

THE NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE'S
WEEKLY NEWS PUBLICATION

Stories published daily at
update.legislature.ne.gov

UPDATE

Tax incentives proposed to attract large data centers



Sen. Abbie Cornett (left) discusses LB1118 with Sen. John Harms.

Companies looking to build large data centers could receive tax incentives to locate in Nebraska under a bill advanced from general file Feb. 9.

Under LB1118, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Abbie Cornett, a company investing at least \$300 million in qualified property for the purpose of building a data center would qualify

for the incentives. The company must also create 30 or more new jobs.

The bill defines data centers as facilities that are designed to centralize the storage, management or dissemination of data and information.

Cornett said she introduced the bill to help make Nebraska a more attractive location for new development. She said the state has an obligation to focus resources where they'll have the most benefit.

"Neighboring states have incentives that are more attractive," Cornett said. "This bill is essential to building Nebraska and creating new jobs."

Businesses qualifying for the incentives would be eligible for an exemption of tangible personal property taxes. Exemptions for sales and use taxes, as well as real property taxes, also would be provided under the

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Bill would increase ag commodity checkoff funds

The Agriculture Committee heard testimony Feb. 7 on two bills that would increase checkoff funds for wheat and corn commodities.

LB905, introduced by Holdrege Sen. Tom Carlson, would amend the Nebraska Wheat Board's current excise tax levy of 1.25 cents per bushel of wheat to be 0.5 percent of the net market value of wheat sold through commercial channels in Nebraska. The board could increase the excise tax by 0.75 percent of net market value.

The bill also would allow gifts, grants and other non-checkoff revenues to be remitted to the Nebraska Wheat Development, Utilization and Marketing Fund and would remove a restriction that limits wheat research contracts

to one year.

The bill would allow Nebraska to increase its education, research and promotional efforts for wheat commodities, Carlson said.

"This is a way for growers to come together and make a decision on how they want to fund and promote their crop," he said.

Larry Flohr, chairman of the Nebraska Wheat Board, testified in support of the bill, saying switching to a percent basis would help the board's efforts. Wheat checkoff rates have not changed since 1989, Flohr said, but promotion costs have since increased considerably.

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Tax incentives proposed to attract large data centers

(continued from front page)

proposal.

A “callback” provision would authorize the state to reclaim property taxes, plus interest, if a company fails to meet established benchmarks.

Kearney Sen. Galen Hadley, who made LB1118 his priority bill, said that nearly every aspect of our daily lives requires data storage. He cited the need to remain competitive with surrounding states for new development as the data storage industry grows.

“These incentives put us in a position to attract and incent hundreds of high technology jobs,” Hadley said.

Fullerton Sen. Annette Dubas said a lack of resources makes it difficult to bring traditional manufacturing plants to many rural areas, so the ability to attract large data centers could have a significant impact.

“Many people want to settle in small, safe communities with good schools,” Dubas said. “These data

“These incentives put us in a position to attract and incent hundreds of high technology jobs.”

-- Sen. Galen Hadley

centers are ideally suited to rural Nebraska.”

Schuyler Sen. Chris Langemeier

said he initially questioned the impact of large data centers on the state’s water supply, especially in fully-appropriated areas. He said water is the chief cooling method used in the data centers, which require unusually large amounts of power to operate.

“Due to our climate, water would most likely only be needed in the summer months,” Langemeier said. “The method used would pump water for cooling and then inject the water directly back into the ground.”

Cornett said the bill could dramatically improve the state’s economic development in the future.

“This is a bill that can take Nebraska forward to the next level,” she said.

Senators advanced the bill from general file on a 41-0 vote.

Bill would increase ag commodity checkoff funds

(continued from front page)

Dayton Christensen, president of the Nebraska Wheat Growers Association, also testified in support of the bill, saying budget constraints have limited wheat research projects. The change would enable the board to extend research projects at the University of Nebraska in areas of agronomic performance, Christensen said.

John Hansen, president of the Nebraska Farmers Union, testified in opposition to the bill. Permitting the board to receive noncheckoff revenues would allow special interests to have more of a financial influence on the state’s agricultural economy, he said.

LB1057, also introduced by Carl-

son, would increase the current fee limit of 0.4 cents per bushel of corn to 0.5 cents per bushel levied by the Nebraska Corn Board. The fee could not exceed 1.0 cent per bushel under the bill.

The bill also would allow non-checkoff revenues to be remitted to the Corn Development, Utilization and Marketing Fund.

Carlson said the wealth and the future of Nebraska’s agriculture relies heavily on corn production. Farmers must produce corn using limited resources, he said, so they need to invest in research to find new and innovative ways to do it.

Alan Tiemann, chairman of the Nebraska Corn Board, testified in support of the bill, saying Nebraska has been lacking in corn research and foreign market development. Nebraska ranks third in corn production but last in corn checkoff rates, he said, so the state is missing many promotional opportunities.

John Hansen, president of the Nebraska Farmer’s Union, testified in opposition to the bill, saying he has concerns about giving authority of an excise tax to an unelected board.

The committee took no immediate action on either bill. ■

Banking, Commerce & Insurance

Bill would increase minimum auto insurance liability limits

The Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee heard testimony Feb. 6 on a bill that would increase minimum liability policy limits for auto insurance in Nebraska.

Current law requires minimum policy limits of \$25,000 per person, \$50,000 per occurrence and \$25,000 for property damage.

LB1003, introduced by Columbus Sen. Paul Schumacher, would increase those limits to \$50,000 per person, \$100,000 per occurrence and \$50,000 for property damage.

Schumacher said the current limits were set in 1998 and have not been adjusted since.

“A simple adjustment for inflation would put [the rates] at double that today,” he said. “This can be looked at as a simple currency adjustment.”

Dan Loring of the Independent Insurance Agents of Nebraska spoke in support of the bill, saying medical costs have “skyrocketed” in recent years and the state’s minimum insurance requirements do not reflect those increases.

LB1003 would increase the cost of a standard policy for two adults with two cars by approximately three percent per year, or \$25 dollars, Loring said. Such an increase would not bankrupt the average Nebraska family, he said.



Sen. Paul Schumacher

Jim Dobler, representing the Nebraska Insurance Information Service, testified in opposition to the bill.

