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**Iowa State Association of Counties Members Invite Press to Discuss Funding of Mental Health Services**

***The interviewees featured in ISAC’s #MentalHealthMattersIA powerful video campaign will be available for interviews on Wednesday, March 13 from 9:00 am – 11:00 am in the Capitol Rotunda***



**Des Moines, IA (March 8, 2019) –** From 9:00 am – 11:00 am on Wednesday, March 13, the Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) will be making those featured in its #MentalHealthMattersIA video campaign available for interviews by the press to discuss why long-term, sustainable funding is needed now more than ever for the mental health and disability services (MH/DS) system in Iowa. Excerpts of the videos will be made available for news use by request and the full videos may be shared on social media - with proper credits. ISAC will assist media providers in telling the story of why and how mental health funding needs to be addressed by setting up interviews with its featured members, policy staff and mental health service providers.

The following individuals will be available for interviews in the Capitol Rotunda. Please contact Rachel Bennett if you plan to attend and would like to conduct an interview.

Jamie Cashman, ISAC Government Relations Manager

Mary Neubauer, Advocate (10:30 am)

Rick Sanders, Story County Supervisor

Jason Sandholdt, Marion County Sheriff

Dawn Smith, Cedar County Supervisor

Suzanne Watson, Southwest Iowa MH/DS Region CEO

Interviews are being made available in conjunction with the 11th annual ISAC County Day at the Capitol during which hundreds of county officials from various county offices will attend and offer displays that exhibit to legislators and the public the important services that counties provide. ISAC members will also be encouraged to meet with their individual legislators to advocate for issues of importance to county governments.

Among other issues, ISAC is calling for the elimination of the regional mental health levy caps so counties can meet the regional budgetary needs and the elimination of the carry forward balance restrictions so counties have the resources to fund newly required and existing programs without significant changes in property taxes.

Financial constraints that have been placed on the counties must be released so that they are able to develop and expand mental health services for children and to provide services for individuals with complex mental health needs as called for in last year’s HF 2456. These constraints will continue to cause instability in both funding and service delivery, as well as dramatic swings in the property tax asking of property owners.

ISAC has committed itself to telling the story of mental health and disability services in Iowa and has created a number of powerful videos in its [“#MentalHealthMattersIA”](https://www.iowacounties.org/2019/01/mentalhealthmattersia/) campaign advocating for immediate changes to address the regional mental health and disability services (MH/DS) system in Iowa during the 2019 legislative session.

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The Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC) is a private, nonprofit corporation. ISAC members are elected and appointed county officials from all 99 counties. ISAC’s mission is to promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa. ISAC’s vision is to be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.