



Iowa Cancer
Consortium

www.canceriowa.org

2026
Gubernatorial
Candidate
Survey

Disclaimer

The Iowa Cancer Consortium is a nonpartisan organization. Responses included in this document were provided directly by candidates and were not edited. Candidates who filed with the Iowa Secretary of State for the 2026 Primary were invited to respond to a survey via email. This document is in no way an endorsement for any 2026 gubernatorial candidate. This survey report was produced for informational purposes only.

About the Iowa Cancer Consortium

For more than two decades, the Iowa Cancer Consortium has been Iowa's statewide cancer control partnership uniting leaders, organizations, and experts who are committed to reducing the burden of cancer in Iowa. By bringing together partners from healthcare, public health, research, nonprofits, and communities, the Consortium supports coordinated, non-competitive collaboration that strengthens local and statewide cancer control efforts. This collaborative model ensures that communities – urban and rural – can access the knowledge, tools, and support needed to address Iowa's high cancer burden.

2026 Candidates and Affiliations

State Representative Eddie Andrews, Republican

U.S. Representative Randy Feenstra, Republican

Zach Lahn, Republican

State Auditor Rob Sand, Democrat

Former State Representative Brad Sherman, Republican

Former Department of Administrative Services Director Adam Steen, Republican

Cover Image

"Sun Setting on an Iowa Corn Field" by [Demian Tejeda-Benitez](#) (Clear Lake, IA), 2020. Courtesy of [Unsplash](#).



Cancer Control Vision

Q: Do you plan to increase state funding for cancer prevention, control, and research? If yes, how would you do this?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

As Governor, it is my vision to make high-quality healthcare affordable and accessible for all Iowans – and that includes getting to the bottom of the high cancer rates impacting our state. Virtually every Iowan has a personal connection to cancer – from receiving a devastating diagnosis, learning that a family member or friend has cancer, or losing a loved one to this awful disease. My childhood best friend died from cancer at a young age. Under my administration, we will work diligently to reverse this trend by investing in cancer research and partnering with our world-renowned universities to find cures and save lives. I will also work with the legislature to secure funding for cancer research and ensure that Iowans – no matter their zip code – can receive the preventative care that they need and deserve close to home.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

After traveling to all 99 counties and hearing from Iowans at 100 town halls last summer, it's clear that cancer is one of the top issues on voters' minds. We need to start addressing it like the crisis it is, unlike our current elected officials. That starts by properly investing in research, control, and

prevention, because preventing cancer is a whole heck of a lot cheaper than treating cancer.

This is a multi-faceted problem that will take a multi-faceted approach to addressing. I've released a plan with meaningful proposals that aim to improve Iowans' health so they can live better, healthier lives. In it, I outline my plan for radon mitigation, funding water quality monitors, establishing a public alert system for dirty water, increasing wetlands, expanding conservation efforts, tackling smoking and tobacco use, and much more. You can read more about it [here](#).

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

The state's role in the fight against cancer is one of facilitating public/private partnership. Specifically, to ensure the private sector has the tools it needs to innovate and create necessary pathways to prevent cancer and provide the highest quality treatment options. Far too often, government entities get in the way of innovation and I would champion adequate funding for independent research, as well as, develop a dedicated enterprise within the executive branch to ensure the right people – those with the background, experience, and education necessary to fight cancer – have a voice, a seat, and a role in stopping cancer in its tracks.



Iowa Cancer Plan

Q: The Iowa Cancer Plan is Iowa's blueprint for action, created by experts and Iowans across the state to provide proven strategies to reduce the burden of cancer in Iowa. How do you envision using the Iowa Cancer Plan to guide cancer prevention, control, and research priorities in the state?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

As Governor, an important priority for me is to listen to Iowans, understand their concerns, and pass policy that improves their lives. To that end, I recently had the opportunity to visit with a mom from Lansing, Iowa whose now two-year-old daughter received a cancer diagnosis a few months after she was born. Hearing her story and the challenges her daughter and her family faced during a very uncertain and tragic time was sobering. These are the stories that elected officials need to hear as we invest in cancer research, for both adults and children, and work towards finding lifesaving cures and promoting cancer prevention. I appreciate that the Iowa Cancer Plan includes real accounts from real Iowans who have been impacted by cancer. I believe that the first step to lower our cancer rates is to listen and engage with Iowans.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond

Rob Sand, Democrat

As governor, I'll always listen to Iowans knowledgeable in their field to guide my decision-making, especially around matters as critical as addressing cancer. The Iowa Cancer Plan is a great

place to start for figuring out how to tackle this crisis head on, and I'll empower the doctors and scientists behind it to lead the way in solving this problem.

