

# Right to Repair

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during critical planting and harvest seasons when delays can be costly.

Opponents, including some manufacturers and environmental advocates, warn that the bill could allow emissions systems to be altered or disabled, potentially increasing pollution from diesel engines. They also argue the proposal could conflict with federal Clean Air Act regulations and raise concerns about safety, equipment reliability, and warranty coverage if complex systems are modified outside authorized repair channels.

Supporters counter that the goal is not to bypass emissions standards but to ensure farmers have the ability to diagnose and repair equipment quickly when sensors or software faults cause tractors to enter reduced-power “de-rate” modes. As the debate continues, the issue highlights a broader national discussion about how much control manufacturers should retain over the increasingly computerized equipment used on modern farms.

## Why Modern Tractors Sometimes “Slow Themselves Down”

Anyone who has watched modern farming equipment at work has probably noticed that tractors today are far more advanced than the machines many farmers grew up with. Along with GPS guidance, touch-screen displays, and computer controls, newer tractors also include sophisticated emissions systems designed to reduce air pollution.

One of the key pieces of that system is something called Diesel Exhaust Fluid, often referred to simply as DEF.

DEF is a mixture of purified water and urea that is stored in a separate tank on many modern diesel tractors. During operation, small amounts of this fluid are injected into the tractor’s exhaust stream. The process helps convert nitrogen oxides — a pollutant produced by diesel engines — into

harmless nitrogen and water vapor before it leaves the exhaust pipe. The system, known as selective catalytic reduction, was introduced on most agricultural equipment to meet federal emissions standards that took effect over the past decade.

To make sure the system is working properly, tractors rely on a network of sensors and computer controls. These sensors monitor things such as the amount of DEF in the tank, the quality of the fluid, exhaust temperatures, and the level of emissions coming from the engine.

If the system detects something out of the ordinary — such as an empty DEF tank, a faulty sensor, or an emissions reading outside the acceptable range — the tractor’s computer may trigger what operators call “de-rate mode.”

When this happens, the tractor automatically reduces engine performance. Horsepower may be limited, acceleration may slow, and in some cases the machine may only operate at reduced speed. The idea behind the system is to encourage operators to correct the emissions problem rather than continue running the equipment in a way that could violate environmental regulations.

While the technology helps reduce pollution, it has also become a topic of debate in agricultural communities. Farmers say that occasionally a faulty sensor or minor issue can cause a tractor to lose power during critical times such as planting or harvest. Supporters of the system say the controls are necessary to ensure engines meet modern emissions standards.

Like many pieces of modern farm equipment, today’s tractors are a combination of heavy machinery and advanced computer technology. For better or worse, that means the machines in the field are now watching their own emissions — and sometimes slowing themselves down when something isn’t quite right.

# Verification

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lieve existing federal and state verification systems already prevent ineligible individuals from receiving benefits.

Critics argued the legislation could add new administrative hurdles for families applying for assistance, particularly those in mixed-status households, where some members may be citizens and others may not be. They said additional verification requirements could delay benefits for eligible individuals, including children.

Some Democratic lawmakers also raised concerns that the bill could discourage families from applying for assistance programs they legally qualify for, out of

fear or confusion about immigration status checks.

## Broader debate

The debate over Senate File 2422 reflects a broader national discussion about how states manage public assistance programs and verify eligibility. Supporters say stronger verification protects public resources, while critics caution that overly strict procedures can create barriers for people in need.

The measure passed the Iowa Senate on a 30-17 vote, with Republicans largely supporting the bill and Democrats opposing it. The legislation now moves through the remainder of the legislative process for further consideration.

Unapproved Minutes  
Earlham City Council  
March 9, 2026

The Earlham City Council met in regular session on March 9, 2026, 7:00 p.m. at Earlham City Hall. Mayor Pro Tem Mudge called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. and the following answered roll: Fredericksen, Miller, Mudge, Visser. Also present: Chief Stringham, Supervisor Coffman, Clerk Visser

Absent: Mayor Lillie, & council member Nelsen

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
Motion by: Fredericksen, second by: Miller to approve agenda  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous-Motion passes.

