

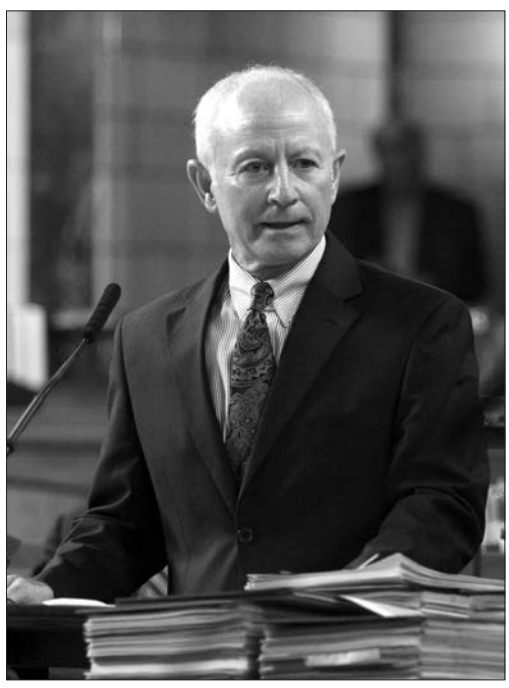
- the Nebraska Legislature's news source since 1977
- stories published daily at update.legislature.ne.gov

UPDATE

Legislature concludes 'difficult' session



Left: Speaker Greg Adams delivers closing remarks to fellow senators June 5. Above: The Legislature considers bills on final reading the last day of the session.



The 103rd Legislature, first session, adjourned June 5.

York Sen. Greg Adams, Speaker of the Legislature, thanked senators and staff for their hard work, while acknowledging that the 90-day session had not been an easy one. In fact, he said, if he had to choose one word to characterize the session, the word would be “difficult.”

“It was difficult because we took on difficult issues. We didn’t shy away from them; we debated them.” Adams said. “At times it became very divisive but ... that’s what deliberative bodies in a representative democracy do.”

Among the challenges were passing the state’s two-year budget and addressing reform of the tax code.

Adams said the approximately \$7.8 billion budget was “relatively conservative” and reflected the right priorities

by focusing on early childhood, K-12 and higher education.

The budget includes funding for a new University of Nebraska Medical Center nursing facility in Lincoln and increased funding for the Early Childhood Endowment and special education.

Adams said the Legislature “did the right thing” by approving the Tax Modernization Committee. The committee, created by LR155, is tasked with reviewing and recommending

(continued page 2)

Legislature concludes ‘difficult’ session

(continued from front page)

updates to the state’s property, income and sales tax codes.

Additional difficult work lies ahead when the Legislature begins to analyze the committee’s recommendations next year, Adams said.

“Making tax policy is the jurisdiction of this body and that is what we will do,” he said.

Gov. Dave Heineman, in his address to lawmakers, echoed the importance of tax reform, saying the state needs a tax code that is simpler and fairer.

“Nebraskans work hard to provide for their families and we must be good stewards of their tax dollars,” he said.

Heineman thanked senators for their work on the budget and on other key pieces of legislation, including juvenile justice reform. He called passage of LB561, which makes broad changes to the state’s juvenile justice system with a focus on treatment rather than punishment, an “innovative” approach to dealing with youth who break the law.

“This reform will reduce reliance on detention and focus on rehabilitation for youth while keeping families involved,” Heineman said.

Lawmakers passed 214 of the 661 bills introduced this session, but two of the most contentious proposals were not brought to final votes. LB577, which would expand Medicaid coverage, and LB543, which would abolish the death penalty, were subjected to filibusters. Bill sponsors were not able to garner the 33 votes necessary to cease debate on either bill and both were removed from the agenda.

After indefinitely postponing bills amended into other bills this session, the Nebraska Legislature adjourned sine die. ■



Gov. Dave Heineman greets senators as he enters the chamber to deliver his address.



