

Lower property taxes prioritized by governor

Voter ID bills discussed



Gov. Pete Ricketts and First Lady Susanne Shore are escorted from the Norris Chamber after Ricketts' State of the State Address Jan. 22.

With an emphasis on growth and innovation, Gov. Pete Ricketts proposed providing property tax relief, creating new and better-paying jobs, easing regulatory burdens and increasing educational opportunities in his State of the State Address to lawmakers Jan. 22.

Ricketts said he relied on his private sector background when crafting the state budget, which would restrict spending growth to 3 percent over the biennium, down from 6.5 percent during the previous biennium. This savings, combined with the state's annual 5 percent revenue growth rate, Ricketts said, would help taxpayers afford more goods and services, further growing the state's economy.

"I promised the people of Nebraska I would put my business experience to work for the state. To that end, I worked to develop a budget – a blue-

print that slows the growth of spending, provides for property tax relief, has room to make improvements in critical areas like corrections and [Health and Human Services] and also funds the essential services of state government," he said.

The governor emphasized the importance of retaining young Nebraskans and bringing in new people as the impetus for property tax relief. His budget proposal includes a transfer of \$60 million each year to the property tax credit relief fund – an increase of nearly 43 percent.

"There is one consistent message I have heard in every corner of the state: property taxes are too high," Ricketts said. "This property tax relief will help all Nebraskans – homeowners, small business owners and our farmers and ranchers."

Ricketts also proposed a 10 percent

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The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard joint testimony Jan. 23 on two bills that would require voter ID in Nebraska.

LB111, introduced by O'Neill Sen. Tyson Larson, would require voters to provide a government-issued photographic identification before voting. Under the bill, either a driver's license or state ID card issued by the state Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) would be required.



Sen. Tyson Larson

If a voter indicates that he or she is indigent, the DMV would offer a state identification card at no cost for purposes of voting under the Election Act.

Voters casting a ballot in elections held by mail or who vote early would not be required to provide a photo ID unless it was their first time voting. A voter who does not present a valid ID at the polls would be permitted to cast a provisional ballot.

Larson said Nebraskans overwhelmingly support requiring ID to vote as a means of safeguarding the electoral process.

"I introduced this legislation in order to further protect the integrity and reliability of our elections," he said, adding that the bill's provisions would not place an undue burden on voters.

"Ninety-eight percent of Nebraska registered voters already possess a driver's license or state ID card,"

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Lower property taxes prioritized by governor

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decrease in agricultural land valuations from 75 to 65 percent, phased in over two years. He said the state's high property taxes are simply not sustainable for those working in the agricultural sector.

"We did not get to be a high tax state overnight," he said. "We won't get taxes down overnight either. But together, we can take important steps toward providing tax relief."

The governor urged lawmakers to be mindful of the state's most vulnerable citizens when crafting the state's budget.

"It is easy to view a government budget as a collection of numbers in rows and columns next to agencies and programs," he said, "but behind the numbers are people's lives."

Ricketts called for "transformational leaders" to head state agencies, including the state Department of Correctional Services and the state Department of Health and Human Services. He said he is seeking a culture change among state agencies that will give "voice to the voiceless."

"The people who need our help do not fit neatly into the silos we have created," Ricketts said. "We need a system that cares for the entire person, helps them reach their full potential and if possible helps them live a life free of public assistance."

The governor's other proposals included a decrease in federal overregulation, a call on President Barack Obama to approve the Keystone XL pipeline, the elimination of state income tax for members of the armed forces and a career vocational training pilot program.

"We are united in our desire to make Nebraska a better place for our communities and for our children and grandchildren," he said. "Our ancestors made sacrifices for

future generations, for the greater good of Nebraska. And so we too will focus on the future." ■

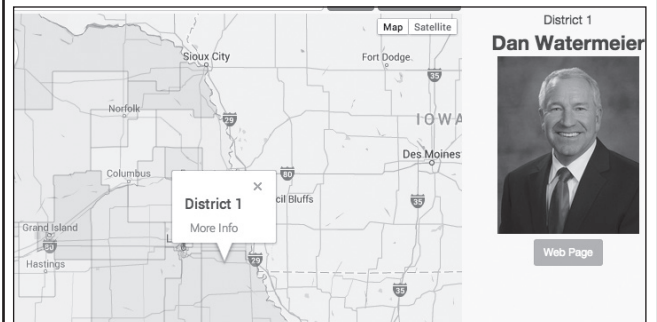
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Voter ID bills discussed

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Larson said.