2. PUBLIC HEARINGS-None  
3. PUBLIC FORUM – The Mayor and Council welcome comments from the public on topics not on the agenda. The Mayor may limit each speaker to five minutes- None

4. CONSENT AGENDA:  
a. Council meeting minutes for 2-9-26  
b. Finance Committee meeting 2-11-26  
c. Finance Committee meeting 3-2-26  
d. Treasurer’s Report for 3-9-26  
e. Claims and Receipts Report for 3-9-26  
f. Consider approval appointing Kate Eckard to the library board term ending 03/09/2031  
g. Consider approval to renew Lost CD in the amount of \$60,587.16 mature date 3-31-2026 on a 12-month term  
h. Consider approval to renew General CD in the amount of \$56,022.97 mature date 3-17-2026 on a 12-month term  
i. Consider approval to renew Perpetual CD in the amount of \$60,520.60 mature date 4-8-2026 on a 12-month term  
Motion by: Visser, second by: Fredericksen, to approve consent agenda.  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion passes.

5. DEPARTMENT REPORTS  
a. Police Department- Matt Stringham  
Chief Stringham reported that a child would like to sell lemonade in front of the bar as a fundraiser for Doug’s Ride in May and asked that the city allow the lemonade stand for this cause. Chief Stringham also reported that the department is currently working on two grant applications to help fund a generator for the community building. He informed the council that the Earlham Police Department policy and procedures manual is being updated, as it is required to be reviewed and updated annually. Additionally, Chief Stringham stated that the department is working on moving certain traffic violations from state code to city code so that citations can be written under city ordinance. Lastly, Chief Stringham mentioned the possibility of the police department having a different attorney from the city’s attorney to provide additional representation in court if needed.

b. Public Works- Gary Coffman  
The SE Cherry Watermain Project will be put out for bid by Wednesday, with the project expected to be completed by July 1. New stop signs have been installed at the intersection of 4th Street and Oak Street. At the Rec Park, pine trees located within the Northern Natural Gas right-of-way will need to be removed due to a gas pipeline request requiring a 25-foot clearing on both sides so the pipeline can be monitored from the air. The oak trees that were recently planted will be relocated to another area within the park. The Hoot Building is in need of some repairs; however, funds have already been budgeted for the work. At the cemetery, bushes have been trimmed and the area has been cleaned up. The Sewer Lagoon Phase 2 project is still in progress, with staff currently working with engineers to make adjustments before moving forward with the next step.

6. BOARD, COMMISSION, COMMITTEE REPORTS- Finance Report – Mayor Pro Tem Mudge reported that several budget sessions were held throughout February. During those discussions, it was identified that there may be a deficit in the upcoming budget. The council is currently working to identify opportunities to tighten departmental budgets in order to address the situation.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS-None

8. NEW BUSINESS  
a. Dr. Steve Kaster- Discussion of Baseball & Softball Fields  
Dr. Steve Kaster provided aerial view documents of the softball and baseball fields at the Rec Park. He explained that about a year ago the school district began discussing ways to improve the park facilities and explore options to make the fields more competitive and higher quality. Dr. Kaster stated that the infields of both fields, as well as drainage issues, need to be addressed. He noted that the existing 28E Agreement is in place but may need to be reviewed to determine how the project would move forward. The proposed approach would be to begin with improvements to the infields. This would include excavating approximately four inches, regarding the area, and sodding the boundaries of the playing surfaces. A red ball diamond aggregate would then be installed to improve drainage. After the infield work is completed, the next step would be to evaluate the outfield conditions and determine whether the current water lines are adequate before making decisions regarding further outfield improvements. Dr. Kaster also stated that approximately one year ago the school district allocated \$100,000 toward improvements to the fields. Discussion included whether the city and school could partner financially on the project and whether the 28E Agreement may need to be amended.

b. Consider approval on Resolution No. 26-09 setting dates of a consultation meeting and public hearing on a proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Earlham 2019 Urban Renewal Plan in the City of Earlham, state of Iowa

i. Consultation Meeting set for March 17, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.  
ii. Public Hearing set for April 13, 2026 at 7 P.M.  
Motion by: Fredericksen, second by: Miller, to setting dates of a consultation meeting and public hearing on a proposed Amendment No. 1 to the Earlham 2019 urban Renewal Plan in the City of Earlham, state of Iowa  
-Consultation meeting set for March 17, 2026 at 10:00 A.M.  
-Public Hearing set for April 13, 2026 at 7 P.M.  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

