

# ECA ADVOCACY UPDATE

Driving economic growth. Supporting job creation. Empowering small businesses.

March 15, 2024



## 1. State advocacy is heating up

**Across the country**, advocacy efforts that impact the business events industry are heating up.

**In Iowa**, momentum is growing for legislation that would improve the landscape for event organizers, exhibitors, and venues that license music for their events.

- **The legislation**, [HF 2260](#), has passed the Iowa House of Representatives and has been advanced by the Senate Committee on Commerce.
- **On Wednesday**, the [MIC Coalition](#), which includes ECA, IAEE, IAVM, and SISO, [sent a letter](#) to Iowa Senate calling on them to take up and pass the bill. (Thanks to Elizabeth Frazee and Greg Barnes for their great work here!)

**In several states**, ECA is pushing back against efforts to tax digital advertising services, which would unfairly raise the costs of meeting and event marketing.

- **ECA** and its Ad Tax Coalition partners are actively opposing legislation in [Nebraska](#), [Maryland](#), [California](#), and [Tennessee](#), while also keeping an eye on possible bills in New York and the District of Columbia.
- **State digital ad taxes** have been previously [stuck down in the courts](#) for violating *The Internet Tax Freedom Act* and the U.S. Constitution's Commerce Clause, but state legislatures continue to propose them (and ECA continues to fight back accordingly!).



## 2. Register today for Legislative Action Day

Have **you** registered yet for [ECA Legislative Action Day](#)?

**So far**, 70 industry leaders and advocates have signed up to join us in Washington, DC on May 30 to advocate for ECA's top [federal policy priorities](#):

- Eliminating visa backlogs and modernizing the visa processing system. 🌐
- Helping attract and retain the industry's next generation workforce. 🧑

**Triple threat:** Legislative Action Day will be part of a trio of 3 great events taking place in Washington, DC that week:

- **On May 28**, mdg, a Freeman Company, will present [From Hypothetical to Reality: How AI is Actually Changing Events](#), an executive roundtable event in conjunction with the Society of Independent Show Organizers (SISO).
- **On May 29**, the Lippman Connects [Exhibitions & Convention Executives Forum](#) (ECEFF) will bring together association and independent organizers to exchange insights, trade opportunities, and develop top-to-top relationships.



## 3. Capitol Hill policy updates

- **The authors** of the *Bipartisan Workforce Pell Act*, legislation that would allow Pell Grants to fund short-term skills training, are working to [find a funding mechanism](#) that will allow the bill to pass the House of Representatives under suspension of the rules, which requires a two-thirds majority.
- **Work continues** on 6 government funding bills, including the State-Foreign Ops bill where ECA is [pushing for supplementary funding](#) for the State Department to help deal with ongoing visa processing delays, in advance of a possible government shutdown next Friday, March 22.

# ICYMI

## 4. In case you missed it...

- **ICCA recently released** [\*Beyond Borders: How association business events bring the world together\*](#), which features ECA's perspective on the importance of advocacy efforts [across the globe](#).
- **ECA celebrated** International Women's Day by [recognizing](#) the alliance's women board members, alliance partner CEOs, and on-the-ground leaders who are driving the advocacy work of the the business events industry.
- **ASAE successfully delivered** its [Legislative Fly-In](#), where ECA joined 100+ association leaders to advocate for the *Freedom to Invest in Tomorrow's Workforce Act*, which would expand qualified expenses under 529 savings plans to include certain training and credentialing programs. Congratulations to Mary Kate Cunningham, Jeff Evans, and Burcu Sahmali on a great event!