Individuals who purchase minimal insurance do so because they cannot afford more coverage, he said, adding that increasing the required minimum may result in more uninsured drivers.

“Our concern is that if you raise the minimums, you’ll affect the uninsured motorist population,” Dobler said.

Tad Frazier of the American Insurance Association also opposed the bill, saying it may lead to more drivers purchasing insurance in order to register vehicles and then dropping the coverage because they cannot afford to continue it.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Bill would require insurance coverage for autism spectrum disorders

Health insurance policies issued in Nebraska would be required to cover the screening, diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in individuals up to 21 years of age under a bill heard Feb. 7 by the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee.

As introduced, LB1129 would require coverage for behavioral health treatment, including applied behavioral analysis (ABA) and other evidence-based care up to a maximum benefit of \$70,000 per year for individuals 9 years of age or younger and \$20,000 per year for those 10 to 21 years of age.

Lincoln Sen. Colby Coash, sponsor of the bill, recommended that LB1129 be amended to require \$70,000 of coverage for

the first three years of treatment and \$20,000 for each subsequent year until age 21. He said the change would allow children diagnosed with ASD to access intensive therapies for the first three years of treatment, regardless of the age of diagnosis, which he said is essential to an individual’s long-term outcome.

“This is not new,” Coash said. “We would not be the first state to say that this kind of coverage makes sense for its citizens.”

The bill defines ASD as any of the pervasive developmental disorders as defined by the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), including autistic disorder and Asperger’s disorder.

Michael Wasmer of Autism Speaks testified in support of the bill, saying 29 states have passed similar legislation.

Wasmer said premium rate increases have been minimal in the other states that have implemented autism insurance reform. He said an actuarial study using Nebraska demographics estimates a \$1.21 per member, per month increase if LB1129 becomes law.

“[This bill] is cost effective and the right thing to do for Nebraskans,” he said.

Cynthia Ellis, a pediatrician at the Munroe-Meyer Institute in Omaha, also supported the bill. She said approximately one in 110 children is diagnosed with ASD. Well established behavioral treatments exist, she said, but rarely are covered by private insurance or Medicaid.

“Autism is fairly common,” Ellis said. “Autism is treatable.”

Cathy Clark-Martinez, whose son has autism, testified in support of the bill, saying her family filed for bankruptcy after paying \$62,000 per year for behavioral therapy that insur-



Sen. Colby Coash

ance would not cover. She said her 8-year-old son missed a valuable year of therapy while the family weighed their options.

“Finances were the only reason we didn’t [initially] do ABA,” Clark-Martinez said.

Jan McKenzie of the Nebraska Insurance Federation testified in opposition, saying insurance providers do not define ABA therapy as a medically necessary treatment for autism spectrum disorders.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Business & Labor

Immunity proposed for employer referrals

Employers providing job references for a current or former employee would receive civil immunity under a bill discussed during a Business and Labor Committee hearing Feb. 6.

LB959, introduced by Fremont Sen. Charlie Janssen, would provide absolute immunity to any employer who discloses factual information during a reference check. Janssen said the protection is necessary to encourage a free flow of information.

“Many companies are reluctant to offer referrals beyond the basic information,” Janssen said. “Pertinent information is withheld because it is not worth the potential for a time-consuming and expensive legal challenge.”

Employers who are shown to have disclosed information with actual malice or deliberate intent to mislead would not be granted immunity.

Steve Sexton of Fremont testified



Sen. Charlie Janssen

in support of the bill, saying the threat of legal action has caused a shift away from candid and honest referrals.

“Where competition is extremely tough, it can be a disservice to the candidate to only provide bland biographical information,” Sexton said.

Kathleen Neary, representing the Nebraska Association of Trial Attorneys, testified in opposition to the bill, calling it a solution to a problem that does not exist.

“There is no onslaught of cases here,” Neary said. “Extending immunity to employers is not a road the state wants to go down.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Recipients of unemployment benefits would be eligible for job training

The state Department of Labor would be authorized to fund job training for recipients of unemployment benefits under a bill discussed during a Business and Labor Committee hearing Feb. 6.

Under LB1152, introduced by Omaha Sen. Steve Lathrop, people currently receiving unemployment benefits would be eligible for job training funded by the state Department of Labor. Lathrop said providing the training would help create a more skilled workforce.

“This would be beneficial for both workers and employers,” Lathrop said.

Steve Howard, representing the Nebraska AFL-CIO, testified in support of the bill, saying providing training to unemployed workers would help to ease the strain on the unemployment benefit system.

“It makes sense to prioritize these



Sen. Steve Lathrop

unemployed workers to receive the training,” Howard said. “Ultimately it would return these people back to work sooner.”

No one testified in opposition to the bill and the committee took no immediate action.

Education

Single-district educational service unit bill advances

A bill that would allow for Lincoln and Omaha to continue operating as single-district educational service units (ESUs) was advanced from general file Feb. 9.

Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) and Omaha Public Schools (OPS) currently are authorized to function as single-district ESUs until 2013. LB446, introduced by York Sen. Greg Adams, would permit both LPS and OPS to continue functioning as single-district ESUs.



Sen. Greg Adams

Adams said the number of students served by the two districts is significantly higher than most of the multi district ESUs. He said that while the two districts would maintain autonomy under his plan, they also would be expected to collaborate with other schools.

“They need to have the option to stand alone,” Adams said. “But they have to recognize that they need to be part of statewide initiatives.”

Under the bill, a school must be categorized as a Class IV or V school to qualify as a single-district ESU. Other ESUs would be required to have at least four school districts in order to levy a property tax.

The current infrastructure funding formula would be modified to reflect a 5 percent decrease in student counts for the single-district ESUs. This would account for the inherent lack of district cooperation in a single-district ESU. An additional 5 percent of core service dollars would be dedicated to statewide initiatives.

Senators advanced the bill to select file on a 34-0 vote.

Funding formula approved for community colleges

State aid to community colleges will be appropriated using a new funding formula passed by the Legislature Feb. 7.

LB946, introduced by York Sen. Greg Adams, will establish a formula for appropriating funds to the state’s community colleges.