Under LB121, introduced by Columbus Sen. Paul Schumacher, voters without government-issued photo ID would be required to sign a statement verifying their name and current address and submit to being photographed at the polling place or obtain a written certification from a poll worker that he or she was personally known to them.



Sen. Paul Schumacher

The bill also would require a secret-ballot envelope in which to place mail-in ballots that he said would maintain the anonymity of the voter.

Voting by mail has become increasingly popular in Nebraska, Schumacher said, and is the only method of voting available in some counties. Under

the current system, he said, a ballot is placed in a return envelope that includes the voter's name and address—thus it is not a secret ballot.

“The language of the bill is very simple,” Schumacher said. “Use an inside sleeve or envelope, and if it costs a penny or two more—or a minute or two more in the processing—that’s the price of an election.”

Kansas Secretary of State Kris Kobach testified in support of LB111, saying there is strong empirical evidence that voter ID laws do not suppress voter turnout. For example, he said, Kansas experienced higher voter turnout after enacting voter ID requirements.

In addition, Kobach said, only 838 out of 1.2 million Kansas voters showed up at their polling place without a photo ID in the 2012 general election.

“It is not an imposition,” Kobach said. “It is, I believe, a very reasonable request that someone bring a photo ID.”

Doug Kagan of Nebraska Taxpayers for Freedom also testified in support of LB111, saying a photo ID is required to rent a movie or vehicle and to cash a check or board a plane. A photo ID also should be required to vote, he said.

“Currently, anyone can walk into a polling place, give your name and address, sign with your signature and vote with your name,” Kagan said.

Bri McLarty, director of voting rights for Nebraskans for Civic Reform, testified in opposition to both bills. The ID requirements disproportionately would impact rural voters, she said, adding that some rural DMV offices are open only once a month or are not open over the noon hour.

In addition, she said, increasing the number of provisional ballots will increase the cost of elections.

“Other states are spending millions on this kind of legislation,” McLarty said.

Amy Miller of ACLU Nebraska also testified in opposition to LB111 and the voter ID provisions of LB121. She said the courts repeatedly have ruled that vague concerns about voter fraud cannot justify placing burdens on the constitutional right to vote.

“The burden is on the government to prove that the voter ID law is necessary,” she said, adding that there have been “zero examples” of voter fraud in Nebraska.

“Until you have a record of fraud, this bill should not be advanced forward,” Miller said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bills. ■



Members of the Department of Correctional Services Special Investigative Committee of the Nebraska Legislature (LR424, 2014) held a press conference Friday, Jan. 23 in the Capitol's Rotunda. The members of the special committee have jointly introduced a package of bills to implement the recommendations made by the LR424 report that require statutory changes. From left: Sens. Bob Krist, Kate Bolz, Les Seiler, Paul Schumacher and Heath Mello.

MEET THE SENATOR

For Ebke, public service runs in the family

For most kids, sitting through a city council meeting would seem like punishment. For future senator Laura Ebke, it only increased her desire to become involved in local government.

Ebke attributes her interest in politics to her very civically engaged family. Her father, Ron Schwab, held the distinction of being Fairbury's youngest mayor and her grandfather, Charles Schwab, held the record as the town's longest-serving mayor. Her mother, Gwen Schwab, served on the local school board and her other grandfather, Alvin Junker, served on the city council.

Ebke married her high school sweetheart, Russ, and moved to

Omaha for his medical school and residency at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. After seven years in Omaha, the couple moved to Tennessee and North Carolina for his later naval deployments. During their travels Laura and Russ welcomed their first child – daughter Jennifer – and Laura finished her bachelor's and master's degrees in political science.

While working on her master's program at the University of Memphis, a professor requested that she teach a class, and her experience was so positive that it derailed her previous plan to attend law school.

"I had never really considered teaching before," she said. "I realized that I enjoyed the challenge of con-

necting with the students and engaging them in the material."

Over the next decade, Laura and Russ welcomed two more children – daughter Tasha and son Isaac. Ebke also earned her Ph.D. in political science from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, began teaching part time and won election to the Crete School Board.

Ebke's rural upbringing will impact her priorities during her time in the Legislature, she says. While issues like prison reform and tax relief will always be important, helping small town Nebraska grow will be her priority.

Of the 39 towns and villages in her district, only one – Crete – has shown growth in the last 20 years. Her hometown of Fairbury has seen a population decrease of roughly 1,000 people since she lived there as a child.

"You go to small towns that are just drying up," Ebke said. "That's where real Nebraskans live. And we can accomplish that growth with more businesses and improved infrastructure allowing people to telecommute, for example."

Her belief in government transparency has fueled her approach to constituent services. In addition to interacting with constituents in face-to-face meetings and phone calls, Ebke has fostered a strong social media presence.

"[Social media] is just one more nice tool in the toolbox," she said, noting that she tries to update her constituents daily with her votes and general news from the Capitol. "Even when people disagree with my positions, they seem to appreciate the communication." ■



Sen. Laura Ebke (center) and her family, from left: son-in-law Chris, Tasha, Russ, Jennifer and Isaac.

EDUCATION

Bill would require meningitis vaccines

Students would be required to receive two meningitis vaccinations by a bill heard by the Education Committee Jan. 20.

Under LB18, introduced by Omaha Sen. Bob Krist, every student would receive a meningitis vaccine upon entering the seventh grade and again at age 16.



Sen. Bob Krist

Krist said that adolescents and young adults are at the greatest risk for contracting the disease, accounting for 15 percent of all cases.

“Each year the meningococcal disease affects 1,500 Americans and of those affected, 11 percent will die,” he said. “Keeping up-to-date with vaccines is the best defense against meningitis. The school is the best place to make sure this happens.”

Douglas County Health Director Dr. Adi Pour testified in favor of the bill, saying that her local health director colleagues unanimously supported requiring the vaccine.

“Physicians recommend [the meningococcal vaccine] today, but not everyone has a medical home and not all people go to their physician regularly,” Pour said. “This will level the playing field, especially for those living below the poverty line. We want to eliminate health disparities wherever we can.”

Maggi Pivovar, representing Meningitis Angels, supported the bill, saying her battle with meningitis gave her a deeper understanding of the vaccine’s importance.

“I faced a long and painful recovery

that took nearly five years and cost nearly \$1.5 million,” she said. “I vaccinated my children because I didn’t want them to live through the horrors of meningitis. Even one child [contracting the disease] is one child too many.”

Also supporting the bill was Andy Marso, who contracted meningitis as a college student. He said the bill’s mandate could be an invaluable public health tool.

“[Meningitis] is rare, but it is devastating,” he said. “We have the tools to eradicate it. If we’re not brave enough to do that in the face of fear, then we’ll have done a disservice to everyone.”

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

Bill would address postsecondary and career readiness

Collaboration between the state Board of Education and postsecondary educational institutions would be facilitated by a bill heard by the Education Committee Jan. 20.

Cedar Rapids Sen. Kate Sullivan introduced LB101, which would require the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education to identify an assessment system to indicate students’ academic preparedness for postsecondary college and career readiness beginning with the 2016-17 school year.



Sen. Kate Sullivan

Sullivan said that the need for remedial education at the postsecondary level currently is very high.

“[This bill] would identify a way to ensure our children are making progress that will prepare them for postsecondary education or a future career,” she said. “We want to provide assurances that Nebraska’s students are adequately

prepared to receive a postsecondary education or are career ready.”

Sullivan said that it might be possible to use an already existing assessment, but that ultimately the assessment must consist of multiple administrations so that student progress may be adequately measured.

Accelerate Nebraska President Greg Adams spoke in favor of the bill, saying that it represents a necessary refinement in the state’s assessment and accountability system.

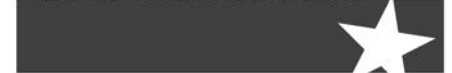
“If [postsecondary schools] say that this is the assessment mechanism we’re going to use for placement, they need to communicate that with high schools,” he said. “If I were a teacher in a K-12 system and these were my students [requiring remediation], I’d want to know where the weakness is so that I could do something about it.”

Mike Baumgartner, executive director of the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education, also supported the bill. He said that ensuring students are adequately prepared in high school will benefit them for years to come.

“We need to address the learning gaps and utilize tools and strategies to address those gaps,” Baumgartner said. “Without the need for remediation at the postsecondary level, students are more likely to finish quicker, with less debt and enter the workforce more quickly.”

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

GOVERNMENT, MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS



Bill seeks to modernize public meeting access

Some public bodies would be allowed to make greater use of technol-

ogy in order to comply with the state’s Open Meetings Act under a bill heard by the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee Jan. 21.

Under LB84, introduced by Hyanis Sen. Al Davis, one member of a public body that represents territory in a county with a population of 3,000 or less—or a public body whose territory includes at least two counties with populations of less than 3,000—would be allowed to participate in a public meeting by teleconference, videoconference or other electronic means.

