

Iowa Fiscal Partnership hosts Fall Retreat for Public Policy Advocates



Selected Iowa public policy advocates met September 15 at the Des Moines Botanical Center to discuss Iowa's budget situation, focusing heavily on the impacts of tax policy proposals on fairness for working families, adequacy for critical public services, and better accountability for long-term fiscal stability.

Participants, which included organizations interested in improving the ability of state and local governments to meet critical needs in the current recession, received up-to-date information on the underlying fiscal issues faced by state legislators and the Governor, and began to develop a coordinated strategy to address them.

"Such a coordinated effort will be vital to protect important state services over the next few fiscal years," says Victor Elias, CFPC Senior Policy Associate, who helped organize the event. "Our next step is to establish a formal Coalition calling for critical review of both sides of the budget – revenues and expenditures – and enlist broad range of stakeholders."

Nick Johnson, Director of the State Fiscal Project for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, was a special guest at the meeting and shared insights from a national perspective.

The five-hour retreat included sessions on: (1) How tax policies, spending commitments, the recession, and federal legislation will affect the FY2010 and FY2011 budgets; (2) The need and prospects for individual income-tax reform and changes to federal deductibility; and (3) how much of the Iowa's budget hole can be filled by reining in corporate tax breaks and loopholes.

Pictured above: (left photo) CFPC Executive Director Charlie Bruner; (middle photo) Advocats discuss strategy; (right photo) Nick Johnson, Director of the State Fiscal Project for the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities