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# Sioux City Journal

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Crews battle grass fire along U.S. 75 bypass.

STATE & LOCAL, A3



Bohnet among best on the mat.

SPORTS, C1



Thursday, January 8, 2026

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## LAWMAKERS LIST PRIORITIES

State legislators from Northwest Iowa prepare for new session

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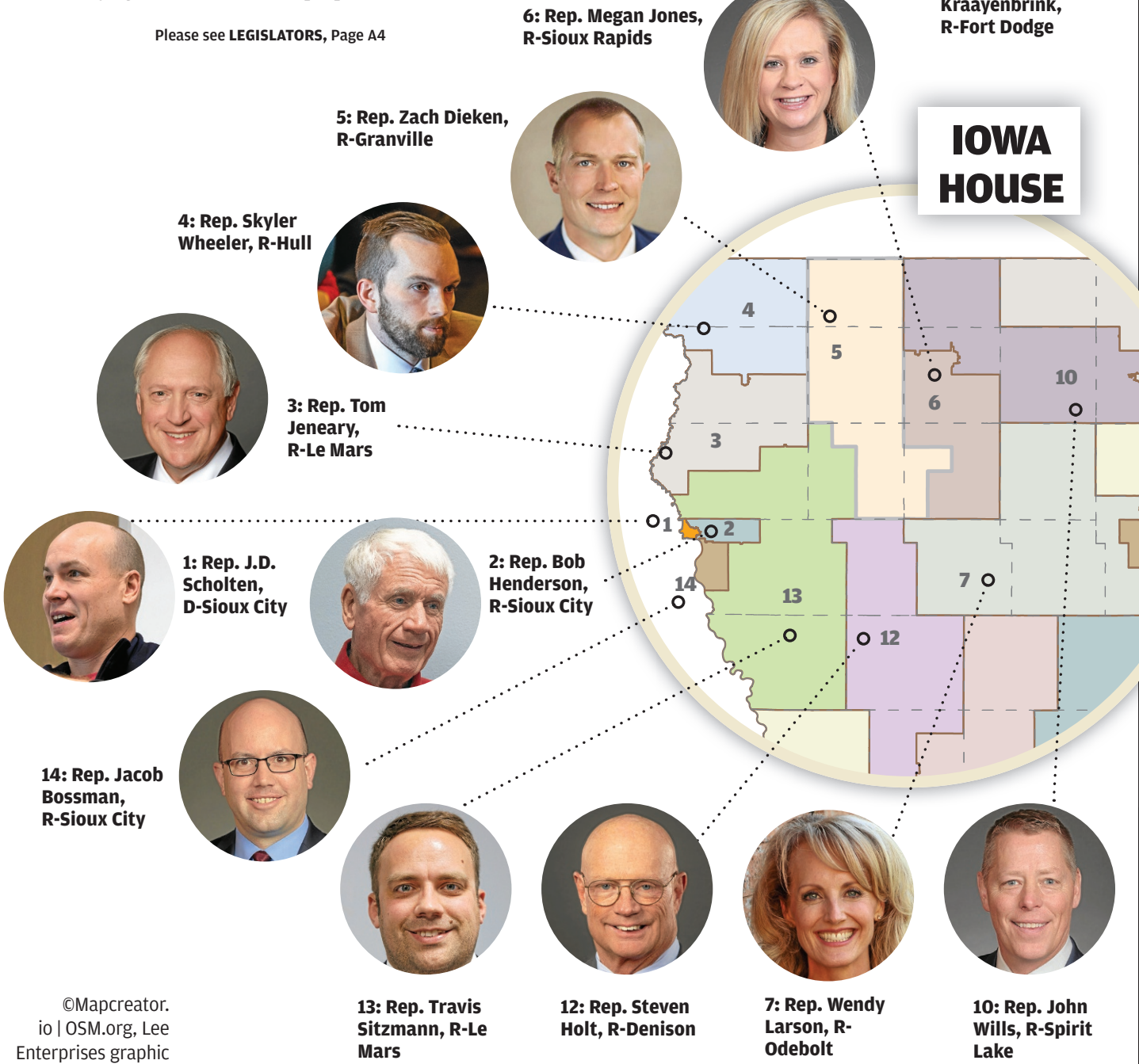
Northwest Iowa legislators say property tax reform, eminent domain, public school funding and crime are some of their top policy concerns for the 2026 session which kicks off Monday in Des Moines.

Property tax reform and the use of eminent domain for carbon-capture pipelines were both major focuses in 2025 as well but neither became law. The former stalled out well before it ever reached Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds' desk and a bill focused on the latter was vetoed by the Republican governor, who opted not to run for reelection this year.

Legislators are cognizant of the fact that overhauling property taxes will require a balancing act between the needs of citizens and the needs of local governments, which rely on property taxes to fund public services and programs. House Speaker Pat Grassley, R-New Hartford, has said previously he wants to see a "very bold" plan. One idea Reynolds has pitched is a property tax freeze for seniors. House Democrats have pitched a freeze for seniors as well, in addition to a 4% property tax cap and rebates for homeowners and renters.

And though legislators from certain parts of the state have been quieter about the issue of using eminent domain for a carbon-capture pipeline the Northwest Iowa delegation, which includes Republicans and Democrats, is staunchly against the idea. The proposed

Please see **LEGISLATORS**, Page A4



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## Education funding waiver approved

Iowa first state to get go-ahead for greater say over federal funds

MAYA MARCHEL HOFF  
Lee-Gazette Des Moines Bureau

DENISON, Iowa — Iowa is the first state in the country to receive the green light for a federal waiver approval that will allow the state to circumvent some reporting and compliance requirements and have more discretion over the spending of federal education funds.

This comes months after Iowa Gov. Kim Reynolds submitted a proposal to the U.S. Department of Education in March — one opposed by multiple education groups — seeking approval for Iowa's "Unified Allocation Plan," which she says puts student achievement over federal compliance.

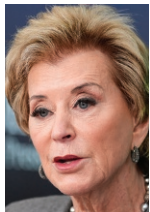
Under the plan, Iowa will receive federal education funding through block grants or fixed amounts of money from the federal government that can be used for a broad range of purposes, rather than through numerous department grants.

The approval was announced during a press conference after Reynolds and U.S. Education Secretary Linda McMahon toured Broadway Elementary

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Reynolds



McMahon

## IOWA COURT OF APPEALS Sioux City man's murder conviction upheld

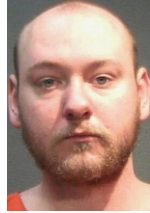
NICK HYTREK  
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DES MOINES — The Iowa Court of Appeals Wednesday upheld the 2024 murder conviction of a Sioux City man found guilty of shooting his girlfriend.

Austyn Self had argued on appeal there was insufficient evidence he acted with malice, that there was prosecutor misconduct and new evidence discovered after the verdict required a new trial.

The three-judge panel affirmed the conviction without hearing oral arguments.

"Because the state presented strong evidence to support the mental elements of first-degree murder, we affirm the district court's finding of guilt.



Self

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### The Mini

The Córdoba fiasco is why working people are fed up. Us taxpayers pay him \$200K+ not to work. We hire an outside attorney to look into it. No one says how much that cost, and in the end an agreement is signed where everyone denies wrongdoing. - GREG NOONEY, SIOUX CITY

### Weather

Cooler; p.m. rain, breezy  
**High 41 • Low 24**  
Forecast • A12

### Inside

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