Sen. Annette Dubas (left) greets Sen. Danielle Conrad and her daughter.



Senators and family members wish one another well as the Legislature adjourns for the interim.

Banking, Commerce & Insurance

Insurance navigator bill approved

Senators passed a bill June 4 that will register individuals and entities applying for and acting as navigators for the state's health benefit exchange.

The exchange will be established in Nebraska under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), which requires that all exchanges include programs to assist individuals in navigating the new system.

LB568, introduced by Omaha Sen. Burke Harr, establishes a registration program for navigators within the state Department of Insurance.

Navigators must be at least 18 years old and will be required to pass an examination and be authorized to act as a navigator. The maximum registration fee will be \$25 for an individual and \$50 for an entity. Registration will be valid for one year and may be renewed for a fee.

Navigators will be prohibited from:

- engaging in any activities that would require an insurance producer license;
- violating Nebraska insurance licensure law;
- recommending or endorsing a particular health plan;
- advising consumers about which health plan to choose;
- accepting compensation dependent on whether a person enrolls in or purchases a qualified health plan; or
- failing to respond to an inquiry from the director.

The bill passed 49-0 and takes effect immediately.



Sen. Burke Harr

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Preference for state contracts approved

Lawmakers gave final approval June 4 to a bill intended to help veterans and certain businesses to secure public contracts.

LB224, introduced by Fremont Sen. Charlie Janssen, provides a preference for a resident disabled veteran or a business located in a designated enterprise zone when awarding a state contract if all other factors are equal.



Sen. Charlie Janssen

The bill defines a resident disabled veteran as an individual who:

- resides in Nebraska;
- was honorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces, including reserve or National Guard;
- possesses a disability letter establishing a service-connected disability;
- owns a business or, in the case of a publicly owned business, owns more than 50 percent of the stock; and
- controls the management and daily operation of a qualifying business.

LB224 passed 49-0.

Judiciary

Sex trafficking penalties increased

Senators passed a bill June 5 that enhances penalties for pandering, soliciting and harboring people for prostitution.

LB255, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Amanda McGill, makes a person under 18 years old immune from charges of prostitution. A law enforcement officer who takes a person under 18 years of age into custody is required to report an allegation of



Sen. Amanda McGill

prostitution immediately to the state Department of Health and Human Services, which will commence an investigation within 24 hours under the Child Protection Act. A person under the age of 16 who is involved in prostitution will be placed in the juvenile court's jurisdiction.

The bill also increases the penalty for soliciting a minor for prostitution, currently a Class I misdemeanor carrying a maximum one year in jail and \$1,000 fine, to a Class IV felony, which carries a maximum five years in jail and a \$10,000 fine. Keeping a place of prostitution, currently a Class I misdemeanor, would be a Class IV felony when those kept as prostitutes are under the age of 18. In cases involving a trafficking victim between the ages of 15 and 18 years old, the offender will be guilty of a Class III felony.

Finally, LB255 requires a trafficking task force formed last year to use information and research that is available from the Innocence Lost National Initiative to recommend a model of rehabilitative services for victims of human trafficking.

The bill passed on a 47-0 vote.

Natural Resources

Chief Standing Bear Trail approved

Lawmakers adopted a resolution June 4 that recognizes the struggles and accomplishments of Chief Standing Bear and supports the Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs' development and designation of the Chief Standing Bear Trail from Nebraska to Oklahoma.

Fullerton Sen. Annette Dubas said she introduced LR171 because May was the 134th anniversary of the Standing Bear v. Crook decision in which the U.S. District Court in Omaha ruled that Native Americans are "persons" within the meaning of the law. The landmark civil rights case resulted from the Ponca tribe being forced by Europeans to give up their land and move to present-day Oklahoma, she said, a journey in which nearly one-third of the tribe died due to starvation and harsh conditions.

"This journey illustrates our not so proud history of our true native citizens and it is essential to raise the level of awareness in order to promote justice and equality in the U.S. legal system," Dubas said. "The trail would help increase that awareness."