Sen. Greg Adams

The initial amount of appropriated state aid - up to \$87.8 million - will be allocated based on the proportionate share of aid received by each community college for fiscal year 2012-13.

Funds in excess of the \$87.8 million - up to \$500,000 - will be appropriated to the Nebraska Community College Student Performance and Occupational Education Grant Fund. The six schools can apply for any portion of that money. An appointed committee will determine how that money is to be allocated.

Any funds remaining after the first two allocations have been made will be distributed as follows:

- 25 percent divided equally to the six community colleges;
- 45 percent based on each school’s average full-time enrollment numbers; and

- 30 percent based on each college’s average reimbursable educational units.

Beginning in FY2013-14, community colleges also will be granted aggregate levy authority of 11.25 cents per \$100 of taxable valuation.

LB946 passed 46-0.

Daily pledge of allegiance would be required in schools

The daily pledge of allegiance would be heard in school classrooms under a bill discussed in an Education Committee hearing Feb. 7.

LB990, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Tony Fulton, would require that all public school students be led in the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag every day school is in session. Students could opt out of the daily pledge. Fulton said all children should learn the importance and meaning of the pledge of allegiance.



Sen. Tony Fulton

“Many schools already have a daily recitation,” Fulton said. “I believe it should be a universal aspect of school life.”

The bill also would require that the U.S. flag and the state flag be displayed in a prominent position in every public school classroom. This provision would apply to each community college and university classroom, as well.

Bob Evnen, state Department of Education president, testified in support of the bill, saying it aligns perfectly with the current revision of social studies standards.

“You cannot have a true and genuine love of country without an understanding of what our country has and has not done well,” Evnen said. “We want students to feel an emotional con-

nection to the history of our country.”

Greg Holloway, representing the Disabled Veterans of America, also testified in support of the bill. He said requiring students to recite the pledge would promote an important part of being an American citizen.

“It’s important that the youth of our nation respect our flag,” Holloway said.

David Moshman, a professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, testified in opposition to the bill. He said patriotism should be spontaneous and voluntary.

“There’s something problematic about compulsory patriotism,” Moshman said. “To believe that simply saying the words equals patriotism is misguided.”

Jon Habben, executive director of the Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association, testified in a neutral capacity. He said he supported the intent of the bill but was unsure of the potential challenges to its constitutionality.

“If it’s going to be a distraction in the classroom, maybe it isn’t worth it,” Habben said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Executive Board

Measures would increase senator salaries, establish compensation commission

Two proposed constitutional changes that would be placed on the November 2012 general election ballot were heard by the Legislature’s Executive Board Feb. 7.



Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh

LR373CA, introduced by Omaha

Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh, would increase state legislators' annual salary from \$12,000 to \$32,000.

Term limits are bringing in many new senators who do not anticipate how demanding it can be to serve, Lautenbaugh said. The \$12,000 salary requires that many of them maintain additional employment while in office but there is little time to do so, he said.

"Our pay is too low and I think we are limiting the number and type of people that can serve as a result," Lautenbaugh said. "There is never a good time to address this issue, but it is long overdue."

Ron Sedlacek of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce testified in support of the proposal. State senators last received a pay raise 23 years ago, Sedlacek said, so the chamber would support the amendment.

LR377CA, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Bill Avery, would require the Legislature to establish a compensation commission that would determine the salary, travel expenses and benefits of state constitutional officers, including the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor of public accounts, state treasurer, attorney general and state senators.



Sen. Bill Avery

The current \$12,000 salary requires that many senators be self-employed or have the financial stability to have a considerable amount of time off to serve, Avery said. "Do we want a legislature where only those who do not need money can serve?" he asked.

Adam Morfeld, executive director of Nebraskans for Civic Reform, testified in support of the proposal, saying the lack of compensation narrows the

field of legislative candidates.

No opposing testimony was given on either resolution and the board took no immediate action on the measures.

General Affairs

Alcohol compliance bill bracketed

Lawmakers gave unanimous consent Feb. 8 to bracket a bill that would prohibit minors assisting with alcohol compliance checks from lying about their age or consuming alcohol.

Under LB60, introduced by Omaha Sen. Bob Krist, law enforcement officers also would be prohibited from consuming alcohol during a compliance check.



Sen. Bob Krist

Krist said the state Liquor Control Commission had agreed to include training on the proper procedure for conducting compliance checks during an upcoming law enforcement workshop. He said the additional training, combined with assurances from the commission that they would not administratively prosecute cases resulting from improper compliance checks, addressed the concerns that led to the bill's introduction.

LB60 was bracketed until April 1, 2012.

Bill would allow entertainment districts

The General Affairs Committee heard testimony Feb. 6 on a bill that would authorize the designation of common areas where alcohol could be consumed.

LB1130, introduced by Lincoln

Sen. Colby Coash, would authorize the creation of entertainment districts and a licensing process for those districts.

An entertainment district would be designated and regulated by a local governing body via city ordinance



Sen. Colby Coash

and could be revoked if found to be a nuisance or a threat to public health, safety or welfare. Entertainment district designations would be filed with the state Liquor Control Commission (LCC).

Under the bill, a local governing body could designate a common area within the district that:

- is shared by entertainment district authorized licensees;
- abuts the licensed premises of the licensees;
- is closed to vehicular traffic when used as a common area; and
- has limited pedestrian accessibility by use of a physical barrier on a permanent or temporary basis.

To operate in the common areas, a business would be required to:

- file an application with the LCC and pay a \$300 fee;
- be located adjacent to a common area within an entertainment district; and
- have a retail liquor license, craft brewery license or microdistillery license.

Each entertainment district licensee would be required to serve alcoholic liquor in a container that displays the business' logo or trade name, which Coash said would hold each one accountable for liquor sales in their individual establishments.

Coash said local governing bodies also could place additional regulations and restrictions on entertainment district licensees.

“This license starts like any other license,” Coash said. “It starts at the local level.”

He said entertainment districts could help retain young professionals in Nebraska and encourage out-of-town visitors.

Dave Landis, deputy director of urban development for the city of Lincoln, testified in support of the bill. The ability to create an entertainment district would help the city promote the new Pinnacle Bank Arena development in the West Haymarket area, he said.

