



SEPTEMBER 2025

Monthly Newsletter

Welcome to September. All the lawmakers took most of August off, but they are back at it in DC, and we'll keep you posted as always. Interim studies and background work will happen through December, but legislative updates on the state level will begin in earnest in January. To start this month, we want to clarify Immanuel's Advocacy Philosophy as the political landscape changes very quickly these days. We want to assure you that it is our mission that guides us.

Immanuel Advocacy Philosophy

- We aim to highlight and advocate for seniors in Nebraska and Iowa and, when necessary, in the U.S. Congress.
- As a faith-based, nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, we do not and cannot subscribe to the agenda of any political party.
- When issues are critical to Immanuel, our staff, and the people we serve, we will advocate for what will benefit them, not detriment.

Our goal with this monthly newsletter is to present the information objectively and unbiasedly. Some issues we focus on may fall further down one side of the traditional political spectrum than the other. In these times, many issues seem to become political that they never were before, such as access to food and housing.

We hope you all will share our advocacy goals as we serve each other through our CHRIST Promise Values of compassion, honor, relationships, integrity, serve, and teamwork.

Nebraska - Medicaid Updates



On August 25, Senator Ashlei Spivey visited Immanuel Pathways in Omaha to learn more about our PACE® program. Our program is in her legislative district. Jennifer, John Sigmon, and Tara Muir sat down with her. She is very interested in helping us with Medicaid Eligibility and/or reimbursement rates. We will continue to work with her and her staff to learn how best to accomplish this. Pictured: Jennifer Vacek, Executive Director IPO, and Senator Ashlei Spivey.

On September 15, our advocacy and PACE® teams plan to meet with Drew Gonshorowski, the new Nebraska Medicaid and Long-Term Care Director. We hope to strategize options to increase Medicaid Eligibility and/or reimbursement rates through the regulatory process.

Iowa Election

The most recent advocacy news in Iowa is that U.S. Senator Joni Ernst is not seeking re-election to Congress in the 2026 Election. Current U.S. Congresswoman in the House, Rep. Ashley Hinson, is bidding for the open seat along with many others. It promises to be an exciting primary election in Iowa. [Read more here.](#)

A Special Election was held on August 26 for the State Senate District 1 seat (Sioux City area) left vacant by Sen. Rocky De Witt (R) when he died from cancer in June. Catelin Drey (D) defeated Christopher Prosch (R) for the seat and ended the super majority (two-thirds) of Republicans in the State Senate. Experts believe this will result in bigger legislative battles when the impact of HR1, the federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act, hits Iowa. [The Hill Story, 8.26.2025](#)

U.S. Capitol – Lawmakers and Federal Government

Congress returned to DC from its month-long August recess on September 2 with a full plate and mounting tensions. Lawmakers will have less than a month to prevent a government shutdown. Key committee hearings were cancelled before Congress adjourned in August, including one to decide the fiscal year 2026 budget for Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HUD programs fund many programs and vouchers in affordable housing programs. Usually, a continuing resolution (CR) comes into play to keep the government open until the December holidays.

Also, now that Congress is back, there is a possible second budget reconciliation bill like HR1, the One Big Beautiful Bill Act passed July 4. There could be even deeper cuts to Medicaid and other health and human services programs than what HR1 contained. We will keep you posted with action alerts as needed.

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or comments.

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The Advocacy and Government Relations Coordinator is a member of the Legal & Compliance Team: John Sigmon is Vice President of Legal and Compliance and General Counsel, Tracy Durbin is the Corporate Compliance Officer, and Ryan Lang is the Contract Administrator.