**IOWA LEGISLATURE TAKES A STAND**

How the Parkland shooting affects Iowa laws

**March for Our Lives**

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After a school shooter left 17 students dead in Parkland, Florida, survivors of the incident have made what they want clear: legislative action.

The pro-gun restriction voices — many being Generation Z-ers getting their first taste of political activism — had their victories.

In Florida, legislators have proposed the age to purchase a gun be raised and a three-day waiting period for most purchases of long guns, according to the Washington Post.

This action still falls short of the ban on assault weapons that those activists are pushing for.

Though states like Florida are moving toward gun restrictions, other states around the country, including Iowa, have taken to loosening gun laws.

The day after the Feb. 14 Florida shooting, an amendment to the Iowa constitution, SJR 209, that would further prioritize the right to bear arms was introduced to the House.

“The sovereign state of Iowa affirms and recognizes this right to be a fundamental individual right,” the legislation states. “Any and all restrictions of this right shall be subject to strict scrutiny.”

The bill passed both the Iowa House and Senate — passing in the Senate Wednesday, 34-15, and in the House Monday, 54-42.

“This bill would make it, I think, significantly more difficult to implement any kind of sensible regulation,” Quirmbach said. “In other words, we’re going the wrong direction.”

Since the bill would be an amendment to the Iowa Constitution, it requires the joint resolution to pass through both the House and Senate this legislative cycle and next as well as be voted on by Iowa residents.

Quirmbach is in support of access to legitimate hunting weapons and permits for people with a need for self defense.

“I don’t see any need for high capacity assault weapons,” Quirmbach said. “An assault weapon, however you want to define it, is not a defensive weapon; it’s an offensive weapon.

“I don’t see any particular need for high capacity magazines of the kind that were used in the Florida shooting and I think that there are some significant loopholes in the background check process.”

Quirmbach is in the middle of working on a bill to address the background check process.

Since he needs time to work through some technical issues, including making sure state violations are posted to the federal database properly, this bill won’t see the floor until the next legislative session.

Another aspect of gun violence issues in the U.S. that Quirmbach thinks are mental health services.

“Kids who are having mental problems, whether they are going to take it out on themselves or take it out on their classmates, we need to recognize that and intervene before violence occurs,” Quirmbach said. “There is no one magic solution here. I think we need a multi-pronged approach. Part of it is background checks, part of it is mental health and part of it is there are just some weapons for which there is no legitimate use.”

The statement that there is more to solving gun violence than taking away the Second Amendment is something Sen. Joni Ernst can agree with.

In an emailed statement, Ernst said, “There isn’t one answer to solving this issue, and it’s critical that we continue to engage in these discussions at all levels of government.

“Everyone must commit to working together to find common sense solutions to these acts of violence that incorporate robust enforcement of our current gun laws, keeping our children safe, expansion of mental health provider access, ensuring law enforcement and mental health providers are equipped with the necessary training and resources, and tangible efforts to build stronger communities.”

Ernst supported the 21st Century Cures Act, which addresses mental health and promotes safer communities.

Ernst also introduced the Students, Teachers, and Officers Preventing (STOP) School Violence Act of 2018 which would provide better security for schools and “invests in early intervention and prevention programs to stop school violence before it happens.”

After a New York Times opinion article listed the top politicians benefitted from NRA funding, Joni Ernst’s place at number seven on that list has caused controversy for the U.S. senator from Iowa.

According to the article, Ernst has received over $3.3 million in funding.

In an emailed statement, Laura Paaver, Ernst’s deputy press secretary, said that this number is false and Ernst has been a supporter of the Second Amendment and a gun owner “long before the N.R.A ever knew who she was as a citizen in Iowa.”

“The reality is, many groups and organizations run commercials independently, without permissio, or consent of candidates or elected officials, which makes up much of the money these misleading stories point to,” Paaver wrote.

The NRA gave Ernst an “A” rating.

**GUNS p8**
One month later, Parkland shooting still a driving force
Iowa State President Wendy Wintersteen sent out an email to the Iowa State community Thursday discussing midyear budget cuts that were approved by Iowa Legislature.

The bill that the Iowa Legislature approved will result in a total of $10.9 million in cuts from the Board of Regents for the current FY2018. The bill outlines that only Iowa State and the University of Iowa will be affected by the cuts.

Wintersteen addressed what the universities current action is to these cuts in her email.

"I am working with the Senior Vice Presidents to develop a plan to implement the midyear budget reduction while mitigating the impact on our teaching, research, and extension excellence, and critical student services," Wintersteen said. "We also will engage university leaders across campus to provide input on this plan."