“We want people to come to Lincoln to enjoy something special,” he said. “To create that, we need to have unique and vibrant experiences.”

Brett West of WRK also supported the bill. As a private partner with the city involved in arena-related development, West said an entertainment district would encourage visitors to spend more time and money in the area.

“The project really is focused around the arena ... and extending that event atmosphere,” he said.

Hobert Rupe, executive director of the Liquor Control Commission, testified in support of the bill. The state’s liquor control act was written in 1935, he said, and adding entertainment district would reflect more modern business models.

Rupe said a similar district in Kansas City has resulted in no additional enforcement problems.

No opposition testimony was given and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Ballot vacancy provisions approved

Provisions for filling a general election ballot vacancy are harmonized under a bill passed Feb. 7 by the Legislature.

Under current law, the political party of a candidate who declines a nomination has three days to fill the ballot vacancy but there are different provisions when a candidate exits a race for other reasons.

LB503, sponsored by Omaha Sen. Pete Pirsch, provides consistency in filling ballot vacancies by removing the time constraint in cases of declination and allowing a vacancy to be filled by the executive committee of the vacating candidate. If such a committee does not exist or chooses not to replace the candidate, the vacancy may be filled by a mass convention of the political party.

The bill passed on a 34-0 vote.



Sen. Pete Pirsch

Ban on PSC gifts, contributions proposed

A candidate for or member of the Public Service Commission (PSC) would be prohibited from accepting certain gifts or contributions under a bill heard Feb. 9 by the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee.

Under LB1025, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Bill Avery, a PSC can-

didate or member could not accept a gift or contribution from a person engaged in a business that applies to and receives its authority to conduct business in Nebraska and is subject to oversight by the commission.

An officer, director, partner or member of such a business also would be prohibited from giving a gift or contribution.

Avery said the bill was not the result of any wrongdoing by current or former PSC members, but was introduced because of the addi-



Sen. Bill Avery

tion of oil pipelines to the types of businesses that the PSC regulates.

“The pipeline industry is large; it is very wealthy,” he said. “They have deep pockets and they have a history of using their money to influence public policy.”

Approximately 90 percent of campaign funds raised by members of the commission are donated by individuals and industries that the PSC regulates, Avery said, adding that such a relationship may create the appearance of impropriety.

Jack Gould of Common Cause Nebraska testified in support of the bill, saying that most individual donations from CEOs, board members and directors of regulated industries are small enough not to require reporting and therefore are difficult to track.

“Pipelines add a whole new dimension to this – a new level of seriousness,” he said.

No one testified in opposition and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Health & Human Services

Bill to expand family planning services amended, advanced

Lawmakers gave first-round approval Feb. 7 to a bill intended to expand eligibility for the state's publicly-funded family planning services.

Under LB540, introduced by the Health and Human Services Committee, the state Department of Health and Human Services [DHHS] would be required to submit a state plan amendment or waiver to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), no later than July 1, 2011, to provide medical assistance for family planning services to individuals with a family earned income at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty level.

Lincoln Sen. Kathy Campbell, chairperson of the committee, said testimony during the bill's hearing indicated that 27 states utilize the



Sen. Kathy Campbell

family planning expansion allowed by CMS. The number of abortions in Minnesota has dropped significantly since providing these services to low-income and high-risk women, she said.

"The importance of reaching low-income women to provide good education to them is significant," Campbell said. "This is an important health issue."

A committee amendment, adopted 29-1, clarifies that no state funds would be used to pay for abortion services and changed the application deadline to July 1, 2012.

Lincoln Sen. Tony Fulton offered

an amendment to the committee amendment that would prohibit state funds from being used to promote elective abortion services.

The amendment further would require DHHS to ensure that any funds received under the waiver or state plan amendment would not be spent or used in any way to contract with any entity that performs or promotes elective abortion services or with any entity that affiliates with any entity that performs or promotes elective abortions.

Fulton said 27 clinics in the state provide family planning services but only two perform abortions.

"What I don't want to happen is that those entities that perform abortions can apprehend these dollars," he said. "I want to draw a bright line between those that perform abortions and those that do not."

Omaha Sen. Bob Krist supported the amendment, saying taxpayer dollars should not go to an organization that performs abortions. For example, he said, it would be difficult to ensure that funds provided to Planned Parenthood for other family planning services were kept separate from funds used for abortion services.

Malcolm Sen. Ken Haar opposed the amendment. Government regularly gives money to organizations that are able to segregate those funds successfully, he said, citing religious organizations that also provide social service functions.

"The group that by far and away gets the most public funding of any nonprofit in the United States is Catholic Social Services," Haar said.

Omaha Sen. Brenda Council also opposed the Fulton amendment, saying any waiver application that included the Fulton amendment's language would be denied by CMS. She said federal law prohibits states from

restricting funding to an entity that provides services to those who meet Medicaid guidelines simply because of other services that entity also may provide.

The Fulton amendment was adopted on a 25-8 vote.

An amendment offered by Omaha Sen. Burke Harr would have prohibited funds appropriated or distributed under the waiver from being used for abortion, abortion counseling or a referral for abortion or any operational costs of a facility that provides abortion, abortion counseling or a referral for abortion.

Harr said his amendment would accomplish the same goal as Fulton's amendment, but with clearer language that would not violate federal law.

The Harr amendment failed on a vote of 11-19.

Campbell said she hoped to work with all interested parties before select file debate, saying it is critical that the state expand family planning services to more low-income women.

"We very much need to address the eligibility of women in this program," she said.

Senators voted 28-5 to advance the LB540.

Bill would require child welfare financial reports, strategic plan

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Feb. 8 on a bill that seeks to provide fiscal accountability and transparency for child welfare spending in Nebraska.



Sen. John Harms

Scottsbluff Sen. John Harms, chairperson of the Legislative Performance Audit Committee, introduced LB949

on behalf of the committee. He said the bill contains recommendations stemming from a performance audit of child welfare privatization efforts recently undertaken by the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Harms said privatization was begun without a strategic plan outlining the key goals of the reform or time frames and benchmarks for achieving those goals. As a result, he said, the Legislature has had difficulty obtaining timely information about important aspects of privatization, including information on lead agency contracts.

"If you can track the money, you know where the issue is," Harms said. "And that's been difficult for us."

