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HELLO! My name is Allie Raines and I am the new designer for Advocacy News from the Iowa United Nations Association. I am currently a sophomore at Drake University as a double major in graphic design and environmental science, with a minor in magazine and brand media. I am most passionate about designing environmental topics, however I love all forms of art, especially painting! My hometown is in Missouri, but I am so excited to become more involved in Iowa through this newsletter. View my past projects and portfolio at arainesdesign.myportfolio.com/



Massive Rains and Floods: The New Normal

 **Jozef Figa | Member of the Iowa UNA Advocacy Committee**

A [massive flash flood](#) swept southeastern Spain on October 31. We know that 205 have died as the result of this flood, but this figure is bound to increase because of the number of people, who, as of now, are listed as lost. The floods are the result of a massive rainfall. Spain's national weather service said it rained more in eight hours in Valencia than it had in the preceding 20 months, calling the deluge "extraordinary". When the King of Spain visited the city of Paiporta that was destroyed by the flood, he and his entourage were pelted with mud and rocks by the angry crowd. They were accusing the authorities of being too late in informing them about the deadly danger of the coming rainfall.

The massive rain at this point of the year is not unusual in Spain. It is caused by the phenomenon known as a "[cold drop](#)": the cold air meets the warm, moist air over the Mediterranean Sea. The hotter air rises rapidly and quickly forms vast rain clouds. These water-laden clouds can remain over the same area for many hours, which raises their destructive potential. The difference, this time, was the intensity and the speed of the development—a difference that is the result of global warming. What happened in southeastern Spain is the most recent development. Massive floods and flash floods in 2024 have included Poland, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Greece, Afghanistan and Nepal. In the United States, flash floods

unrelated to hurricanes took place in New Mexico and in Utah.

The reasons always involve local and/or regional factors. But these factors have been magnified by global warming. For instance, massive floods in September in Poland were [caused by a seasonal weather](#) phenomenon known as the "[Genoa Low](#)", also called the Genoa cyclogenesis, a low-pressure system formed in the region south of the Alps that brings intense and prolonged rain when it meets cold air further north. Although this is a recurring weather phenomenon, recent Genoa low events have been more extreme and exceptional in terms of rainfall. Scientists attribute the intensity of recent events

to human-induced climate change. The rainfalls that took place in Central Europe, 12 to 15 as of September, were twice more probable and 20% more intensive than before preindustrial times. In general, heated air contains more water, resulting in more intense rain falls. Scholarly research has demonstrated that rainfalls have been 10% to 40% more intensive that they would have been without climate change.

There are additional factors that have resulted in massive flash floods. Experts analyzing the [massive flood that hit Bosnia](#) at the beginning of October blamed not only climate change, but also deforestation and the massive use of concrete in road and street construction. The result is that the increasing amount of water that is generated by climate change has nowhere to go. Analysts have pointed out that eastern Spain

and also Bosnia are hilly and even mountainous. Concrete roads, concrete walls, and concrete driveways transform cities, towns and villages into gutters through which masses of water flow very fast. Also, as it has been pointed out in the case of [massive floods in Nepal](#), many human settlements are simply too close to rivers and streams. And these rivers and streams are bound to overflow more frequently – because of global warming.

The overall result is that massive and intense rains, floods, and catastrophic flash floods are very quickly becoming the new normal. The recent events in [New Mexico](#) and [Utah](#) tell us that the United States is not going to avoid this problem.





“A female cat has more rights than a woman in Afghanistan.”



Caryl Lyons | Member of the Iowa UNA Advocacy Committee

In a [speech before the UN General Assembly](#) in September 2024, actress Meryl Streep reminded listeners that women in Afghanistan had gotten the vote in 1919, before American women had. But now, in what Streep called “a cautionary tale for the rest of the world,” she says that “a female cat has more freedom than a woman in Afghanistan.” Streep believes that the international community could effect change for women if they worked together.

Ever since the US pulled out of Afghanistan in August of 2021, the Taliban began to return to their previous harsh rules for women, though they had promised that rights would not be curtailed. We have all been watching for the past three years as women have been returned to the same restrictions that they had lived under starting in the mid-1990s, when the Taliban had previously been in control. The war in Afghanistan had many downsides, but one positive result had been the improved status of many women, especially those in more populated areas, who became full members of society, receiving good educations, working at meaningful jobs, and having increased personal autonomy.

