

# Iowa Public Television



Visit us on the Web at [Iptv.org](http://Iptv.org)

**More than 1.4 Million**

Number of people using Iowa Public Television's broadcast services each week.

**More than 1.3 Million**

Number of visitors to Iowa Public Television's Web sites in the last year.

**More than 340,000**

Cumulative number of Iowa children ages 2 – 11 watching Iowa Public Television's programming every week.

**More than 40,000**

Number of participants who took interactive field trips via the ICN last year thanks to IPTV's K-12 Connections Program.

**More than 65,000**

Number of individuals and families who support IPTV through their membership in Friends of Iowa Public Television.

**Nearly 600**

Number of hours of locally produced programs broadcast on Iowa Public Television last year.

**99**

Number of counties in Iowa the network serves.

**One**

Number of media organizations in Iowa that can claim numbers like these – only IPTV can.

**Our mission:  
to educate, inform, enrich, and inspire Iowans**

Be more  **Iptv**

**Education Appropriations Subcommittee**  
**Iowa Public Television**  
**February 19, 2009**

*1. How will you implement the Governor's proposed FY 2010 reduction to your programs? Will you decrease particular services, offer fewer programs, reduce staff time on a particular programs, furlough or layoff staff, or take some other measures in response to the reduction?*

FY 2009 1.5% across the board budget cut	\$136,277
FY 2009 Governor's selective cuts	\$210,477
FY 2010 6.5% across the board budget cut	\$567,995

**Total reduction:** \$914,749

Iowa Public Television is considering the following measures to meet the reductions:

**Action:** Cancellation of overnight broadcast service, signing off the air around midnight and back on around 6 a.m.

**Implication:** Teachers, AEAs, librarians, and media specialists won't have the overnight block feed of programs used by the teachers in the state in a place where educators have come to expect them. Some programs will be broadcast on IPTV's digital channels, but this makes the programs less accessible to schools. The programs on IPTV's secondary digital channels will be more difficult for schools to receive: they won't be on basic cable, for example, they'll likely be on a digital basic cable package, which will make it costly and confusing. More about how the network plans to mitigate the damage in #3 below.

**Action:** Reduction of local program budgets by 10% for the current season and next season.

**Implication:** The reduction will mean production of fewer local programs, broadcast of more repeats, fewer programs about Iowa and fewer programs from around Iowa (no broadcast of the April concert at the Sioux City Symphony, for example) and fewer episodes of *Iowa Press* and *The Iowa Journal*. (These two regular programs will not be produced or broadcast all summer.)

In addition, the reduction means more programs will be driven by the money the network is able to raise, rather than the merits of the programs themselves. That's a slippery slope.

**Action:** Cancellation of PBS World service, the new digital current affairs channel that started broadcasting February 1<sup>st</sup> on IPTV's .3 service.

**Implication:** The service won't be available to Iowans, many of whom turn to this service during weekdays when IPTV's primary service is broadcasting children's programming.

**Action:** Reduction in production and engineering overtime.

**Implication:** Transmitters with outages may not be repaired – and service to the area not restored – until later to avoid overtime. Production values of local programs may be lower than usual to save overtime editing and production costs. There will be fewer stories with footage and interviews from around the state, and more stories with guests in IPTV's studios. Before long, viewers will start noticing these things.

**Action:** Possible reduction in staff by 3-4 through resignation, retirement, transfer, or layoff.

**Implication:** Remaining staff will be asked to do more with less, just as others throughout government and indeed the economy are doing. Program and service quality suffers with morale.

**Action:** Possible institution of a 3-day network-wide furlough.

**Implication:** Fewer staff available to conduct the same amount of work during furlough periods.

**Action:** Cancellation of nationally-recognized DTV Symposium after 14 consecutive years.

**Implication:** Reduced training opportunities for staff to deliver good services efficiently in the digital world.

**Other Actions:** Reduction in non-critical out-of-state travel; utility savings when fully digital; scaling back outreach efforts (i.e. no longer distributing books to families at the Iowa State Fair); considering changes to *Advance* program guide.

**Implications:** Every one of these weakens the service, raising the very real possibility that the network will raise less money from members and corporate donors, which, in turn, will shrink the amount of federal money the network gets from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. (CPB determines the amount of money given to the network based on the amount of money raised from other sources.)

*2. What three programs, services, or functions would you want to spare from reduction, in part or total, if possible?*

Four, not necessarily in order:

A. **Children's programming.** It is the cornerstone of the network's early childhood education efforts, and directly supports the Department of Education's top priority that all children will arrive at school ready to learn. Each week IPTV's children's programming helps 340,000 children do just that.

B. **Local programming.** Iowa Public Television is the only place producing local programs that link the state, the only remaining locally responsive and locally controlled media organization covering the entire state. That's why Iowa Public Television is IOWA'S NETWORK.

C. **Prime-time programming.** Prime time is the home of the highest-quality current affairs programs. According to a just-released Roper Public Affairs and Media poll, PBS remains the network with the most trusted news and public affairs programs, and PBS is ranked first in overall public trust. Prime time is also where Iowans come from all walks to learn about the world (on *NOVA*, for example, widely used by teachers in the classrooms); it's where they come to experience the arts and create communities with programs very important to the entire state, especially the state's elderly.

D. **Statewide service.** The network cannot afford to cut a transmitter. Iowa Public Television needs to remain statewide in fact, not just in name.

*3. What three to five programs, services, or functions could be reduced or eliminated with the least impact to recipients of your services and IPTV in general?*

A. **Overnight block feeds of educational programs.** Some of the damage caused by the loss of the overnight services may be mitigated by moving these programs to the .3 service, where IPTV World currently resides. Of course, this would put these programs on a digital tier on local cable systems and schools may have to pay to receive that tier. The network will be working with cable companies to offer this channel "in the clear," which means without having to pay, but there are no guarantees. Nearly 70% of Iowa's teachers use IPTV resources (according to a 2007 survey), so this is an important change to get right.

B. **PBS World.** Because it's a new service offered to viewers.

C. **One-time-only collegiate and high school sporting events.** A caution about cutting these events, particularly at the high school level: this coverage plays an important role in the social fabric of some of the small towns showcased, as evidenced by the 300+ calls and letters the network received when the time of the telecast of the Iowa High School Volleyball Championships was moved. This sports coverage is also important for the network's ability to raise private dollars. Some companies only want to fund sports coverage, for example.

*4. How will the economic downturn affect your services and the cost to provide those services? What are the key factors? What are the trends?*

The economic downturn is affecting the Iowa Public Television Foundation's fundraising efforts. The Foundation is projecting that the contributions to the Network will be down 7.4% for the fiscal year. This reduction will put further pressure on IPTV and will result in a further decrease services to align expenditures with revenues.