Furthermore, she said, Native Americans in Nebraska continue to struggle with poverty and their children suffer when they are removed from their original culture and heritage and placed in the child welfare system.

Lincoln Sen. Colby Coash supported the resolution, saying it is important to inform people of the state's past and prevent future injustices from occurring.

"The history of this trail is intertwined with the history of the state



Sen. Annette Dubas

and it is important for the Legislature to recognize that history," he said. "Not understanding history is a factor that continues to marginalize certain populations."

The resolution was adopted on a 46-0 vote.

Revenue

Net energy tax credit approved

Senators passed a bill June 4 that provides a tax credit to customers who generate electricity.

LB90, introduced by Malcolm Sen. Ken Haar, allows an offset of a customer-generator's electricity production against their consumption. A customer-generator is defined as an end-use electricity customer that generates electricity on the customer's side of the meter from



Sen. Ken Haar

a qualified facility.

The bill passed on a 41-7 vote.

Legislative power to subpoena passed

Senators passed a bill June 5 that codifies the state's ability to issue subpoenas.

LB613, introduced by Columbus Sen. Paul Schumacher, establishes and affirms the Legislature's investigatory power.

A committee has to receive approval by a majority vote of the Executive Board to issue a subpoena with regard to a specific inquiry or investigation. The committee can require any state agency, political subdivision or individual to provide information relevant to the investigation within 30 days of the initial request.

The bill passed on a 47-0 vote. ■



Sen. Paul Schumacher

CONNECTING WITH YOUR UNICAMERAL

FRIDAY, JULY 26, 9 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

NEBRASKA STATE CAPITOL

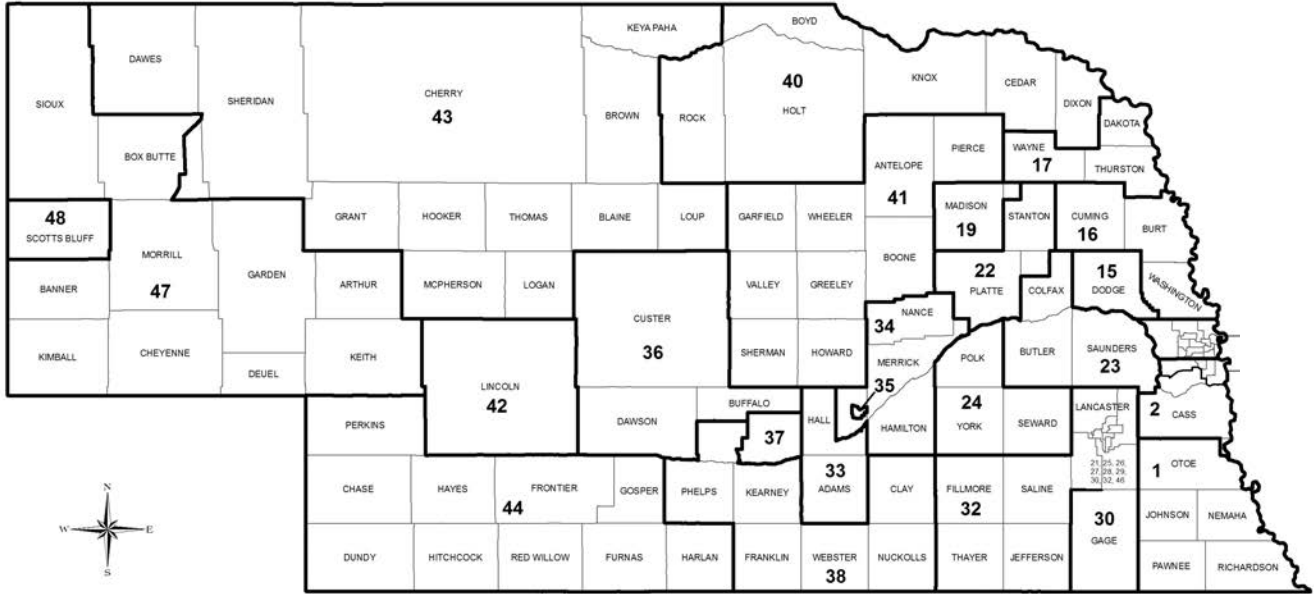
High school teachers are invited to attend a training on the history and process of Nebraska's unique Unicameral Legislature, which includes:

- a committee hearing and floor debate simulation
- an exercise in civic engagement
- a panel discussion of social studies educators on service learning

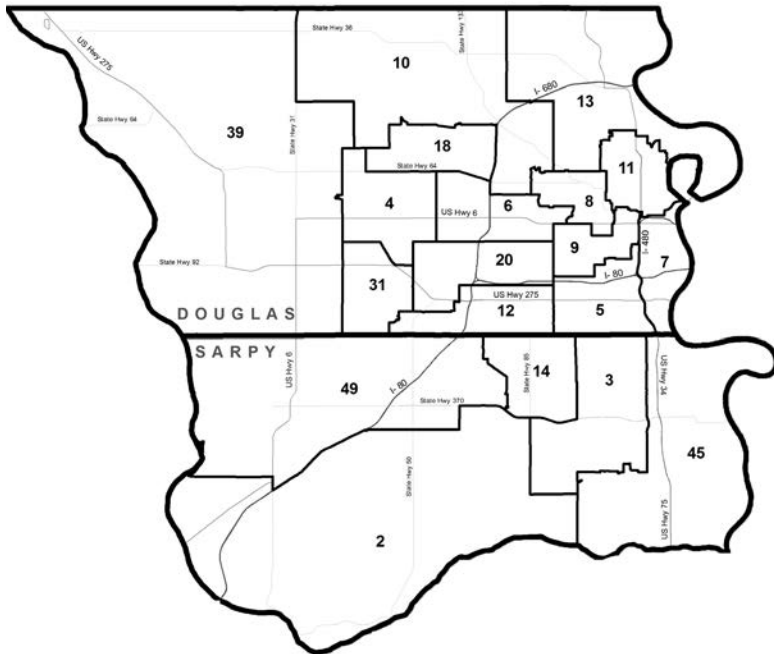
For details, contact the Unicameral Information Office at: (402) 471-2788 or uio@leg.ne.gov

LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS

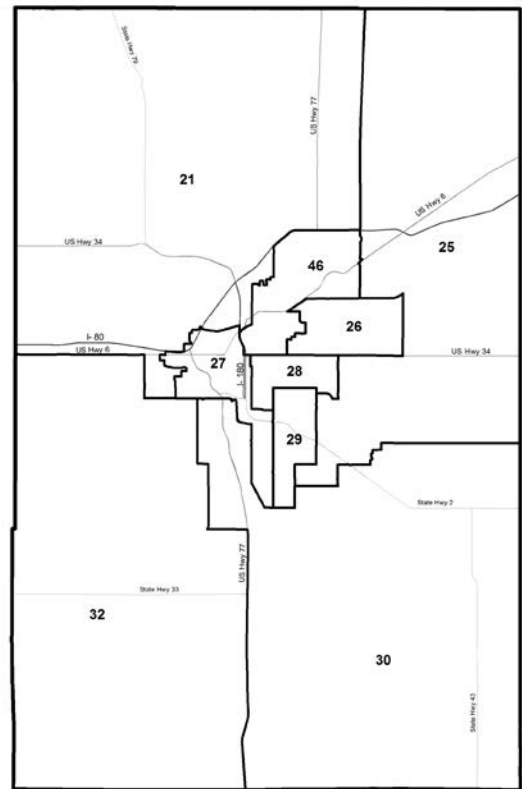
For larger versions of these and other district maps, visit the maps clearinghouse page on the Legislature's website: www.nebraskalegislature.gov/about/maps.php