Now, the Taliban has [returned women to their homes](#). Education for girls ends with the 6th grade. They can no longer leave their homes without a male escort. They cannot have jobs, with the occasional exception of women hired to enforce the restrictions imposed on other women. And most recently, women are banned from speaking aloud and or singing in public places; their voices are not to be heard outside of their homes. They cannot even read aloud from the Koran. Some have said that Afghan women are basically incarcerated in their homes. Others refer to the “erasure” of women from public life.

An [article](#) in UN News, published on June 18, 2024, noted the Taliban’s “use of violence, mainly through murder, enforced disappearance, torture, rape and other inhumane acts.” A mental health crisis for women in Afghanistan exists. Data from [UN Women](#) notes that 68% of women report having “bad” or “very bad” mental health and 8% report knowing at least one woman or girl who has attempted suicide. The restrictions on women have led to an increase in early childbearing and in maternal mortality.

Child marriage, reported to be “prohibited but pervasive,” has increased.

There has been so much violence in the Mideast, with the horrors of Gaza and the spreading regional violence, that it would be very easy for the world to lose track of what Afghan women are facing. It is vital that the world keep this in their collective sights.

The [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](#) has emphasized the need to collect and preserve evidence of these human rights violations against women for future accountability and justice, such as for the potential prosecution of such crimes under international law.

Afghan women are saddened but not defeated. They are fighting back with secret schools to ensure that girls are still getting some kind of education. Some women, assisted by [UN Women](#), are entrepreneurs from within their homes, though with limited types of enterprises allowed.

What can we do? Remind our Senators and Representatives of the need for the world to advocate for human rights for the women in Afghanistan.

The Critical Importance of the UN in a Time of Rising US Isolationism

US International Involvement in a Second Trump Term

 **Caleb Stewart | 2024-25 Iowa UNA College Ambassador from Drake University**

With the election of Donald J. Trump as the 47th President of the United States, now more than ever is the time to highlight the steady rise of US isolationism and the critical importance of international cooperation in the United Nations and other global institutions. As Trump's election amplifies fears in many scholars and policy experts that ["he \[will\] dismantle the liberal order that the United States and its allies have built and defended since World War II,"](#) it is vital that we discuss the foreign policy that defined Trump's first

term, the figures who will shape his foreign policy in the second term, and the benefits the United States receives from its engagement on the international stage.

President Trump's first term was marked by a break from traditional political norms (both domestic and international), a change in the US approach to the United Nations, and a more drastic shift in how the US engages with other countries. President Trump's first term was characterized by events such as the US withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord, [Trump declining to attend emergency G7 meetings, and Trump leaving UN conferences](#) when said summits required international collaboration and did not serve Trump's immediate interests. The steps taken throughout his first term clearly emphasize the increasing importance and appeal of isolationism to Trump and his allies. Given Trump's political platform's slogan is "Make America Great Again," this type of self-serving foreign policy logically follows— why negotiate within an international sphere built on compromise when Trump feels the US has a broad mandate to do as it pleases?

The steady rise of isolationism, a consequence of runaway [American exceptionalism](#), defined President Trump's first term and is the run-up to Trump's second term. The rhetoric used by the Trump campaign followed the same isolationist path as his initial presidency. Given Trump's threats of utilizing tariffs to force other states and corporations into submission, his isolationist path is clear. Furthermore, with Trump's picking of Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik for UN Ambassador, Trump signaled ["a more combative US posture](#)



toward the UN, [given] Stefanik has frequently criticized the international organization, particularly over its criticism of Israel, and last month said the Biden administration should consider a 'complete reassessment' of US funding for the UN if the Palestinian Authority continues to pursue a push to revoke Israel's UN membership." Trump's nomination of Stefanik demonstrates the rise and solidification of conservative isolationism as a guiding force of US foreign policy.

Although President Trump claims that working through international organizations leads to poorer outcomes for American interests, the facts show precisely the opposite. While isolationist foreign policy sounds rational in theory, isolationism, in fact, leads to a more unstable world, both economically and politically. Many populists posit that isolationism allows for more state resources to be directed internally as opposed to directing resources to international organizations and cooperation. In reality, the withdrawal of critical US support of major international institutions such as the UN actively undermines US national and economic security interests. For instance, United States Institute of Peace's Steve Hadley,

who is also the former national security adviser to President George W. Bush, argues that ["when domestic problems seem overwhelming, there is an instinct to doubt our engagement abroad and say we should be dealing with our problems at home. Historically, though, that approach has not worked out very well for us. In the 1920s and 1930s, it resulted in the Great Depression, and to some degree it contributed to the coming of World War II."](#) Furthermore, given that ["UN operations are one-eighth the cost to American taxpayers of deploying comparable U.S. missions,"](#) disengaging from the UN in any capacity makes little fiscal sense.