We share the same goals: increasing access to affordable health care coverage, decreasing radon exposure, focusing on water quality, reducing alcohol and tobacco use, and so much more. My Healthier Iowa for All plan covers my vision for our state, and it includes many of the things in the Iowa Cancer Plan already. It also includes establishing a Cabinet-level Cancer Task Force that will work with experts to identify best practices and help tailor solutions to specific regions or communities across the state.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

The Iowa Cancer Plan is one of the starting points for independent research and accessing the expertise necessary to win the cancer fight. My leadership style requires bringing the right people to the table to make recommendations and develop winning strategies. From my perspective, the Iowa Cancer Plan is a fantastic head start to drive treatment and prevention results Iowans deserve and need.



Access to Care

Q: All Iowans should have the same opportunities to prevent cancer, find it as early as possible, and access the highest quality treatment and long-term survivor support. As governor, what specific executive actions or legislative priorities will you champion to ensure that an Iowan's zip code, background, access to health insurance, or other difference does not determine their cancer outcome?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

I'm running for Governor to make high-quality healthcare affordable and accessible for all Iowans. No matter their financial status or zip code, Iowans deserve to be able to see a doctor close to home and at a price they can afford when they need care. I am passionate about healthcare access because I was a volunteer EMT in my hometown of Hull for 15 years. I responded to emergencies where seconds could be the difference between life and death, and saw firsthand the importance of local access to care as I transported patients to local clinics and hospitals. Especially in rural Iowa, our neighbors should not have to travel 50-75 miles to get their yearly physical, receive preventative care for illnesses like cancer, or, in times of emergency, be transported to an emergency room as quickly as possible. My administration will be focused on expanding healthcare access, lowering insurance premiums, and protecting rural pharmacies and hospitals. Every Iowan deserves access to high-quality, affordable care.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

On day one, I would begin reversing the privatization of Medicaid, which has been a disaster for our state and those in its care. It prioritized profits over the health of Iowa families, reduced access to care for tens of thousands of

Iowans, and has been an administrative nightmare. As State Auditor, I audited Iowa's privatized Medicaid system and found a nearly 900% increase in illegal denials of care after privatization. One of the best things we can do to ensure better access to care is end this decade-long failed experiment.

Protecting rural hospitals and expanding tele-health services is also a vital part of serving all Iowans, regardless of where they live. Iowans in our rural communities often live several miles away from the nearest hospital or clinic, putting care out of reach. We should support our remaining rural hospitals and clinics while also increasing access to tele-health services. We can do so by expanding insurance coverage for health care offered via tele-health at the same rate as in-person care for all care, and require audio services be covered as well. Access to affordable, quality health care shouldn't depend on your zip code.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

Every Iowan, regardless of demographic, should benefit from high quality medical care, including the education and access to preventative care, treatment and long-term support. My commitment to Iowans is to ensure transparency, accountability, and a culture of support in all areas of our state. It will be a team effort and will require real talk and real solutions to ensure our communities, and families are healthy and remain healthy.



Environmental Risk Factors

Q: Many Iowans are concerned about the potential links between environmental contaminants in soil and water and Iowa's cancer rates. How would you approach the state's role in evaluating, monitoring, and mitigating environmental risk factors linked to Iowa's cancer burden?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

Every Iowan deserves access to clean drinking water. When Iowans turn on the tap, they should feel confident that their water is safe and drinkable. I'm a father of four. My kids drink the same water that we all do, and I want our water to be the safest and cleanest possible.

Being from rural Iowa, I know that nobody cares more about the health of our water and soil than our farmers. Iowa farmers have implemented practices like buffer strips, terracing, cover crops, other measures to keep our water safe. Water quality is a paramount concern for all Iowans, and my administration will take this matter seriously and work to find solutions.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

First, I'd be investing in water quality monitors, not defunding them like our current elected officials. While insiders deny a water quality issue even exists, Iowans are facing the very real consequences of the defunding of water quality monitors across the state. They would rather keep Iowans' heads in the sand than address water quality issues. It's mind-boggling. Iowans should know what's in their water.

I'd also implement transparent manure management plans, so every Iowan can see how, when, and where the manure is spread on Iowa farmland. A single, free, online form will replace

handwritten records. It isn't any more work for growers and producers – it just means we all can see what the plans are and help steer in the right direction anyone tempted to forget them.