Among other provisions, LB949 would require DHHS's division of children and family services to include a strategic plan in its budget request to the Legislature for the next two budget cycles. The plan must identify the main purpose of each program in the division, goals for measuring progress and benchmarks and time frames for meeting those goals.

Under the bill, the division would be required to provide quarterly updates to the Legislature's HHS and Appropriations committees beginning in October 2012 on any movement of funds greater than \$250,000 into the child welfare subprogram from other budget programs.

Harms said the provision was meant to address concerns that the department had moved funds between programs in the past in ways that were difficult to track.

The bill also would require that funds for child welfare be removed from the division's main budget and established as a separate budget program beginning in fiscal year 2013-14.

Sarah Helvey of Nebraska Appleseed testified in support of the bill.

She said creating a separate budget program for child welfare and requiring regular financial reporting would prevent the kinds of situations that have caused concern in the past.

"Ongoing problems with fiscal oversight are critical and must be addressed," she said.

No opposition testimony was given and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Bill would clarify state-funded nursing care for family

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Feb. 9 on a bill meant to clarify permitted practices under the Nebraska Nurse Practitioner Act.

Hoskins Sen. Dave Bloomfield said he introduced LB1083 to clarify for the state Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) that they may hire nurses to provide home health care to family members.

Bloomfield said he believes the department is misinterpreting recent changes in state law. The changes made to the nurse practitioner act do not apply to family members providing home health care, he said, adding that such care can be essential for patients.

"It is my firm belief that no one can or will provide the extra-touch care of a family member," Bloomfield said.

Dee Shaffer, a nurse who has cared for her son at home for the last five years, testified in support of the bill. Shaffer said she was recently informed by DHHS that she would no longer be compensated for providing him care.

"I was told that I could no longer work with my son," she said. "The

monies I earned in this position I used to support my son's special needs."

No one testified in opposition and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Judiciary

Contraband in detention facilities bill passes

Senators passed a bill Feb. 7 that creates an offense for bringing prohibited items into a detention facility.

LB415, introduced by Cortland Sen. Norm Wallman, makes it a Class I misdemeanor to bring prohibited items into a detention facility, provide them to an inmate or for an inmate to possess them.

Any items prohibited by the detaining authority must be listed on a sign that is clearly posted and visible to all persons entering the detention facility.

The bill passed on a 45-0 vote.



Sen. Norm Wallman



Sen. Dave Bloomfield

Transfer of county court judgeship advances

Senators advanced a bill from general file Feb. 9 that would transfer a county court judgeship to another district.

LB790, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Colby Coash, would transfer a judgeship in the 5TH Judicial District County Court—serving Boone, Butler, Colfax, Hamilton, Merrick, Nance, Platte, Polk, Saunders, Seward and York Counties—to the 3RD Judicial District



Sen. Colby Coash

County Court—located in Lancaster County.

Lancaster County judges' caseloads have increased 60 percent since 1985, while the other counties have seen a decrease, Coash said. To address the issue, he said, a Seward County judge has been traveling to Lancaster County three times per week to assist with caseloads.

Due to this shift in needs, Coash said, the Nebraska Judicial Resources Commission has determined that a 5TH Judicial District judgeship should transfer to the 3RD Judicial District.

O'Neill Sen. Tyson Larson spoke in opposition to the bill. Rural citizens often have to travel long distances to appear in court, Larson said, so rural populations need better access to judges.

"I think this is another example of the weakening of the rural court system," Larson said.

Valentine Sen. Deb Fischer also spoke in opposition to the bill, saying that citizens deserve to have reasonable access to their state government.

"Rural Nebraska is not depopulated yet," Fischer said. "We are seeing an increase in young people in rural communities across the state, but if we continue down the road of eliminating services [in rural areas] then we are going to have trouble."

Norfolk Sen. Mike Flood supported the switch, calling it an acceptable remedy that would not hurt rural Nebraska. The commission has a duty to ensure that citizens have access to judgeships, Flood said, and six judges in the 5TH Judicial District have proven to be too many.

"If we start becoming territorial and parochial [in the Legislature] then we are not doing a good job allocating [the state's] resources,"

Flood said.

Senators advanced the bill from general file on a 27-11 vote.

Bill would expand child visitation provisions

The Judiciary Committee heard testimony Feb. 9 on two bills that would expand grandparent-child visitation provisions.

Currently, a grandparent may petition for visitation rights only if the:

- child's parents are deceased;
- marriage of the child's parents has been dissolved or a petition for dissolution has been filed; or
- parents have never been married, but paternity has been established.

LB1086, introduced by Omaha Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh, would allow court ordered visitation rights for a grandparent if he or she has made prior reasonable efforts to have visitation with the minor child, but the child's parents have refused such visitation. The court would be allowed to consider the potential relationship between the grandparents and grandchildren.

Lautenbaugh said grandparent visitation rights are important and should be given consideration by the courts.

Harold Wheeler, member of the AARP, testified in support of the bill, saying grandparents are valuable because they can teach their grandchildren about a family's history, cultural events and values.

"In some circumstances parents become estranged from their children and do not have an opportunity to play that role in their grandchild's

life," Wheeler said.

Amy Martinez, member of the Nebraska State Bar Association, testified in opposition to the bill, saying it was too broad. The bill would not require that there be an existing relationship with the grandparents, Martinez said, but only that there be a potential relationship.

Under LB935, introduced by Omaha Sen. Jim Smith, a person with a legitimate interest could petition the court for visitation. A person with a legitimate interest would include a grandparent, great-grandparent, stepparent or former stepparent, family member or legal guardian.



Sen. Jim Smith

The bill also would permit a person with a legitimate interest to petition for visitation if a child has been placed outside the home but has not been legally adopted.

Temporary caretakers can be a positive influence in a child's life, Smith said, but when those children are placed in foster care the caretakers lose their visitation rights.

"These children are already experiencing disruption and it would be nice for them to have some consistency in their lives," Smith said.

Martinez also testified in opposition to LB935, saying it would violate parents' Fourth Amendment rights to raise their children.

"It is a long-standing tradition in Nebraska that when we look at parents who are raising the children, they should be afforded the opportunity to decide who visits them and whether it is in the child's best interest," Martinez said.

No supporting testimony was given on LB935 and the commit-



Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh

tee took no immediate action on either bill.

Property damage immunity proposed for police officers

A bill providing immunity from liability for property damage was heard by the Judiciary Committee Feb. 8.

Under LB1107, introduced by Omaha Sen. Pete Pirsch, police officers who remove a vehicle, cargo or other property that is obstructing a roadway, creating an emergency situation or endangering the public would have immunity from liability for property damage.



Sen. Pete Pirsch

The bill also would allow vehicle operators who are involved in an accident resulting in property damage—but not resulting in injury or death—to move their vehicle to the safest area before providing their personal information to the property owner or vehicle involved in the accident.

Dave Baker, deputy chief of the Omaha Police Department, testified in support of the bill, saying it would prevent primary accidents from becoming more severe secondary accidents. Other states that have implemented similar quick clearance programs have had a 69 percent reduction rate in secondary accidents, Baker said.

John Lindsay, a lobbyist for the Nebraska Association of Trial Attorneys, testified in opposition to the bill, saying he opposed giving police officers immunity from liability. The judicial system is set up to determine and hold accountable those who were at fault, he said.

JoAnne Hitz, president of the Professional Towers Association of Nebraska, provided neutral testimony,

saying tow companies are primarily called upon to remediate roads after an accident and are expected to do so quickly and efficiently. Tow companies can be sued for damaging vehicles, she said, so private companies also should be released from liability.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Retirement

Reduction sought in county retirement plan contribution rate

The Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee heard testimony Feb. 6 on a bill that would allow certain counties containing a city of the first class to reduce the employer’s contribution to the county employees retirement plan.

Under the bill, the contribution rate would be capped at 100 percent of the employee’s contribution for those hired after July 1, 2012. The current contribution rate is set in state law as 150 percent of an employee’s contribution.

Wilber Sen. Russ Karpisek said he introduced LB867 at the request of the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners. He said the board sought the change to lower personnel costs and bring the county’s contribution rate in line with the private sector.



Sen. Russ Karpisek

He said the bill was projected to save Lancaster County \$42,000 in fiscal year 2012-13 and \$119,000 in FY13-14.

“This is a real savings that the county can bank on immediately,” Karpisek said.

Kerry Eagan, chief administrative officer for the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, testified in favor of

the bill. The board often hears from citizens that the 150 percent match is far more than private sector employers contribute to retirement accounts, he said.

“[LB867] is an additional tool that we’ll need going forward to keep our budget under control,” Eagan said.

Lincoln attorney Joy Shiffermiller, testifying on behalf of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, opposed the bill.

County employees are not eligible for bonuses or merit pay increases, she said, and more generous retirement plans can help compensate for that reality. She added that many county jobs do not have an equivalent in the private sector, making benefit comparisons difficult.

“You really cannot compare the public sector job with the private sector job,” Shiffermiller said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Revenue

Tax exemption proposed for social security benefits

People receiving social security benefits could see a new tax exemption under a bill discussed in a Revenue Committee hearing Feb. 8.

Under LB976, introduced by Omaha Sen. Jeremy Nordquist, social security benefits would not be figured into a person’s federal adjusted gross income for tax purposes. Nordquist said the tax exemption would benefit seniors in every community.



Sen. Jeremy Nordquist

“We need to continue to work across the board to relieve taxes for

Nebraskans,” Nordquist said. “This would benefit all seniors who have worked hard their entire lives and paid into the system.”

James Cavanaugh of the National Organization of Social Security Claimants’ Representatives testified in support of the bill, saying most seniors depend on their social security benefits.

“Most people spend all of their benefits each month,” Cavanaugh said. “This is a real hardship on people with limited resources.”

Jane Kleeb, Bold Nebraska founder, said as the baby boomer generation reaches retirement age, it is especially important that they stay in the state.

“The senior citizens are really the backbone of our communities,” Kleeb said. “We want to make sure we keep them in Nebraska.”

David Drozd, a research coordinator at the University of Nebraska at Omaha’s Center for Public Affairs Research, testified in a neutral capacity. He said the data shows more people of retirement age are leaving the state due to high taxes.

“People are voting with their feet and moving out of the state,” Drozd said. “Lower population totals mean less political power.”

No one testified in opposition to the bill and the committee took no immediate action.

Transportation & Telecommunications

Bill would require a driving distance from cyclists and pedestrians

A bill requiring drivers to maintain a minimum distance from cyclists and pedestrians was heard by the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee on Feb. 6.

Under LB1030, introduced by North Platte Sen. Tom Hansen, drivers would be required to leave a minimum distance of three feet when passing a pedestrian, bicycle or electric assistive mobility device traveling in the same direction on a roadway.



Sen. Tom Hansen

A person who is in violation would be fined \$100 to \$300, depending upon the frequency of the offense in one year.

Various groups of citizens are using alternative modes of transportation to save money and get exercise at same time, Hansen said, and many of them have had fatal encounters on roadways. Accidents could be avoided if drivers were provided with clearer requirements for passing pedestrians on roadways, he said.

Ron Snell, a North Platte resident, testified in support of the bill. Bicycling is a “risky venture” because bicyclists are required to ride on the road, Snell said. A cultural shift needs to occur to make drivers more aware of the dangers of accelerating past bicyclists irresponsibly, he said.

“[The bill] will not solve everything,” he said. “However, it would [encourage] the culture shift and level of safety we consistently promote.”

Matthew Martin, executive director of Community Bike Project in Omaha, also testified in support of the bill. Many times law enforcement is uncertain of who is at fault when bicyclists are hit by vehicles, he said, so setting a minimum distance requirement for vehicle operators would help law enforcement

make that determination.

No opposing testimony was given and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Matching funds could be considered for state highway projects

The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee heard testimony Feb. 6 on a bill that would expand considerations by the state Department of Roads when prioritizing state highway projects.



Sen. Mike Flood

Under LB1112, introduced by Norfolk Sen. Mike Flood, the department could consider whether local matching funds were available from a county or municipality or from joint entities consisting of counties and municipalities when prioritizing projects for state highways.