The rise of US isolationism contributes to a more unstable world— a world in which everyone is worse off. Only through engagement with international organizations, respect for global institutions and norms, and investing in worldwide initiatives does America (and the world) truly benefit.

"Only through engagement and investing in worldwide initiatives does America (and the world) truly benefit."

WHAT CAN YOU DO:

1. **Contact members of your Congressional delegation and inform them of the dangers of adopting isolationist practices.**
2. **Converse with family, friends, and neighbors about the importance of constructive US involvement on the global stage.**
3. **Donate to the United Nations and NGOs affiliated with the United Nations.**

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Charles P. Howard, Sr.: Iowan, UN Correspondent, and Advocate for Racial Justice and Human Rights



Debra DeLaet | Executive Director, Iowa United Nations Association

The life of [Charles P. Howard, Sr.](#), an Iowan who became a UN Correspondent, shines light on the intersection of domestic and international politics during the Cold War and the era of African decolonization.

Born in 1890 in Des Moines, Howard made notable achievements during his lifetime. In 1917, he graduated from the Fort Des Moines officer-candidate school and went on to serve in France during World War I. After the war, he returned to Iowa where he completed his law degree at Drake University in 1920. Refused admission to the [American Bar Association](#) (ABA) as a Black lawyer, Howard co-founded the [National Bar Association](#) (NBA), a national network of Black lawyers, in 1925. During the 1920s and 1930s, Howard also served as a columnist for the *Iowa Bystander*, an Iowa newspaper published for a predominantly African American audience. In 1939, Howard also founded the [Iowa Observer](#), an African American newspaper that later expanded to Indiana and Wisconsin.

Throughout his career in both law and journalism, Howard was committed to the pursuit of racial justice and human rights for Black Americans. In 1948-49, he served as lead attorney for Edna Griffin and other Black Iowans in their lawsuits against [Katz Drug Store for discrimination](#). Due to an array of client complaints about ethical misconduct, Howard voluntarily surrendered his law license in 1951 and, despite personal efforts and public advocacy, was never readmitted to the Iowa Bar.

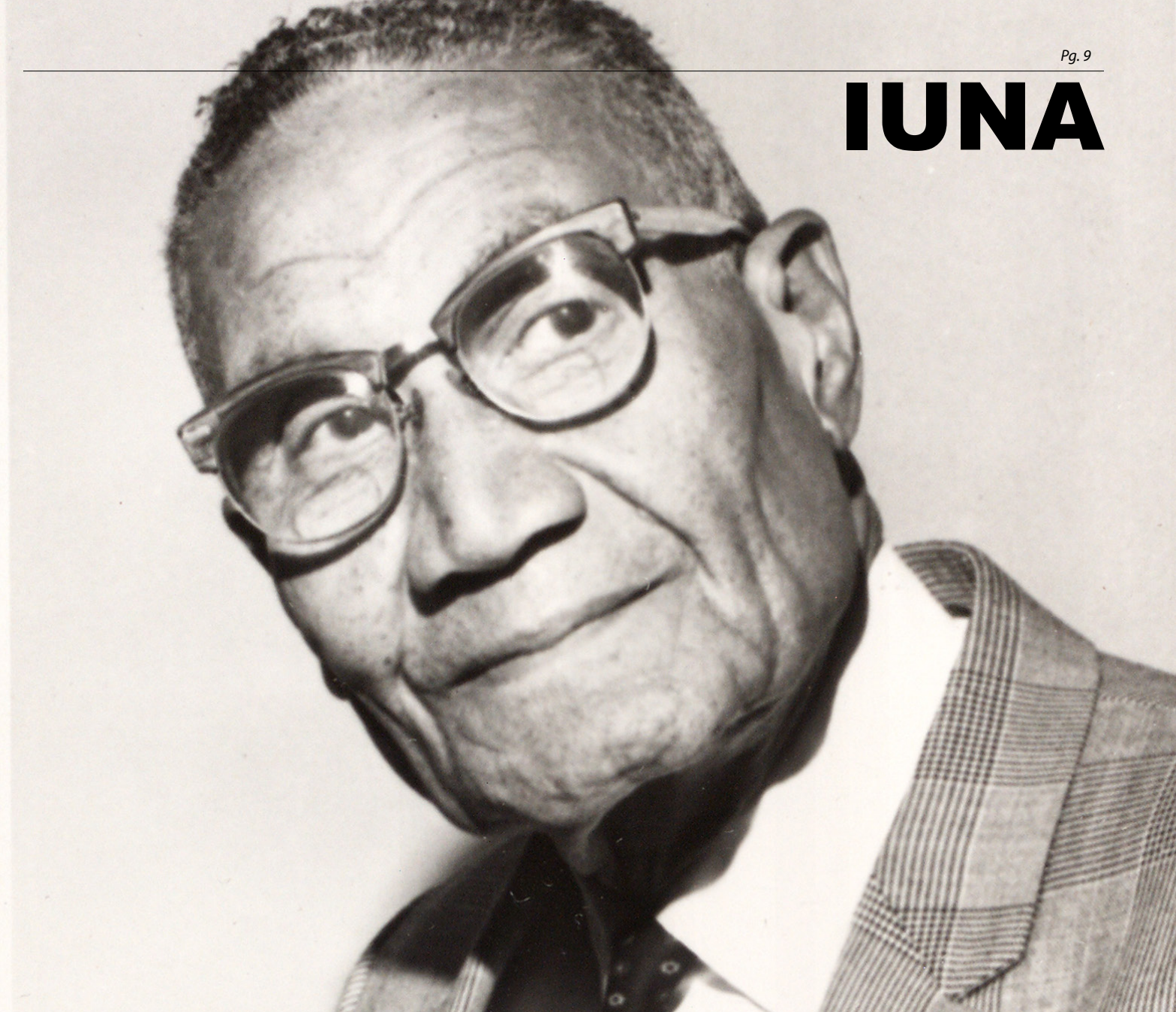
Like many Black activists during the post-World War II era, Howard's human rights activism got tangled up with the emerging ideological politics of the Cold War. Howard's activism aligned with outreach by Black organizations to the new United Nations as an international institution to which