Lastly, I'd invest in digester technology. Right now, any manure decomposing freely releases methane—a potent greenhouse gas—and nitrates from a form that is hard to predict due to weather and hard to haul. Digesters control that breakdown in a controlled environment, capturing methane to be sold to renewable natural gas companies and turning nitrate into a different form, still for use as fertilizer but less likely to wash into rivers and streams. Digesters gives us a domestic source for fertilizer, lowering costs for farmers while tackling the water quality crisis head-on. And making each hog more profitable removes the pressure on farmers for more hogs.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

Much like my above responses. Every Iowan deserves access to independent research that tells the truth. Far too often, politics gets in the way of truth to score political points. Politics should be removed from the equation and real data should be the talking point. From my perspective, environmental risk factors are just one component of the issues impacting cancer in our state. There are many other risk factors that need to be examined as a whole. My approach requires bringing professionals to the table, dedicated project management, and adequate funding to keep Iowa families safe and healthy.



Radon

Q: Iowa has one of the highest average radon concentrations in the nation. Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer in non-smokers, and the second-leading cause in smokers. What is your strategy for helping Iowans navigate Iowa's high radon levels?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

We will help protect Iowans from radon by ensuring we better understand why radon is prevalent in Iowa and how we can mitigate its impacts on our communities. That's why, as Governor, I will work with the legislature to invest in research to find solutions to help reduce radon and deliver high-quality, affordable healthcare for all Iowans.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

Iowa is the number one state for radon levels, and it's a serious issue across our state. Here's the good news: radon testing is cheap, and it's definitely cheaper than continuing to do nothing to address cancer. In my plan, I call for requiring home sale contracts to provide a radon warning and information about how to test for radon, and home

inspectors to mention Iowa's high radon levels and ask the potential buyer if they want to have a test done. The state can facilitate the training of more individuals to become radon mitigation professionals since the good ones we do have will be overbooked if they aren't already.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

Radon is an issue and the State of Iowa is making strides in this area. That said, we need to continue to find ways to reduce radon exposures. We should continue to create pathways for radon mitigation systems in homes across Iowa. We should also explore ways to get more Iowans outside and enjoy our State's natural resources. Statistically, Iowans are spending more time inside and less time outside. We need to pursue a culture of health and prosperity in Iowa. Providing more access to natural resources and challenging families to get outside will act to reduce radon exposure and enhance radon mitigation efforts currently in place.



Tobacco Prevention and Control

Q: Tobacco remains the leading cause of preventable disease and premature death in the United States and in Iowa. Lung cancer remains the number one cause of cancer deaths in Iowa, and smoking causes 80% of lung cancers in the state. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that Iowa spend \$30.1 million on tobacco prevention and control. Iowa currently allocates only \$4.02 million. As governor, where do you see opportunities to address high tobacco usage rates in Iowa?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

As a father of four, ensuring that our kids and our families can lead healthy, fulfilling lives is important to me. That's why I want every Iowan to have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare when they need it. Whether it's a routine checkup, preventative measures, or emergency care, cost and access should not prohibit Iowans from receiving the quality care they deserve. Educating young Iowans about the risks of tobacco use, and aiding tobacco cessation efforts, remains the best way to ensure that we can prevent lung cancer and the adverse health consequences of tobacco use.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

We should look at all avenues to help Iowans kick unhealthy habits. We need to adequately fund tobacco prevention and education instead of

constantly underfunding programs and hoping the problem just disappears. If we want to tackle the cancer crisis, we cannot overlook the fact that lung cancer is leading the way in Iowa and that smoking dramatically increases the risk of getting it.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

My dream would be for Iowans to stop smoking. I've seen the results of smoking in my own family and it could have been prevented. Iowa should partner with local communities, local churches, local schools to spread the important message of the impact of smoking cessation, which should include: tobacco, vaping, and marijuana. Funding dedicated to marketing and other programs focused on prevention and cessation only matter if people are willing to listen and make the decision to quit. I would evaluate current programming and determine how effective our existing dollars are and move forward from there.