Wintersteen also referenced the fact that the FY2019 budget appropriations for the Board of Regents are still unknown, and that the Board has said that it is thinking about a tuition rate increase. That is expected to be discussed at the April 11-12 Board of Regents meeting.

In the email, Wintersteen went on to thank those who have voiced strong opposition to the midyear cuts. She also pointed out the large population of Iowans that make up Iowa State's enrollment.

"Our supporters know these students are the future of this state and are well worth the state's investment in their growth, education, and development," Wintersteen said.

Over the past four years, Iowa State has reduced or avoided costs totalling $22 million, Wintersteen said.

"The state's move to take back promised funds for the second year in a row makes this an especially difficult situation, but Iowa State University is strong and resilient. We will face these challenges together to seek the best possible outcome for our students, faculty, and staff," Wintersteen said.

BY TRISTAN.WADE @iowastatedaily.com

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BY ALEX.CONNOR @iowastatedaily.com

Iowa State Athletic Director Jamie Pollard announced to Student Government Wednesday evening that the athletics department will be donating $1 million to the Financial Aid Office to go toward degree completion grants.

The contribution to the grants, which go toward students having financial difficulty completing their degrees, was first announced at Faculty Senate on Tuesday.

Pollard said that he was first approached by Student Government President Cody West last spring with West looking for opportunities for athletics to better help students.

While ideas such as discounted concessions were floated around, Pollard said he wanted to think just a bit bigger. After talking with Financial Aid Director Roberta Johnson, Pollard said her office could benefit from having more funding to help students stay in school.

“There’s a lot of hardship,” Pollard said. “There’s hardship where a student… is in a tough spot and can’t pay for school.”

Providing a brief summary of the athletics department budget, Pollard said that the announcement will be officially announced Thursday, but he wanted to let Student Government know beforehand.

Following his announcement, Student Government applauded the donation and some senators thanked Pollard for his department’s donation.

Pollard joked that he hoped the majority of the clapping was for West, as he had originally approached Pollard with an idea to benefit students.

“I’ll buy him a soda or a hot dog when he comes back for football next year,” Pollard said.

West also shared the news in his executive update Wednesday evening.

“One million dollars for the students of Iowa State University,” West said in his email report. “It is days like today that make our time in Student Government worth it.”
Young people can cause change with effort

In the wake of the tragic shooting in Parkland, Florida, conversation is happening. More importantly, calls for change are happening.

We wouldn’t have asked the high school students, survivors of the shooting, to do anything after the horrible experience they’d been through. But they decided to do something anyway. And by doing so, they are inspiring a movement.

New York Times up-ed contributor Tim Kreider said it best. “As with all historic tipping points, it seems inevitable in retrospect: Of course it was the young people, the actual victims of the slaughter, who have finally begun to turn the tide against guns in this country.” Kreider wrote. “Kids don’t have money and can’t vote, and until now burying a few dozen a year has apparently been a price that lots of Americans were willing to pay to hold onto the props of their pathetic role-playing fantasies. But they forgot what adults always forget: that our children grow up, and remember everything, and forgive nothing.”

Young people have the power to make change. And as much as we may want to use millennials as the scapegoat for all of our problems, this upcoming generation has the potential to change the world just as the generations before it did. Of course, that change may come in a different form, but it is still progress nonetheless.

Millennials are consistently stereotyped as lazy. But that’s missing the point. This generation has different values and a different way of life, but it is certainly not lazy. The way millennials are civically engaged is vastly different.

Millennial and Generation X voter turnout increased in 2016...and among millennials, black turnout decreased.

Being civically engaged requires exposing ourselves to new ideas and actively participating in our communities. We can do better than posting our opinions on social media, but not actually talking to lawmakers or participating in community conversations.

And we can do better than voting in presidential elections, but not caring about local elections that make more of a difference in our daily lives.

Young people can change the world, but not without effort and not without civic engagement. Let the Parkland teens be an inspiration to us to strive for change and progress at all levels of government.

Trump, and many Republican gun owners, think it would be wise if we armed teachers. After all, if teachers had guns then mass shooters would be too afraid to enter! Well, as the headline dictates, I disagree with this idea.

Let’s not tackle the budgetary limitations just yet. Let’s put ourselves in a scenario where this country cared about education and education was funded so well that arming teachers with military grade rifles wasn’t out of the question. Does no one remember that Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School already had an armed guard. Do you know what he did when Nikolas Cruz entered the school and opened fire? He did nothing. He was trained for this scenario, and he did nothing. Are you expecting an elderly tenured high school chemistry teacher to be braver in that situation?