they could appeal for human rights and racial justice. In 1947, the NAACP submitted [An Appeal to the World](#), a statement documenting widespread racial injustices and violence, to the United Nations asking for the organization to provide redress Black Americans. In 1951, the Civil Rights Congress submitted a petition titled [We Charge Genocide](#) to the United Nations, using the newly adopted [Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide](#) as a framework for analyzing and advocating against racial violence and injustice in the United States.

Reflecting efforts by Black advocacy organizations to internationalize the struggle for human rights in the United States, Howard worked closely with Paul Robeson, W.E.B. DuBois and Charlotta Bass in efforts to fight Jim Crow segregation in the Panama Canal Zone. Each of these Black activists was surveilled by the FBI during the 1940s due to both their ties with the Soviet Union and their advocacy for racial justice and equality during this period of history. In her book [Eyes Off the Prize: The United Nations and the African American Struggle for Human Rights, 1944-1955](#), historian Carol Anderson shows how the struggle for human rights for African Americans narrowed to the pursuit of civil and political rights as the work of Black activists like Robeson and DuBois was discredited by their ideological ties to Communist ideology and the Soviet Union. Howard's professional trajectory was likewise shaped by these political dynamics. Howard received widespread public criticism after attending the 1950 World Peace Congress (a Communist-sponsored event) in Warsaw, Poland and subsequently moved to New York City in 1951.

In New York, Howard worked as a UN correspondent whose work focused on the decolonization movements in Africa and on the

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struggles of newly independent African countries. Published as part of the Howard News Syndicate, a group of 34 newspapers in the United States and abroad, Howard's UN correspondence examined the intersection of domestic struggles for racial justice and human rights in the United States and self-determination movements for African peoples seeking independence from European colonial powers.

The [Charles Preston Howard Collection](#) in the Drake University Archives offers rich, primary source material including Howard's UN correspondence along with other documentary evidence chronicling both domestic and global struggles for racial

justice. In a 1960 editorial, Howard explicitly linked lunch-counter sit-ins in the American South to anti-colonial resistance movements throughout Africa. Howard's UN correspondence also includes a "hate letter" sent by the Ku Klux Klan to UN delegates from predominantly Black countries and UN Ambassador Adlai Stevenson's response. As this exchange shows, it was impossible to disentangle the domestic struggle for racial justice in the United States from broader global struggles for racial justice and human rights.

...

Charles P. Howard, Sr., died in 1969.



Captain John H. Fraser Receives Hawkeye Distinguished Veteran Award

 **Eric Adae | Board President, Iowa United Nations Association**

Captain John H. Fraser (Ret.), former president of the Iowa United Nations Association (IUNA), was honored with the Hawkeye Distinguished Veterans Award on Friday, November 1, 2024. The impressive ceremony took place at the Richey Ballroom in the Iowa Memorial Union (IMU) on the University of Iowa campus.