Flood said the bill would provide encouragement for communities that are willing to invest their own resources in a local highway project. It would not guarantee that communities able to match funds would take priority, Flood said, but the department should be allowed to take that into consideration.

West Point Mayor Marlene Johnson testified in support of the bill. It is not meant to favor certain highway projects, Johnson said, but would help speed up the process.

Dennis Houston, president of the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, also testified in support of the bill, saying it would allow communities to take ownership of their local highway projects.

“What we are looking at here is an opportunity to raise our hand and say

that we are willing to help take care of ourselves,” Houston said.

No opposing testimony was given and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Urban Affairs

Bill seeks to increase natural gas capacity

The Urban Affairs Committee heard testimony Feb. 7 on a bill that would allow jurisdictional utilities to construct and authorize natural gas pipeline facilities.

Norfolk Sen. Mike Flood, sponsor of LB1115, said he introduced the bill because many rural Nebraska communities lack adequate natural gas pipeline capacity to meet the demand of existing or potential end-use business customers. He said the bill would provide a streamlined, less-regulated process for natural gas pipeline construction in the state.

Under the bill, a jurisdictional utility could implement a plan to construct rural natural gas infrastructure. Prior to constructing a natural gas facility, the jurisdictional utility would be required to consider factors such as the environmental impact on the area and the project’s economic feasibility.

Following a determination that an area is unserved or underserved, the bill would require a jurisdictional utility to make a tariff filing with the PSC that adjusts the utility’s residential and commercial customer rates to recover costs.

“The current system has put up a barrier to economic development in rural Nebraska,” Flood said.

“We have existing businesses in Madison County that would like to grow their businesses ... but the gas capacity is a barrier for us.”

Norfolk Mayor Sue Fuchtmann testi-

fied in support of the bill, saying the 2007 loss of a proposed soy processing plant was “devastating” for the community. Norfolk lost the project – and the 200 jobs associate with it – due to a lack of natural gas capacity, she said.

Fuchtmann said the state needs to find a way to increase capacity in rural areas.

“Our future economic vitality is at stake,” she said.

Dennis Houston, representing the Norfolk Area Chamber of Commerce, also supported the bill. He said many rural communities have lost economic development opportunities due to lack of natural gas capacity.

“This is not just a Norfolk problem,” he said. “This is a rural Nebraska problem.”

Lynn Rex of the League of Nebraska Municipalities testified in a neutral capacity. She said league members support the idea of increasing natural gas capacity in rural areas of the state but have concerns about the bill.

Among the concerns cited was a provision in LB1115 giving a jurisdictional utility sole discretion to determine whether an area is unserved or underserved. Rex said the PSC should be involved in making such a determination.

“I think this bill needs to pass this year in some form,” she said. “Just not in this form.”

No opposition testimony was given and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Bill to require MUD district elections stalls

A bill requiring that metropolitan utilities district (MUD) board members be chosen by district elections failed to advance from select file Feb. 8.

Omaha Sen. Brenda Council said

she introduced LB190 in the hope of making MUD board membership more reflective of the citizens it serves. Currently, members are elected at large.

Most political subdivisions are elected by district, Council said, so that members reflect the geographic, economic and political perspectives of district voters.



Sen. Brenda Council

Senators adopted a Council amendment 29-0 that would stagger elections for the new seven-member board beginning in 2014.

Lincoln Sen. Amanda McGill supported the bill. Lawmakers have tended to support district elections for local governing bodies, she said, because it results in officials who are more responsible to those they serve.

“This Legislature has a history of moving in this direction,” she said. “It’s just good public policy.”

Omaha Sen. Scott Price opposed the bill, saying the current MUD election system works well. District elections might lead board members to focus on the individual needs of their election district only, he said.

“I’m concerned that these districts will become parochial in nature,” Price said.

Sen. Beau McCoy of Omaha agreed, saying members elected at large are answerable to everyone in the service area.

“The board as it is currently constituted has to worry about what is in the best interest of the MUD service area as a whole,” he said.

LB190 failed to advance from select file on a 23-15 vote. Twenty-five votes were needed for advancement. ■

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Monday, February 13

*9:30 a.m. Hearings Rescheduled from Friday, February 3, 2012

*Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Room 1507 - 9:30 a.m.

LB765 (Krist) Change bidding requirements relating to contracts with providers of certain health and social services as prescribed
LB1159 (Krist) Provide additional requirements and duties relating to state contracts for services valued at twenty-five million dollars or more
LB792 (Mello) Change provisions relating to personal services contract review and approval duties of the Director of Administrative Services
LB858 (Avery) Change requirements and exceptions for certain state contracts for services

*Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 9:30 a.m.

LB995 (Heidemann) Change provisions relating to county medical facilities and public hospitals
LB1047 (Howard) Require safe injection practices as prescribed
LB1077 (Howard) Require certain health care facilities to offer vaccinations to residents and patients
LB1042 (Campbell) Authorize nurse practitioners to sign death certificates

*Judiciary

Room 1113 - 9:30 a.m.

LB993 (Ashford) Change provisions relating to child abuse and neglect teams and child advocacy centers
LB917 (Cornett) Change truancy provisions for absences relating to military employment activities
LB933 (Ashford) Change provisions relating to truancy
LB1165 (Fulton) Change provisions relating to truancy and excessive absenteeism

*Natural Resources

Room 1525 - 9:30 a.m.

LB1087 (Nordquist) Adopt the Compressed Natural Gas Innovation Act

*Revenue

Room 1524 - 9:30 a.m.