Now let’s get rid of the dream scenario of an infinite budget. As I said in my previous article, Trump proposed a $9.2 billion cut to education for the 2018 fiscal year. In some states teachers are so poorly paid they had to go on strike to get a decent wage.

These are teachers who are supposed to be fostering your child’s future in a meaningful way and preparing them for the world at large. Not only are they educating them on academic principles, but also providing a listening ear when a child is going through life’s hurdles.

They’re so much more than just teachers, they’re mentors. They’re supposed to be there for your child, and we’re already underpaying them.

Now, on top of underpaying them for the incredibly important task they’re already fulfilling, you want to put a gun in their hand.

You refused to provide a budget to their school districts where they could adequately provide for their students without reaching into their own pockets or begging students’ parents to provide resources, but you found it important enough to find room in the budget to train them to be killers.

I understand that if you’re of the mind that we should arm teachers that you’re probably scared. Maybe you’re just fed up. But you need to take a breath and ground yourself.

Arming and training teachers isn’t a possibility. It never was, and it never can be. There needs to be change, but it won’t be found in this course of action.

The change is more money into mental health research and preventative measures, more regulation on how accessible military grade assault rifles are to civilians and much, much more money into education.
Sophomore Austin Fleener practices one of the hardest positions as the clay is coming toward you during practice.

“Safety is our No. 1 priority,” Dick said. “If we have a new group of people who have never shot before, we’ll have a big safety meeting with everyone.”

The safety meeting is mandatory and supervised by the club’s advisors. The meeting consists of a demo on how the gun shoots, and how to properly handle the gun.

Dick is a sophomore studying agricultural business and as the president of the club, it is his job to ensure a safe environment for all the members of the club.

The safety precautions don’t stop there. To even be able to join the club, the club requires you to have either completed the Hunter’s Education Safety Course, or have participated in the DNR Firearms Safety Presentation.

After the group safety meeting, newcomers will then begin practicing their shot. But they do not do this alone.

“An experienced member of the club who is used to shooting will shadow a new member and watch how they’re shooting until they’re comfortable,” Dick said, explaining the process. One of these experienced members of the club is vice president Dakota Boyer, junior in business management. Boyer participated in his high school’s trap and skeet team prior to coming to Iowa State.

“I got my hunter safety license when I was 12,” Boyer said. “I got it young so I was able to go hunting.”

So it’s needless to say that the club has a group of leaders who are very experienced with guns and have been around them for a long time.

Being part of a club that’s centered around guns can be difficult, especially when living on a college campus. With Iowa State’s rules about not having firearms on campus, members have to find places to keep their guns.

“Students that have their own guns, it is up to them to keep them off campus,” Dick said. “Usually, it’s a friend’s apartment or a house someone lives in right here in Ames.”

The gun that the team uses in competition is a 12-gauge shotgun. The team never uses their guns outside of a competition.

Most of the team has their guns custom fit for trap and skeet only, so they don’t have much use in any other environment.

Tanner Owens, who is a sophomore in forestry, also started hunting at a young age and was part of his high school’s trap team for all four years.

Owens feels there is a different perception for people when it comes to hunting than there is too competitive shooting.

“I think people like the perspective of sports shooting better than using guns to kill animals because it’s a more competitive sport and they see it in the Olympics,” Owens said.

As the debate about guns continues every single day, the trap and skeet club becomes an even brighter light on a rather dark subject, becoming a place where kids can learn to shoot and use guns in a safe way.

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In times like these, Dick and the rest of the club believe that this is when the club should be talked about and utilized more often. Now is when the club becomes even more important.

“I think competition is good for guns. It is a reason why we shouldn’t get rid of guns,” Dick said. “It’s teaching a safe way of how to use the guns and there is a club for young kids if they want to shoot guns.”

“There is a safe way to do it.”
The Ames community will be joining together on the field of Jack Trice Stadium on March 24 to sleep under the stars for one night during the annual Reggie’s Sleepout.

Reggie’s Sleepout is hosted by Youth and Shelter Services (YSS), Assault Care Center Extending Shelter and Support (ACCESS) and Emergency Residence Project (ERP) with the intent to raise money and awareness about youth homelessness in central Iowa and across the country.

The event is designed to help those participating understand what it is like to sleep outside, even if just for a single night. The sleepout is free to attend, but donations and fundraising are encouraged. Throughout the event, there will be entertainment, including a comedians and bands, food, and educational opportunities for the participants.

Reggie’s Sleepout was started 12 years ago in honor of a young man named Reggie Kelsey who, in 2001, aged out of foster care when he turned 18. Three and a half months later, Reggie was found dead in the Des Moines River.