Davis said the bill would allow public entities to comply with open meetings law while dealing with travel conditions that often make it difficult for all members to attend a meeting in person.

“I do not envision this bill as an attempt to supplant open meeting laws,” Davis said, calling it a “baby step” toward ensuring that public bodies in rural areas are able to conduct their business.

Terri Licking, a member of the Thomas County Visitors Committee, testified in support of the bill. She said LB84 would help her committee and others like it to reach a quorum in order pay bills in a timely manner and keep members involved.

Rural counties have small pools of individuals to draw from who are willing to engage in public service, Licking said, which often involves driving long distances in inclement weather. In addition, she said, those who are willing to serve often are on many boards and committees and face time constraints that make it difficult to physically attend all meetings.

“We need everyone’s participation to conduct business efficiently,” Licking said.

Gavin Geis of Common Cause Ne-



Sen. Al Davis

braska also supported the bill, saying the state “falls more on the restrictive end” of the spectrum of how states approach allowing participation via technology.

Nebraska needs to explore using technology in ways that lessen the geographic burden on rural public bodies, he said.

“We think LB84 is a great first step to improve our system,” Geis said.

Walter Radcliffe, representing Media of Nebraska, opposed the bill. Current state law provides sufficient options for public bodies to use technology, he said, as long as reasonable advance notice is given and other conditions are met.

“I don’t believe [this bill] is needed because remote participation is adequately covered today in regard to Nebraska open meetings law,” Radcliffe said. “I would submit that LB84 is, quite frankly, a phone-in-your-vote bill.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Presidential election by national popular vote considered

Popular votes, rather than electoral votes, would determine the outcome of the next presidential election under a bill heard by the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee Jan. 23.

Under LB112, introduced by O’Neill Sen. Tyson Larson, Nebraska would enter into an interstate compact to elect the country’s president by national vote.



Sen. Tyson Larson

Currently, Nebraska uses the congressional district method. Nebraska has five electoral votes; one for each of the three congressional districts, plus two for the state’s Senate seats. The winner of each district is awarded one electoral vote, and the winner of

the statewide vote is then awarded the state’s remaining two electoral votes. Nebraska and Maine are the only two states who use this system.

“[This bill] would ensure every Nebraska voter is relevant in presidential campaigns and rightsizing the influence of battleground states like Ohio and Florida,” Larson said. “This will start a broader discussion about what can be done to make voter participation more relevant in presidential elections.”

The presidential candidate with the largest national popular vote total would be certified by each state’s chief election officer and awarded all of the state’s electoral votes.

The compact would become effective if and when states possessing a majority of electoral votes —270 votes — enact similar legislation. Any member state could withdraw from the compact at any time. Any request to withdraw from the compact occurring within six months of a presidential election would not become effective until after the election.

Additionally, the compact would be terminated if the Electoral College system is abolished at any time.

Patrick Rosenstiel, representing National Popular Vote, spoke in favor of the bill. He said that in the last presidential election, the 13 smallest states received only four of 250 visits by the national campaigns.

“If we want to increase the influence of small states during the presidential election, we must fix the national system,” he said. “The national popular vote would accurately reflect the voice of Nebraskans.”

Patrick Borchers of Omaha opposed the bill, saying the national popular vote would eliminate any influence Nebraska voters currently have.

“[Nebraskans] are one-half of 1 percent of the population,” he said. “[With LB112] we are in effect giving away our

votes to the other 99 percent. This is a radical attempt to amend the constitution without really having to amend it.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Emergency data proposed for first responder use

Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard testimony Jan. 22 on a bill that would provide first responders access to an emergency management database.

LB163, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Sue Crawford, would allow members of the public to voluntarily input information into a database, which would be available to law enforcement officers and first responders.



Sen. Sue Crawford

Crawford said the bill would help leverage current technology to help emergency planners, first responders and police.

“It creates a way for counties to provide valuable information to 911 and other first responders,” she said. “To have the ability to enter information about a child with autism, for example, or that someone may need extra care or attention is invaluable.”

Possible information that could be included in a person’s database profile would be a physical description, medical conditions or allergies, household information, primary language and emergency contacts.

The information collected for the database would be available only to emergency management agencies, public safety agencies and public safety answering points, like 911. The information would not be considered public and any person who intention-

ally discloses or releases information from the database would be guilty of a Class III misdemeanor.

Development of the database is estimated to cost \$900,000 in fiscal year 2015-16 and \$600,000 in FY2016-17.

