

**COMMITTEE MINUTES for
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE**

Date: ***January 29, 2024***

Location: ***RM 315***

Convened: ***11:00 AM***

Adjourned: ***12:25 PM***

Attendance Roll Call:

Present: Senators Lofgren-CH, Dickey-VC, Dotzler-RM, Gruenhagen,
Quirmbach

Absent:

Excused:

Chair Senator Lofgren called the meeting to order at 11:01. The clerk took the roll silently. The minutes from the last meeting were approved as distributed. Senator Lofgren welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that the presenters for today's meeting also introduce colleagues they've brought with them when they present. He then introduced the first presenter, Director Beth Townsend, from Iowa Workforce Development. She introduced her staff members that were present. Due to a problem with the slide presentation, Director Townsend directed the committee to the handouts in order to follow along. Director Townsend shared accomplishments, goals, recent data and highlighted the benefits they've seen with having all four Title Programs under one agency. They now have the ability to provide services to Iowans faster, better and more efficiently and they are able to leverage the programs much better to meet the needs of our Iowa workforce. She expressed her eagerness for the new mobile unit that is coming soon and how it will allow them to take services wherever they are needed. She also spoke about the new Veteran's portal and how that has placed all veteran's programming under one roof. She highlighted that the virtual capabilities they now have today allows them to reach more broadly across the state. Senators Quirmbach, Dickey, Dotzler and Lofgren all asked questions and contributed comments. Senator Lofgren introduced Ambassador and Former Governor Branstad who spoke about the programming at The World Food Prize. A very light, conversational presentation ensued. Each Senator contributed to the conversation. Senator Lofgren then introduced Rick Hunsaker and Mike Norris with the Iowa Association of Councils of Governments. Rick gave an overview of their 2024 legislative priorities. He highlighted COG Assistance and the opportunity it provides them to match grants because these funds are unencumbered. He also highlighted the need to continue with housing initiatives. Lastly, Mike Norris presented on COGs projects around the state, highlighting the new colored map they have designed to give a picture of the projects COGs has helped with. He also gave an update on the Homes for Iowa program. With no other business to come before the committee, Senator Dickey moved to adjourn at 12:26.

Senator Mark S. Lofgren

Paula Lofgren, Committee Secretary