As a result, YSS developed Reggie’s Sleepout to bring a wider awareness to the issue in Des Moines and other cities.

Advocacy efforts initially started with an event called “Celebration of Hope.” This event involved auctioning off pottery that was painted by celebrities, such as John Travolta, Whoopi Goldberg and Bill Cosby. The first year brought in over $6,000.

The following year, the event was not as successful, which sent the YSS team back to the drawing board, resulting in the creation of Reggie’s Sleepout. Those on the board found the sleepout was a good way to give the community a small sense of what these youths and others who face homelessness go through.

“I went to a lot of fundraisers and very few, if any, were in close alignment with the cause as Reggie’s Sleepout,” said Andrew Allen, CEO of YSS.

The sleepout this year is only the second in Ames and will mark the 13th year that the has been held in Des Moines. Between the two, Reggie’s Sleepout has raised nearly $2 million for homeless youth since it began.

This year, McFarland Clinic, Wells Fargo, Todd and Sargent, Iowa State and three of the “First Ladies of Iowa State Athletics” — Katie Prohm, Erica Campbell and Deb Fennelly — are all actively donating, participating and fundraising to help the cause. All proceeds raised are shared equally between YSS, ACCESS and ERP.

YSS is an Iowa organization which has positively impacted youth and families for more than 40 years. The organization provides a variety of programs through their locations throughout central and north Iowa to allow the youth and families to build a brighter future. YSS also helps 67,000 children every year.

ACCESS focuses on aiding survivors of domestic and sexual abuse as well as those seeking social justice. The organization provides services such as support groups, advocacy and temporary, emergency housing, to those in need free of charge while remaining confidential. ACCESS has several locations in central Iowa as well as several hotlines to assist those around Iowa.

ERP is an organization in Ames which provides food and shelter to the homeless as well as aid in the prevention of individuals becoming or remaining homeless. ERP has been in Ames for more than 33 years and has aided more than 2,000 individuals and families during the 2016-17 fiscal year.

“Every person deserves a home, but especially every kid should have able housing and this is a way that we both raise awareness and money, and it’s in a format that’s actually pretty fun,” said Allen.

For more information, visit the Reggie’s Sleepout website.
One bill moving through the Senate would require schools to go through active shooter training. This bill, SF 2253, has mustered up support on both sides one day after Nikolas Cruz pulled a fire alarm and shot students at his former school as they filed out of classrooms. The bill requires schools to set up protocols for school shooters, natural disasters and other emergencies before June 30, 2019. These plans can be given recommendations by the state and must be in compliance with local law enforcement.

“It basically dictates to school districts that they have to have an appropriate emergency plan. I’m presuming that something like 80 percent of the districts already have that, but just in case they need to be reminded we have moved a bill forward along those lines,” Quirmbach said.

“I can’t imagine that any school administrator who is at all competent hasn’t already worked through this issue.” With 80 percent of schools in the state currently having protocols for active shooters, legislators realize the need for active shooter trainings but are saddened by the necessity in this day and age.

Sen. Jeff Danielson, D-Waterloo, shared his support for the bill on social media: “Today, after another school shooting tragedy in Florida, I voted to require all Iowa K-12 schools to have a plan and practice for active shooter incidents.” Danielson also stated his concerns for the state moving forward: “I would rather be voting on better mental healthcare, real background checks and greater accountability for assault weapon ownership.”

This stance is one shared by many Democrats in the Iowa Legislature, but Senate and House Republicans don’t completely agree. Speaker of the House Linda Upmeyer, R-Clear Lake, gave her support for the bill and said she was willing to discuss the mental health issues in the state.

Since the shooting Wednesday, no legislation has been pursued that would tighten gun laws in the state, and with the first legislative deadline passed, no new bills are coming for the 2018 session.

Following the shooting, Sen. Mark Chelgren, R-Ottumwa, proposed legislation, SF 2086, that would recognize the Second Amendment in schools. The bill provides that a person with a valid nonprofessional permits to carry weapons may go armed with, carry, or transport a firearm on school grounds,” the bill stated.

“The bill died before making it to the senate floor. “A seriously dumb idea,” Quirmbach said, “The bill died an appropriate death, metaphorically speaking.” Chelgren did not respond to requests for comments.

A constitutional carry was scheduled to be discussed on Feb. 14 but, after the Florida shooting, was taken off the agenda.

Quirmbach said he doesn’t believe this bill will move through this legislative session.

“An assault weapon, however you want to define it, is not a defensive weapon; it’s an offensive weapon.”

-Sen. Herman Quirmbach, D-Ames