Gruber-Miller and Tyler Jett
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK



Samorajski

while Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System officials fired Chief Benefits Officer Steven Herbert on Thursday, May 7, spokespeople for Gov. Kim Reynolds and the pension system announced.

The departures come about five weeks after the governor and pensions officials suspended the leaders, though

spokespeople for both offices have declined to share details about the complaints against the executives.

The moves leave holes atop a system that, as of the end of last year, oversaw about \$48 billion in assets for about 424,000 current and former state government, local government and public school employees.

Reynolds and IPERS officials have said repeatedly that the problems raised in complaints about Samorajski and

Herbert did not expose risks to the system's trust fund. But they wouldn't detail the reasons behind the suspensions.

"Benefit payments to our members are not impacted," IPERS spokesperson Rachel Simon said in an email Thursday.

Simon did not answer questions from the Des Moines Register about what Iowa Department of Administrative Services investigators found while

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Charting his own path

1 year in, poll shows most U.S. Catholics approve of Leo XIV

Marc Ramirez, Phaedra Trethan, Mike Stunson, Bailey Allen, Liam Adams and Rachel Gow
USA TODAY NETWORK

It's been nearly 1,000 years since King Henry IV stood barefoot in the Italian snow to beg forgiveness after clashes with Pope Gregory VII, and over two centuries since Napoleon imprisoned Pope Pius VII in France.

Now, a battle is underway between a pope and a world leader: the war of words between President Donald Trump and Pope Leo XIV. Their divide is believed to be one of the most contentious between the papacy and a secular leader in many years.

For dozens of U.S. Catholics interviewed by the USA TODAY Network across the nation, it's Leo who has the upper hand in the crusade. A year into his historic papacy, he has given them hope for the future of the Catholic Church.

Catholics nationwide feel overwhelmingly upbeat. Many say Leo is palpably different from Pope Francis, with an everyman affability they believe is helping fuel a global resurgence in Catholicism – especially among the young.

See **POPE LEO**, Page 1A

Pope Leo XIV's firm push for peace amid the war with Iran has rankled President Donald Trump, igniting sparks at times that have tested the loyalties of conservative Catholics.

GUGLIELMO MANGIAPANE/REUTERS FILE
PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JUANITA LAGRONE/USA TODAY NETWORK



Reynolds scores wins in her final session

Charter school funding, tax cuts among victories

Stephen Gruber-Miller and Marissa Payne
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Iowa's Republican legislators cemented Gov. Kim Reynolds' legacy in her final year as governor, approving a property tax cut, food assistance restrictions and increased funding for charter schools.

Reynolds, a Republican, said in April 2025 that she would not seek reelection this year. That means Iowa's 2026 legislative session, which concluded after 112 days on May 3, was her final chance as governor to get her priorities across the finish line.

"Throughout my time in office, the commonsense, conservative policies we've enacted will ensure our state remains strong, prosperous and vibrant for generations to come," Reynolds said in a statement. "That has been my commitment to Iowans since Day One, and I will continue to serve with that same purpose during my final months in office."

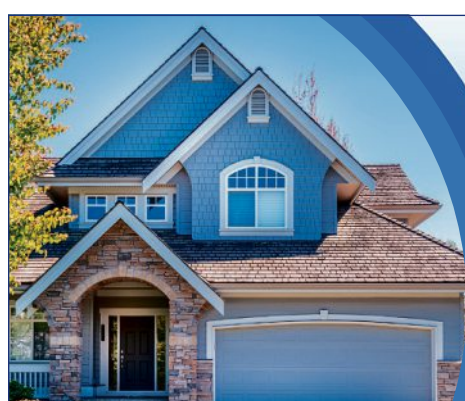
Here's what happened to Reynolds' key priorities in the 2026 legislative session.

Win: Delivering a \$4 billion property tax cut

Iowa lawmakers passed an estimated \$4 billion property tax cut to cap off a weekend marathon end to the 2026 legislative session, sealing the deal on Reynolds' and Republican legislative leaders' top-priority issue.

The measure would implement a 2% growth cap on local governments' general levies, with exceptions for new construction, and a 10% homestead

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