Cancer Prevention Vaccination

Q: Two vaccines are used in cancer prevention efforts. The HPV vaccine is a primary tool for preventing six types of cancer, and the Hepatitis B vaccine prevents chronic hepatitis B virus, which is a cause of liver cancer. As Governor, how would you approach vaccination policy to address public health outcomes?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

From polio to measles, we know that vaccines can save lives. However, I do not support vaccine mandates. As a father of four, I believe that parents should consult with their family physicians about healthcare decisions and determine the best path forward for their children and their families.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

I support a policy that balances public health with the rights of individuals. Iowans should consult their physicians to make the best decisions for themselves and their families. Yet, just recently, there was a measles outbreak in Johnson County. If we want to stop diseases that have already been eradicated from coming back into our communities,

then we should rely on safe vaccines, including the HPV and Hepatitis B vaccines. We should also take people's concerns seriously, without giving up effective disease prevention tools. Vaccines save lives, and I'm in favor of using tools that save lives. My opponents want to ban all future mRNA vaccines no matter how many people are dying. I do not.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

I am an advocate for informed consent and medical liberty. I do not support vaccine mandates but fully support a parent or family's right to choose whether or not to receive a vaccine. Vaccine policy falls directly in my desire as Governor to ensure independent research has been developed to give parents and families every piece of data available to make a decision based upon their family desires.



Research

Q: Cancer research is essential for understanding how best to prevent cancer, find it at its most treatable stages, and for developing innovative treatments and care that reduce the healthcare burden and improve outcomes for all Iowans. What is your vision for expanding cancer research in Iowa?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

Investing in and expanding cancer research is a key component of my vision to deliver high-quality, affordable healthcare for all Iowans. We must continue to allocate resources to cancer research so that we can find cures and save lives. As Governor, I'll also partner with our universities to not only discover new treatments to combat common types of cancer, but also find innovative therapies for rare cancers, including pediatric cancer. Working with experts and families impacted by cancer, I will work with the legislature to dedicate the necessary funding to reduce Iowa's high rates of cancer incidence and turn diagnoses into stories of hope and resilience, not devastation.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

Iowa faces one of the fastest growing cancer rates in the nation, and we need to treat this like the crisis that it is. That starts with investing

significantly more into cancer research so we can identify the root causes and work to eliminate them at the source. As an Iowan, I always want to beat Nebraska. They invested over \$23 million into cancer research while we've just scratched the surface. Let's put our universities to work by investing in research and giving Iowa families a fighting chance to live better, healthier lives, and beat Nebraska while we're at it. The timeline to tackle Iowa's cancer crisis thanks to insiders who have put this crisis on the backburner is currently multiple generations away, a finish line far too distant for a state staring down a cancer rate that demands action.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

The state in its latest legislative session has made more strides into properly funding cancer research. As Governor, I will monitor current funding levels to ensure adequate dollars are supporting cancer research. I believe it is a duty of the state to ensure our families and children are protected to the fullest extent possible.



Coalition Partnership

Q. The Iowa Cancer Consortium represents a broad coalition of healthcare providers, public health professionals, researchers, cancer survivors, caregivers, community members, policy makers, and others. The coalition brings together key partners to address cancer prevention, early detection, treatment, and quality of life across all Iowan's 99 counties. If you are elected, how will the Governor's office collaborate with non-partisan statewide coalitions, like the [Iowa Cancer Consortium](#), to coordinate cancer prevention and control efforts to reduce Iowa's cancer burden?

Eddie Andrews, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Randy Feenstra, Republican

As Governor, I will engage with every stakeholder that is committed to reducing cancer rates in Iowa, investing in critical research, and saving lives. From survivors, families, and caregivers to researchers, universities, and nonprofit organizations, I will ensure that the voices of all are heard as we debate and pass policies to lower the scourge of cancer in Iowa. I will also work with these stakeholders to deliver high-quality, affordable healthcare for all Iowans regardless of their ability to pay or zip code.

Zach Lahn, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Rob Sand, Democrat

I plan to be a governor for all, and if you have a

good idea that will help Iowans live better, healthier lives, my door will always be open. I'd look forward to any opportunities to collaborate with the Iowa Cancer Consortium and anyone else willing to work together on tackling the cancer crisis in our state.

Brad Sherman, Republican

The candidate did not respond.

Adam Steen, Republican

As Governor, I would ensure the Iowa Cancer Consortium and organizations similar to the Iowa Cancer Consortium have a seat at the table. The only way we, as a state, will solve the cancer issue is to have educated, experienced, informed, and passionate people at the table. If we all work together, we will find pathways and innovations that will stop cancer in its tracks.

Thank you!

The Consortium wishes to thank the candidates who took the time to respond to this survey and participate in the Gubernatorial Candidate Forum on April 17, 2026. A recording of the presentation may be found on our YouTube channel or by visiting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flRNVjD7hI0&t=13s>

Contact Us

If you have questions, please visit the Iowa Cancer Consortium on the web (www.canceriowa.org) or send us an email staff@canceriowa.org.

