



# IOWA HOUSE DEMOCRATS

## BILL SUMMARY

# County Zoning Laws HF 2512

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**Status of Bill:** House Calendar  
**Committee:** State Government (13-10)  
**Research Analyst:** Brian Guillaume, [brian.guillaume@legis.iowa.gov](mailto:brian.guillaume@legis.iowa.gov), 515-281-5159

**Lead Democrat:** Reps Mascher and Hunter  
**Floor Manager:** Rep. Kauffman

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### **Background**

This legislation stems from an issue in Johnson County and their county zoning board decisions. Rep. Kauffman does not like that there are Democrats on the board. Johnson county has been working on a new county zoning proposal for the last two years that has been the subject of a lot of controversy. Some of those include requiring certain permits on operations that are less than 40 years old.

### **Summary**

Current law exempts farms and farm buildings from ordinances adopted by a county zoning board. This includes farm houses, farm out buildings, farm barns, and any other building or structure where the primary use is agricultural.

The bill makes changes to the current law by prohibiting a county from requiring an application, approval, or payment of a fee for an ordinance deemed inapplicable for buildings that are used for primary agricultural purposes. The changes allow a building to qualify for the exemption independently or in conjunction with other agricultural uses.

The legislation also changes the process of adopting county zoning ordinances by prohibiting an amendment to the ordinance any time and requires them to follow the same process for amendments as they would for a comprehensive plan. The legislation also does now allow a public hearing until they have the final report of the zoning commission, and then a public hearing is required.

Only eligible voters who reside in the county zoning regulations are allowed to be on the commission, this is a change from the previous law that required a majority to live outside of city limits. This will also apply to the county board of adjustment.

The legislation is effective upon enactment, this could result in vacancies on the commission and board of adjusters who do not meet the eligibility requirements. If a vacancy does occur, the Board of Supervisors is to appoint a new member within a year.