Established in 2015, the Hawkeye Distinguished Veterans Award recognizes outstanding service to the United States, their communities, and the University of Iowa. Recipients are selected annually from members of the armed forces.

Captain Fraser’s award citation highlighted his strong connection to the University of Iowa, his honorable military service, and his significant contributions to the community.

Along with Captain Fraser (U.S. Navy), other distinguished veterans were honored, including:

- Colonel Edwin “Andy” Anderson (U.S. Army)
- Lieutenant Howard Cowen (U.S. Navy)
- Master Sergeant David Dierks (U.S. Army)
- Colonel Robert Hedgepeth (U.S. Army)

Additionally, Captain Zachary Graham (U.S. Army) received the Hawkeye Distinguished Veterans “Larry Lockwood” Student Award.

Several board members of the Iowa United Nations Association and friends of the IUNA were present to celebrate with Captain John Fraser. These included Dr. Eric Kwame Adae (President), Professor Deb DeLaet (Executive Director), and Ed and Jane Cranston. Congratulations to Captain John H. Fraser! Your continued service and dedication inspire us all.

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SUCCESSFUL MATCHING CHALLENGE FUNDRAISER!

We are delighted to announce the success of our recent Matching Challenge Fundraiser. John Fraser, longtime member and former President of the Iowa UNA Board of Directors, issued a matching gift appeal to the Iowa Division of UNA-USA. He pledged a matching gift of up to \$10,000. We successfully met the fundraising target of \$10,000 after our Annual Assembly in September, and John has donated \$10,000 to match this amount. John’s incredible generosity has allowed us to double the impact of this fundraising initiative. The success of this initiative will help sustain our work advocating for peace, human rights, sustainable development, gender equity, and climate action. Thanks to John and all of our donors for helping to make this achievement possible!

It is not too late to contribute to our 2024 fundraising efforts.

To donate online, go to www.iowauna.org and select Donate button.

Please send checks to:
Iowa United Nations Association/ 20 E. Market St./ Iowa City, IA 52245

& WHERE TO FIND US & HOW TO REACH US

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HELP US BY DONATING!

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Your generous donations help support our work in support of climate action, gender equity, human rights, and refugees. To donate online, go to www.iowauna.org and select the Donate button. You also may donate to Iowa UNA through Venmo @Iowa-UNA.

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS*

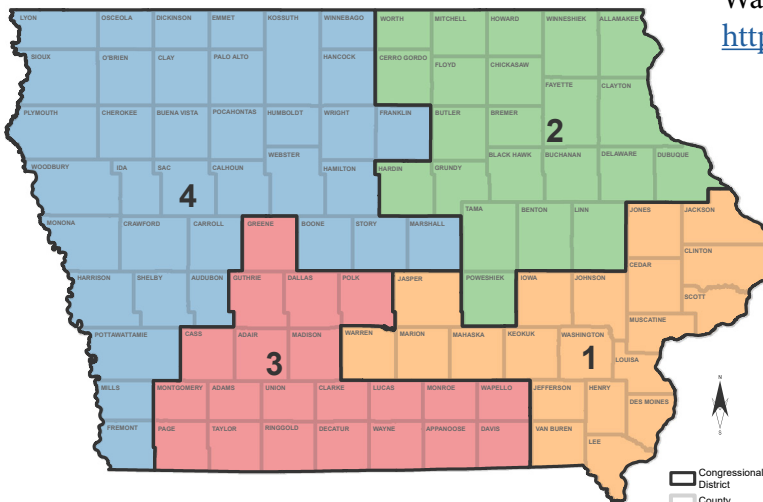
***In January of 2025**

President Donald Trump (R)
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20006
www.whitehouse.gov/contact

Senator Charles Grassley (R)
135 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20510
(202) 224-3744
www.grassley.senate.gov/contact

Senator Joni Ernst (R)
111 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20510
(202) 224-3524
www.ernst.senate.gov/contact

IOWA CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICTS
Effective Beginning with the Elections in 2022 for the 118th U.S. Congress



Prepared by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency

District 1: Representative Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)
1716 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-6576
<https://millermeeks.house.gov/>

District 2: Representative Ashley Hinson (R)
1429 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2911
www.hinson.house.gov/

District 3: Representative Zach Nunn (R)
1034 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-5476
nunn.house.gov/

District 4: Representative Randy Feenstra (R)
1440 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington D.C. 20515
(202) 225-4426
feenstra.house.gov