



**WattsLine** from Repr. **Ralph Watts**

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*Occasional updates regarding legislative issues of constituent interest.*

## **Economic Recovery**

As we try to put together a budget we occasionally get some input from economists regarding the economic outlook. Last week we had a visit by an economist from an internationally recognized firm. He offered a couple of perspectives I thought should be shared with you. First, he pointed out that wages are not growing for a wide swath of our economy, except in government! Secondly, it was his opinion that Iowa, and many other states, would not see a return to full employment (as it was defined in 2008) before the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2012. Since 80%+ of our state revenues are from either personal income taxes or sales taxes, which of course are employment sensitive, we should not expect a resounding recovery for many months. The Fiscal Year 2013 budget will already have been completed by the 2012 legislature prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of 2012-- so we probably won't see a budget that approximates anything close to normal until FY2014.

Given the circumstances as they are, House Republicans intend to do whatever we can to hold the line on spending. As a result, we have made it known that we will not vote for any budget that spends more than we take in. The Republicans have offered \$600 million in spending reductions over the past two years to help fill the spending gap. So far, they have been largely ignored.

## **Climategate**

If you have been following any of the recent news items regarding climate change, you may be aware of the issue being referred to as Climategate. Climategate is the term being applied to the release of emails from within one of the prime entities that has been involved in so-called scientific research associated with global climate change.

The group at the Univ. of East Anglia in the UK has been among the primary purveyors of global climate change issues. The emails have revealed the soft under-belly of the whole climate change debate. For many years the group at E. Anglia had refused to release their purported data for peer review. Instead, they have made claims regarding climate issues that were unfounded. They plotted to destroy whatever data they had and conspired against other inquiring scientists.

When these shenanigans were revealed, the floodgates were opened that exposed a wide variety of claims associated with global climate change that cannot be supported by scientific research. The implosion of the whole climate change debate continues daily with more baseless claims of climate catastrophes being de-bunked.

The complete collapse of the alarmists' arguments after the curtain was pulled back at E. Anglia is not surprising. The real problem now is that the terms "climate change" and "greenhouse gas emissions" and other related nonsense have become enshrined in federal code as well as our state code, so bureaucrats will be pursuing legislation to save us from a nonexistent problem for many years. The problem with that is that they will waste untold amounts of dollars in this effort.

Michael Barone said it best in a recent article; "Some decades hence, I suspect, people will look back and wonder why so many government, corporate and media elites were taken by propaganda that was based on such shoddy and dishonest evidence. And taken in to the point that they advocated devoting trillions of dollars to a cause that was based on flagrant dishonesty --".

**Next Forum:** Saturday, Feb. 27 at the Raccoon Valley Bank in Dallas Center, 9:30a.