LB1128 (Schumacher) Adopt the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act and provide tax credits
LB752 (Avery) Provide an income tax credit relating to grape growing and wine

producing

LB962 (Pahls) Change provisions relating to tax expenditure reporting and name the Tax Rate Review Committee

Banking, Commerce & Insurance Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB982 (Harr) Provide for the removal of improper or fraudulent liens
LB1026 (Avery) Change the Uniform Disposition of Unclaimed Property Act to change provisions relating to confidential records
LB1054 (McCoy) Exempt ancillary product contracts from state insurance laws and authorize the sale of such contracts in conjunction with motor vehicle service contracts

Business & Labor

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Spray, J. L. - Commission of Industrial Relations
LB1072 (Business & Labor) Provide for payment of claims against the state
LB1073 (Business & Labor) Deny payment of certain claims against the state
AM1782 to LB1073

Education

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB1156 (Carlson) Exempt non-equalized schools from expenditure limits in the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act
LB947 (Hadley) Change averaging adjustment and a certification date under the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act
LB913 (Adams) Change base limitation provisions and certain dates relating to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act

General Affairs

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB824 (Karpisek) Define "flavored malt beverage" under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act
LB829 (Louden) Create alcohol impact zones
LB992 (Fulton) Prohibit the presence of minors on premises of certain liquor licensees and provide a penalty
LB1078 (Lautenbaugh) Require manager of a liquor licensee to complete training as prescribed

Transportation & Telecommunications Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB715 (Fischer) Change regulation of

boundaries for telecommunications services

LB833 (Krist) Change provisions relating to surcharges for 911 services
LB847 (Sullivan) Change the Enhanced Wireless 911 Services Act
LB1091 (Fischer) Adopt the Prepaid Wireless Surcharge Act and eliminate certain charges on prepaid wireless service

Tuesday, February 14

Agriculture

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB927 (Louden) Authorize cattle brands as official identification as prescribed
LB907 (Carlson) Change provisions relating to agricultural tractor permitting and a sales tax exemption
LB1123 (Council) Adopt the Nebraska Healthy Food Financing Initiative Act

Banking, Commerce & Insurance Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Lang, Catherine D. - Dept. of Economic Development

Executive Board

Room 2102 - 12:00 p.m.

LB1007 (Fulton) Require production costs of reports submitted to the Legislature to be stated on the reports
LB1133 (Avery) Adopt the Redistricting Act
LB711 (Wightman) Change provisions relating to membership on the Executive Board of the Legislative Council

Transportation & Telecommunications Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Wacker, David - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
Appointment: Figard, Roger - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
Appointment: Wootton, Edward - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
Appointment: Tagge, Darold - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
Appointment: Weander, Timothy - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
Appointment: Gerrard, LeRoy - Board of Public Roads Classifications and Standards
LB1167 (Lautenbaugh) Require certain provisions in highway and bridge construction and maintenance contracts

Urban Affairs

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB1126 (Christensen) Provide and change extraterritorial jurisdiction of a village
LB1132 (McGill) Change the Community

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Development Law

LB1001 (McGill) Create the Building Code Advisory Committee and change and eliminate state agency building code compliance requirements

LR376CA (Mello) Constitutional amendment to change provisions relating to redevelopment projects

Wednesday, February 15

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB1141 (McGill) Change provisions relating to reimbursement of travel expenses for Neb. National Guard members

LB819 (Price) Provide for the treatment of military medals as unclaimed property
LB999 (Price) Authorize the display of an honor and remember flag at public buildings

LB795 (Avery) Change provisions relating to applying for membership in veterans homes
LB1023 (Avery) Provide for the waiver of education-related fees for dependents of veterans

Health & Human Services

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Johnson, Julie - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Appointment: Hansen, Michael - Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
LB842 (Harms) Change the termination date relating to self-sufficiency activities under the Welfare Reform Act

LB938 (Nelson) Require a uniform reimbursement rate for adult day services
LB1010 (Nordquist) Change eligibility provisions relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

LB1136 (Mello) Create and provide for a wage subsidy program

Judiciary

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB1113 (Flood) Adopt the Nebraska Uniform Power of Attorney Act

LB728 (Mello) Provide for the distribution of money received by the state due to a settlement or court order or judgment

LB777 (Haar) Change provisions relating to distribution of certain supplemental funds
LB1029 (Lambert) Require an address from a complainant or trustee for acceptance of demands of payment relating to real property
LB1134 (Avery) Change agency procedures

for eminent domain

Natural Resources

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB950 (Christensen) Change crediting provisions relating to reimbursement of certain assistance to natural resources districts as prescribed

LB1125 (Christensen) Change provisions relating to natural resources district occupation tax

Nebraska Retirement Systems

Room 1525 - 12:10 p.m.

Appointment: DeFusco, Richard - Neb. Investment Council

Appointment: Simpson, Stuart - Public Employees Retirement Board

Revenue

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB897 (Pahls) Change provisions relating to the completion of tax lists

LB967 (Schumacher) Change an interest rate relating to delinquent taxes and special assessments

LB1069 (Wightman) Change provisions relating to tax sales to collect delinquent property taxes

LB1093 (Hadley) Change provisions relating to foreclosure proceedings for delinquent real estate taxes

LB1109 (Brasch) Provide for classification of flooded agricultural land as inundated land

Thursday, February 16

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB953 (Fulton) Create state fleet card programs and a fund

LB813 (Karpisek) Prohibit counties, cities, and villages from imposing credentialing requirements

LB869 (Janssen) Change provisions relating to the State Athletic Commissioner and change membership of the Athletic Advisory Committee

LB880 (Pahls) Provide duties relating to reducing costs and adopting modern methods of state and local records management

Health & Human Services

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB1032 (Wightman) Change advertisement and display of credential provisions under the Uniform Credentialing Act

LB1103 (Wightman) Provide access to de-

ceased family member's medical records
LB1142 (Nordquist) Adopt the Health Care Transparency Act

Judiciary

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB937 (Smith) Regulate dealers in the business of buying and reselling precious items
LB941 (Smith) Change restrictions on disposition of pawned and secondhand goods

LB1046 (Haar) Change provisions relating to law enforcement certification and continuing education

LB1127 (Christensen) Change provisions and penalties relating to issuing or passing a bad check or issuing a no-account check

LB1145 (McGill) Change and provide provisions and penalties relating to human trafficking and pandering

Natural Resources

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB845 (Sullivan) Provide reclamation requirements under the Oil Pipeline Reclamation Act

LB1161 (Smith) Provide for study and evaluation of routes for proposed oil pipelines

Revenue

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB855 (Fulton) Change sales and use tax collection fees

LB956 (Ashford) Authorize an increase in city sales tax rates

LB986 (Dubas) Exempt repair or replacement parts for commercial agricultural machinery and equipment from sales and use tax

LB1098 (Council) Repeal the Build Nebraska Act and change distribution of sales and use tax revenue



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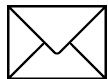
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