OMAHA AND VICINITY



LINCOLN



SENATOR CONTACT INFO

Sen. Greg L. Adams York, District 24 Room 2103 (402) 471-2756 gadams@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist24	Sen. Colby Coash Lincoln, District 27 Room 2028 (402) 471-2632 ccoash@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist27	Sen. John N. Harms Scottsbluff, District 48 Room 2011 (402) 471-2802 jharms@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist48	Sen. Steve Lathrop Omaha, District 12 Room 2000 (402) 471-2623 slathrop@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist12	Sen. Jim Scheer Norfolk, District 19 Room 1117 (402) 471-2929 jscheer@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist19
Sen. Brad Ashford Omaha, District 20 Room 1103 (402) 471-2622 bashford@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist20	Sen. Danielle Conrad Lincoln, District 46 Room 1008 (402) 471-2720 dconrad@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist46	Sen. Burke J. Harr Omaha, District 8 Room 1120 (402) 471-2722 bharr@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist08	Sen. Scott Lautenbaugh Omaha, District 18 Room 1021 (402) 471-2618 slautenbaugh@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist18	Sen. Ken Schilz Ogallala, District 47 Room 1022 (402) 471-2616 kschilz@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist47
Sen. Bill Avery Lincoln, District 28 Room 1423 (402) 471-2633 bavery@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist28	Sen. Tanya Cook Omaha, District 13 Room 1208 (402) 471-2727 tcook@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist13	Sen. Sara Howard Omaha, District 9 Room 1523 (402) 471-2723 showard@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist09	Sen. Beau McCoy Omaha, District 39 Room 2015 (402) 471- 2885 bmccoy@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist39	Sen. Paul Schumacher Columbus, District 22 Room 1124 (402) 471-2715 pschumacher@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist22
Sen. Dave Bloomfield Hoskins, District 17 Room 1206 (402) 471-2716 dbloomfield@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist17	Sen. Sue Crawford Bellevue, District 45 Room 2104 (402) 471-2615 scrawford@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist45	Sen. Charlie Janssen Fremont, District 15 Room 1403 (402) 471-2625 cjanssen@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist15	Sen. Amanda McGill Lincoln, District 26 Room 1212 (402) 471-2610 amcgill@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist26	Sen. Les Seiler Hastings, District 33 Room 1017 (402) 471-2712 lseiler@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist33
Sen. Kate Bolz Lincoln, District 29 Room 1522 (402) 471-2734 kbolz@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist29	Sen. Al Davis Hyannis, District 43 Room 1117 (402) 471-2628 adavis@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist43	Sen. Jerry Johnson Wahoo, District 23 Room 1529 (402) 471-2719 jjohnson@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist23	Sen. Heath Mello Omaha, District 5 Room 1004 (402) 471-2710 hmello@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist05	Sen. Jim Smith Papillion, District 14 Room 1118 (402) 471-2730 jsmith@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist14
Sen. Lydia Brasch Bancroft, District 16 Room 1016 (402) 471-2728 lbrasch@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist16	Sen. Annette M. Dubas Fullerton, District 34 Room 1110 (402) 471-2630 adubas@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist34	Sen. Russ Karpisek Wilber, District 32 Room 1015 (402) 471-2711 rkarpisek@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist32	Sen. John Murante Gretna, District 49 Room 1115 (402) 471-2725 jmurante@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist49	Sen. Kate Sullivan Cedar Rapids, District 41 Room 1107 (402) 471-2631 ksullivan@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist41
Sen. Kathy Campbell Lincoln, District 25 Room 1402 (402) 471-2731 kcampbell@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist25	Sen. Mike Gloor Grand Island, District 35 Room 1401 (402) 471-2617 mgloor@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist35	Sen. Bill Kintner Papillion, District 2 Room 1115 (402) 471-2613 bkintner@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist02	Sen. John E. Nelson Omaha, District 6 Room 2107 (402) 471-2714 jnelson@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist06	Sen. Norm Wallman Cortland, District 30 Room 1406 (402) 471-2620 nwallman@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist30
Sen. Tom Carlson Holdrege, District 38 Room 1210 (402) 471-2732 tcarlson@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist38	Sen. Ken Haar Malcolm, District 21 Room 1018 (402) 471-2673 khaar@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist21	Sen. Rick Kolowski Omaha, District 31 Room 1528 (402) 471-2327 rkolowski@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist31	Sen. Jeremy Nordquist Omaha, District 7 Room 2004 (402) 471-2721 jnordquist@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist07	Sen. Dan Watermeier Syracuse, District 1 Room 1404 (402) 471-2733 dwatermeier@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist01
Sen. Ernie Chambers Omaha, District 11 Room 1114 (402) 471-2612 news.legislature.ne.gov/dist11	Sen. Galen Hadley Kearney, District 37 Room 1116 (402) 471-2726 ghadley@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist37	Sen. Bob Krist Omaha, District 10 Room 2108 (402) 471-2718 bkrist@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist10	Sen. Pete Pirsch Omaha, District 4 Room 1101 (402) 471-2621 ppirsch@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist04	Sen. John M. Wightman Lexington, District 36 Room 2010 (402) 471-2642 jwightman@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist36
Sen. Mark R. Christensen Imperial, District 44 Room 1000 (402) 471-2805 mchristensen@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist44	Sen. Tom Hansen North Platte, District 42 Room 1012 (402) 471-2729 thansen@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist42	Sen. Tyson Larson O'Neill, District 40 Room 1019 (402) 471-2801 tlarson@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist40	Sen. Scott Price Bellevue, District 3 Room 1202 (402) 471-2627 sprice@leg.ne.gov news.legislature.ne.gov/dist03	

