

Administration Budget Puts Kids First

The Administration and Regulation Budget Subcommittee approved a budget for the next fiscal year covering 13 state departments, agencies and offices. While cutting virtually every line item in the budget, the subcommittee did agree to increase funding for the Child Advocacy Board. This board includes the Court-Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) program.

CASA uses volunteers throughout the state to help

abused and neglected children. Committee members did not want to cut back on this program, which went statewide last year and helps Iowa's most vulnerable children. The Child Advocacy Board will receive a \$60,000 increase in funding to maintain their services to children.

The budget bill approved by the subcommittee will cut funding next year by 12% over the current budget year. This is a decrease of \$11.5 million.

The Governor's office is cut 30%, the Auditor's office is cut 27%, the Secretary of State will see a 8% decrease, and the Treasurer's office will be cut by 11%.

The budget bill will be debated first in the Iowa House. It will then go to the Iowa Senate for consideration. Although changes are possible, spending reductions are unavoidable in the current nationwide economic climate.