



Jay Hansen  
Chair  
Des Moines

Chris Atchison  
Vice-Chair  
Iowa City

Laura Beeck  
Denison

Patti Brown  
Wauke

Karie Foster  
Pella

Jason Harrington  
Spirit Lake

Leone Junck  
Ogden

George Kovach, MD  
Le Claire

Vickie Lewis  
Marshalltown

Kierstyn Mickelson  
Ankeny

Michael Wolnerman  
RPh, CCIM  
Des Moines

September 25, 2019

To: The Honorable Kim Reynolds, Governor of Iowa  
Iowa Senate President Charles Schneider  
Iowa House Speaker Linda Upmeyer  
Iowa Senate Minority Leader Janet Petersen  
Iowa House Minority Leader Todd Prichard  
Honorable members of the Iowa General Assembly's Health and Human Services Appropriation Subcommittee.

Cc: Members, Iowa State Board of Health

From: Jay Hansen, Chair - Iowa State Board of Health

RE: Resolution by the Iowa Board of Health, Relating to the Natural Resources Trust Fund

I am pleased to transmit to you this resolution adopted by the Iowa Board of Health on Sept. 11, 2019, in support of raising the state sales tax to support the Natural Resource Trust Fund. The resolution is as follows:

**RESOLUTION BY THE IOWA BOARD OF HEALTH RELATING TO THE NATURAL  
RESOURCES TRUST FUND**

WHEREAS, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' "Outdoor Recreation Plan in Iowa, 2018-2023", acknowledges the broad benefits of Iowa's publicly-supported park and recreational areas and their contribution to communities by supporting the preservation of the natural environment, providing opportunities for Iowans to benefit from the physical benefits of park space, supporting the emotional benefits of spending time outdoors, and providing economic benefits to communities by providing outdoor recreational opportunities which provide jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control says "childhood and adolescence are critical periods for developing movement skills, learning healthy habits, and establishing a firm foundation for lifelong health and well-being. Regular physical activity in children and adolescents promotes health and fitness...Physical activity also has brain health benefits for school-aged children, including improved cognition and reduced symptoms of depression. Evidence indicates that both acute bouts and regular moderate-to-vigorous physical activity improve the cognitive functions of memory, executive function, processing speed, attention, and academic performance for these children;" and

WHEREAS, a 2018 study published in the journal Environmental Research indicated that persons exposed to the natural environment were more likely to have lower diastolic blood pressure, reduced risk of type II diabetes, and have lower cardiovascular mortality; and

WHEREAS, Iowa has the fourth highest adult obesity rate in the nation, and the 10th highest obesity rate for youth ages 10 to 17. Iowa's adult obesity rate is currently 36.4%, up from 20.9% in 2000 and from 12.2% in 1990; and

WHEREAS, according to a 2017 article published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), a recent review of more than 1000 studies concluded that sufficient evidence existed to link weight gain, overweight, and obesity with 13 cancers, including adenocarcinoma of the esophagus, cancers of the gastric cardia, and colon and rectum; and

WHEREAS, according to a March 2005 article published in Current Opinion in Psychiatry, a growing literature suggests that physical activity has beneficial effects for not only physical but mental health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, a healthy environment not only provides opportunities for physical activity, but directly supports the health of Iowans through benefits which accrue from the positive impact of wise land management on water quality in Iowa; and

WHEREAS, the state of Nebraska reported that for every dollar invested into trail infrastructure in that state, a return of \$3 was identified in direct health cost savings; and

WHEREAS, in November 2010, the people of Iowa chose to amend Iowa's Constitution and create the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund and a dedicated funding source. This passage activated 2010 Iowa Acts, Senate File 2310 (SF2310) into law on January 1, 2011, which provides the framework for the distribution, use, and accountability of the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Upon enactment, SF2310 was codified at Iowa Code Chapter 461; and

WHEREAS, the trust fund will serve as a central depository for the revenue and will distribute the funds to the seven funding vehicles. As defined by Iowa Code Chapter 461, when funds are credited to the account, the distribution percentages are designated as:

- 7% Lake Restoration
- 10% Trails
- 13% REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection program)
- 13% Local Conservation Partnership program
- 14% Watershed Protection
- 20% Soil Conservation and Water Protection (IDALS)
- 23% Natural Resources (DNR); and

WHEREAS, the three-eighth cent allocated to the trust for recreational purposes could be matched by five-eighth cent to be invested in other critical health investments, like the newly established children's behavioral health system, as approved in 2019 Iowa Acts, House File 690; and

WHEREAS, while it is widely held that sales tax has a negative effect on lower-income Iowans, requiring them to pay a greater share of their income to these taxes than others, we encourage policymakers to find ways to mitigate the effect of the tax on these Iowans;

THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE IOWA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH, that it supports efforts by the Iowa legislature to approve a three-eighth cent increase in sales tax to fund Iowa's Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.

THE IOWA STATE BOARD OF HEALTH MET IN REGULAR SESSION ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2019, and voted to support this resolution and direct it to be shared with Iowa legislators and Governor Kim Reynolds.