Unicameral Information Office
Nebraska Legislature
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509
03-23-05

PRESRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
LINCOLN, NE
PERMIT NO. 212

UNICAMERAL UPDATE

The Unicameral Update is a free newsletter offered weekly during the legislative session. It is produced by the Clerk of the Legislature's Office through the Unicameral Information Office. For print subscriptions, call (402) 471-2788 or email uio@leg.ne.gov.



On Twitter at
twitter.com/UnicamUpdate



By RSS feed at
update.legislature.ne.gov



Online at
update.legislature.ne.gov

Clerk of the Legislature: Patrick J. O'Donnell

Editor: Heidi Uhing

Contributors: Nicole Behmer, Bess Ghormley,
Kate Heltzel and Ami Johnson

Assistance provided by the Clerk of the Legislature's Office, the Legislative Technology Center, committee clerks, legal counsels, journal clerks, pages, transcribers, mail room and bill room staff and the State Print Shop.

LEGISLATIVE RESOURCES

STATUS OF BILLS OR RESOLUTIONS

www.nebraskalegislature.gov/bills
Legislative Hot Line (available during session) —
(402) 471-2709 or (800) 742-7456

BILLS, RESOLUTIONS OR LEGISLATIVE JOURNALS

Subscriptions: State Capitol, Room 2018 or (402) 471-2271
Individual copies: 24-Hour Request Line at (402) 471-2877

LIVE VIDEO STREAM OF THE LEGISLATURE

www.nebraskalegislature.gov

SENATOR WEB PAGES

www.nebraskalegislature.gov/senators

SENATORS' MAILING ADDRESS

Senator Name
District #
State Capitol
P.O. Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

NEBRASKA BLUE BOOK

Nebraska Blue Book Office: (402) 471-2220
www.nebraskalegislature.gov/about/blue-book.php

STUDENT PROGRAMS AT THE LEGISLATURE

Unicameral Information Office: (402) 471-2788
[www.nebraskalegislature.gov/education/
student_programs.php](http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/education/student_programs.php)