

August 2016 - From the Chairman:

With the start of school not far off I thought that this would be of interest to you. There are many schools of higher learning in Iowa that accept both domestic and international students onto their campus. After hearing what happened in one of the Iowa counties I wanted to share with you some interesting information concerning the Iowa Code and infectious diseases.

Have you ever wondered if the universities/colleges screen their students for infectious diseases before they are admitted onto campus or if that is something that is done after the students arrive on campus? What happens when/if these students become ill with an infectious disease and need to be isolated or quarantined? Who is responsible for the cost associated with the care of the domestic or international student? Is it you, the taxpayers, or the universities/colleges that have accepted the student onto campus that picks up the cost?

Iowa Code 139A makes you the taxpayers responsible for both domestic and international students attending a university/college when students become ill with an infectious disease, need to be quarantined by the public health officials and can't pay bills associated with the quarantine. Iowa Administrative Code 1.9 (3) states that if the local Board of Health imposes quarantine or isolation, they must do so in the least restrictive means necessary to prevent the spread of the communicable disease. The local Board of Health is also required to address the needs of the quarantined or isolated individuals in a systematic and competent fashion including, but not limited to, providing adequate food, clothing, shelter, means of communicating with those in and outside of isolation or quarantine, medicine and competent medical care.

In Fayette County we budget \$105,000.00 to go toward Public Health. This money is used to serve those who can't afford or those who are home bound within the County with their medical, physical or daily needs. When other things such as a person that needs to be isolated or quarantined comes up there has to be extra money that goes into that budget to cover the things mentioned above. That money comes from you, the taxpayers, whether the person is from another County, State or Country. That just doesn't seem right (sorry personal opinion).

In the State of Iowa, we require that students entering kindergarten be current with all their vaccinations. Can this be something that we require of all students, whether domestic or international, before they are accepted onto the campuses of the universities/colleges? When the universities/colleges have no health assessment program on campus the infectious person/s continues on with their daily life and comes in contact with many people while spreading the infectious disease. There needs to be someone on campus that follows up on all the medical records of the students or the universities/colleges need to have a contract with the local Board of Health to do health assessments of all the students on campus with a follow up if there are issues.

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On a personal note: The above article should be of concern to all of us. I am not opposed to having international students attend universities/colleges and that is not what this article is about. My concern

is with the universities/colleges that accept/recruit international students and the lack of health assessments for those students. When any school accepts students they need to be very proactive in the health of their students because we have worked so hard to eradicate infectious diseases in this Country. My concerns are that we, the public, have no say as to who is accepted onto the universities/colleges campuses so why then should we, the taxpayers, have to pick up the cost of caring for the infected person/s. The health and safety of other students, the staff and the general public need to be a priority for the universities/colleges and should never be discarded or put before monetary gains.

On a lighter note: Congratulations to the Oelwein FFA. I hope all of you had an opportunity to see them, they were the FFA Chapter featured on This Week in Agri Business on RFD-TV hosted by Orion Samuelson and Max Armstrong. It was short but very good and they do have a wonderful greenhouse. Check it out in the spring.