

REPRESENTATIVE PETER COWNIE'S WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

My name is Peter Cownie and I am your newly sworn in State Representative for West Des Moines. I have taken over for Libby Jacobs who served West Des Moines and Iowa for seven terms. Libby did a fantastic job and it is an honor to serve in the House seat she so dutifully held. The 83rd General Assembly of the Iowa House of Representatives gavelled in on Monday, January 12. Members were sworn into office to begin the session. This is my first newsletter and I will be sending it out every week during the session. The best way for me to know what is important to you is for you to write or call me directly. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 515.281.3221 or my legislative email address: peter.cownie@legis.state.ia.us

Representative Cownie signing the oath of office



On Tuesday, a joint session of the House of Representatives and the Senate heard Governor Culver deliver his Condition of the State address. The address focused on the natural disasters of 2008 and the current budget crisis we are experiencing. We are currently facing a \$779 million shortfall. This is a staggering number. In my estimation, this budget shortfall cannot solely be blamed on the natural disasters of 2008 and the current economic crisis. The past General Assembly (2006-2008) increased spending in the State of Iowa by approximately one billion dollars! The entire budget for the state is approximately six billion dollars. To increase spending by 20 percent in only two years is ridiculous. This is not how Iowa families or businesses behave and your state government should not either. The budget will be the central issue facing the General Assembly this legislative session. Count on me to use this motto, "government should be run like a business and we need to do more with less." This is what Iowa families are facing in this difficult time and your state government should follow suit.

A major part of our work at the Legislature is done thru our committee assignments. I am a member of the Education, Labor, Economic Growth, and Appropriations Committees. I also serve as Ranking Member on the Economic Development Appropriations Budget Subcommittee. I am very pleased with my committee assignments. All of my committees met the first week, though no legislation has been brought up as of yet. I will keep you all updated on the happenings of my committee work. I look forward to hearing from you and serving the great people of West Des Moines! Please do not hesitate to get in touch to me.

