

Show Me the Money!

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County Response to System Improvements

Each of these state agency proposals address concerns about the adequacy of our public health and mental health systems to meet the needs of Iowans. Just like state officials, local officials are concerned about the capacity of our systems. Local officials have been finding local solutions for many of these problems as they have occurred.

In many ways, the proposals are laudable. Policy makers at all levels of government want better, more consistent services across the state. County officials, however, must be vigilant in how these proposals move forward. Our public health and mental health systems are underfunded. Counties are struggling to maintain the current services that they provide. Additional requirements must be accompanied by the funding necessary to support them, not only for the first year of implementation, but over the long haul. Workforce standards must be reasonable for every area of the state to meet and accommodations will have to be made in some instances.

Alumni Corner

Hi all elected officials and Alumni of ISAC

The alumni members are looking forward to seeing you at our booth at the ISAC Fall School of Instruction November 28 – 30. We would like to visit with you about our organization; so please stop by and see us!

We are so fortunate to have Jerri Noboa assist us with our luncheon reservations and schedule of the hotels for any room reservations. If you are still in need, please call her at 515.244.7181. Our alumni committee is planning to have a special guest speaker for our noon luncheon. Details will be available after our September committee meeting.

Our purpose and goals are to assist county governments, if and when needed, to contact our legislators by writing letters and phone calls within our own districts. Because of your past educational and professional experiences and knowledge, our alumni association can be most helpful. As alumni we wish to continue to share worthwhile fellowships by providing constructive discussions with each other, by serving on panels, and of course, by working with the basic principles of the ISAC board of directors and ISAC staff.

Also, another important item: we provide a scholarship for a student (has to be a family member of an elected official who is a member of ISAC). This student is selected by a special ISAC Scholarship Board.

We are looking forward to our November conference meeting and we are especially looking forward to adding YOUR name to our alumni association. Join us at our alumni booth and SIGN UP! See you in Des Moines November 28 and 29.

Jack Foresman

ISAC Alumni Member, Past Cherokee County Supervisor

Paying for Secondary Road Funds

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deficiency. A county won't lose its entire share of RUTF revenue by coming up short of the local effort requirement; it will only lose the amount of revenue by which it was short of the 75% minimum.

Let's look a little closer at how the minimum local effort requirement is calculated. §331.429 allows transfers to the secondary roads fund from both the general fund and the rural fund, and imposes separate transfer limits on each fund. But for the purposes of calculating local effort, counties must transfer or otherwise provide 75% of the *combined* limits. Counties do not have to transfer or otherwise provide 75% of the general fund transfer limit and 75% of the rural fund transfer limit. They simply have to transfer or otherwise provide at least 75% of the sum of the two limits. Let's say County X's rural fund transfer limit is \$300,000 and its general fund transfer limit is \$50,000. The county must transfer or otherwise provide secondary road funding equal to at least 75% of \$350,000, which works out to \$262,500. It can do that through any combination of transfers from or direct spending in the rural fund and general fund. Statewide, most secondary roads funding comes from the rural fund. In fact, many counties can meet that 75% local effort minimum solely by transferring or otherwise providing the maximum from the rural fund, if they so choose. Those counties would not have to transfer or otherwise provide any revenue from the general fund for secondary roads, and they would still get their full RUTF allocation.

You've noticed, I'm sure, that annoying little phrase that keeps appearing after the word "transfer" above – "or otherwise provide." That's an important phrase, because it means that any county spending on secondary roads – not just transfers to the secondary roads fund – counts against the local effort requirement. For example, if a county spends money directly from either the general or rural fund, that goes toward meeting the minimum local effort requirement. If County X spent \$50,000 directly from the rural fund on secondary roads, and then transferred \$212,500 from the rural fund to the secondary roads fund, it has met its 75% local effort requirement of \$262,500.

County supervisors and engineers should know that they have a certain degree of flexibility in terms of funding secondary roads projects. It's important to know your county's transfer limits under §331.429, because then you can plan accordingly to be sure to meet or exceed the 75% local effort requirement. But it's also important to know that your county's transfer limits are not the final word on how much your county can spend on secondary roads. Iowa law clearly allows counties to spend money for secondary roads projects directly from either the general or rural fund, and that spending will count toward the local effort requirement.