c. Consider approval of the First Reading of Ordinance No. 479 Amending Ordinance No 376, Chapter 69 Parking Regulations by Amending Section 69.04 Angle Parking  
Motion by: Visser, second by: Miller to approve the First Reading of Ordinance No. 479 Amending Ordinance No 376, Chapter 69 Parking Regulations by Amending Section 69.04 Angle Parking  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes

d. Consider approval to waive the Second and Third Reading of Ordinance No. 479 Amending Ordinance No 376, Chapter 69 Parking Regulations by Amending Section 69.04 Angle Parking  
Motion by: Fredericksen, second by: Visser to approve waiving the Second and Third Reading of Ordinance No. 479 Amending Ordinance No 376, Chapter 69 Parking Regulations by Amending Section 69.04 Angle Parking  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

e. Consider the approval of Resolution No. 26-10 ordering the placement of angled parking spaces and handicap parking spaces with handicap signs provided by medical clinic  
Motion by: Visser, second by: Miller, to consider the approval of Resolution No. 26-10 ordering the placement of angles parking spaces and handicap parking space with signs provided by medical clinic.  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

f. Consider the approval of the First Reading of Ordinance No. 480 Amending Chapter 62 Pertaining to General Traffic Regulations by adding New Section 62.08 pertaining to electronic devices while driving in the City of Earlham, Iowa  
Motion by: Miller, second by: Fredericksen, to consider the approval of the First Reading of Ordinance No. 480 Amending Chapter 62 Pertaining to General Traffic Regulations by adding New Section 62.08 pertaining to electronic devices while driving in the city of Earlham, Iowa  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

g. Consider the approval of waiving the second and third Reading of Ordinance No. 480 Amending Chapter 62 Pertaining to General Traffic Regulations by adding New Section 62.08 pertaining to electronic devices while driving in the City of Earlham, Iowa  
Motion by: Visser, second by: Fredericksen, to the approval of waiving the second and third Reading of Ordinance No. 480 Amending Chapter 62 Pertaining to General Traffic Regulations by adding New Section 62.08 pertaining to electronic devices while driving in the City of Earlham, Iowa  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

h. Consider approval on Resolution No. 26-11 Set a public hearing for April 13, 2026 at 7:05 p.m. for SE Cherry Street water main replacement project  
Motion by: Visser, second by: Miller, to consider approval on Resolution No. 26-11 setting a public hearing date for April 13, 2026 at 7:05 P.M. for SE Cherry Street water main replacement project  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion Passes.

9. MAYOR’S REPORT- None

10. CLERK’S REPORT- Clerk Visser reported that the budget is still a work in progress. Several reductions have been made across all departments, and staff are currently making the final adjustments to the budget.

11. COUNCIL COMMENTS/DISCUSSION- Council member Miller stated that the Madison County Development group is starting the strategic planning 31st of this month is the first month. They are meeting with UNI to discuss how the county can develop positively and Earlham is big key point in that matter.

12. ADJOURN  
Motion by: Fredericksen, second by: Visser, to adjourn.  
Roll: Ayes- Unanimous- Motion passes.

Being there was no further business, meeting was adjourned at 7:41p.m.

## City of Earlham Approved Claims- March 9, 2026

Vender	Amount
INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE	\$10,902.93
IPERS	\$6,493.96
TREASURER OF STATE	\$3753.25
TRIONFO SOLUTIONS LLC	\$417.25
EBANK	\$30.00
EBANK	\$45,000.00
COLLECTION SERVICES CENTER	\$463.38
Hello Garage, Inc	\$9,001.79
USPS	\$365.39
BTWI	\$512.00
CITY OF EARLHAM	\$372.26
CORPORATE PAYMENT SYSTEMS	\$121.94
DELTA DENTAL, INC	\$645.88
ELAN FINANCIAL SERVICES	\$56.53
MARQUIS INVESTMENTS LLC	\$376.00
MID AMERICAN ENERGY	\$6,158.50
UNITED HEALTHCARE -2019	\$11,782.60
US CELLULAR	\$119.46
WARREN WATER DISTRICT	\$12,589.50
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$109,162.62</b>

## Earlham Medical Clinic

### Patient Care Hours

**Monday - Thursday**  
**7:30 am - 4:30 pm**

*Closed Fridays*

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