Todd Miller of Rave Mobile Safety spoke in favor of the bill, saying that other states have successfully implemented similar statewide systems.

“[The Arkansas system] allowed first responders to quickly and easily access critical information over the life cycle of an emergency,” he said. “There was a case of a 6-year-old girl who went missing from school. First responders had access to her photo and she was located within 10 minutes.”

Autism Society of Nebraska President Megan Misegadis also supported the bill.

“Whether it be a wandering child, an abduction or a senior with dementia, this would make a difference,” she said. “It would dramatically reduce response times and increase successful rescues.”

Paul Johnson, southeast area director of the Nebraska Association of Emergency Management, opposed the bill, saying there are too many unanswered questions about implementing a statewide system.

“This technology is subject to continual change, ownership, alteration and levels of support,” Johnson said. “The objectives for and implementation associated with collecting this information should be discussed and defined at the local level because not all emergency management needs are the same.”

Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency director, testified in a neutral capacity. He said the lack of a statewide, centralized 911 system would make it difficult to implement the bill’s provisions.

“Having this information is an essential component of preparedness and

planning component for all vulnerable persons in all jurisdictions,” he said. “However, additional measures must be taken to engage stakeholders before the adoption of this bill.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.



Nurse practitioner changes considered

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Jan. 22 on a bill intended to address the shortage of primary care providers in rural Nebraska.

LB107, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Sue Crawford, would remove the requirement for an integrated practice agreement between a nurse practitioner and a collaborating physician and replace it with a transition to practice agreement.

Crawford said the bill was identical to one she sponsored last session, which passed on a 43-0 vote before being vetoed by former Gov. Dave Heineman.

The bill would replace the integrated practice agreement with a transition to practice agreement. The agreement would provide that the nurse practitioner and the supervising provider practice collaboratively within the framework of their respective scopes of practice.

A supervising provider is defined as a physician, osteopathic physician or nurse practitioner licensed and practicing in the same practice specialty, related specialty or field of practice. A nurse practitioner would be required to have 10,000 hours of practice to qualify as a supervising provider.

Crawford said the current practice agreement requirement restricts trade and does not improve patient outcomes – particularly in rural areas. She said there are parts of the state where Nebraskans may be without a primary care provider as a result.

“Small business owners are often unable to find a physician willing to sign an integrated practice agreement,” she said.

Nurse practitioner Kelley Hasenauer testified in support of the bill, saying the change would allow her to provide continuity of care to her patients should anything happen to the physician with whom she has an integrated practice agreement.

Nurse practitioners are skilled clinicians, she said, and the current requirement is an unnecessary barrier to their ability to provide healthcare access to rural Nebraskans.

“Our outcomes and cost effectiveness are well-proven in study after study,” Hasenauer said.

Cathy Phillips, a psychiatric nurse practitioner in Hastings, also testified in support. Nurse practitioners are the sole health care providers in many counties, she said, and allowing them full practice authority would bring Nebraska in line with 19 other states and the District of Columbia.

“Health care legislation should be evidenced based,” Phillips said.

Richard Blatny of the Nebraska Medical Association opposed the bill, saying nurse practitioners are mid-level providers who lack the necessary hours of clinical training to practice unsupervised. He said patients themselves often do not realize how complicated their cases may be.

“Your constituents – the citizens of Nebraska – expect you to pass bills that protect them, not put them in harm’s way,” Blatny said.

Richard Wurtz, a family medicine

physician, also testified in opposition. Physicians and nurses are trained differently, he said, and patients could incorrectly assume that a health care provider has been trained as a doctor if he or she is allowed to practice without supervision.

“You’re opening a Pandora’s box with this bill,” Wurtz said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB107.

JUDICIARY



Marriage license fee increase proposed

Marriage license fees would increase in Nebraska under a bill heard by the Judiciary Committee Jan 21.

LB88, sponsored by Lincoln Sen. Kathy Campbell, would increase the fee charged by counties from \$15 to \$50 for issuing and recording marriage licenses and to administer oaths or affirmations for marriage. The bill also would increase the fee charged by counties from \$5 to \$16 to make a certified copy of a marriage record.



Sen. Kathy Campbell

Campbell said that Nebraska county officials requested the fee increases because their administrative costs have not been adjusted since 1995. She said the proposed licensing fee increase would allow counties to cover their administrative costs, which the officials estimated to be \$55 per document.

Dan Nolte, Lancaster County Clerk, testified in support of the bill. He said his office processes more than 2,000 marriage licenses a year, with

most of his staff’s time spent retrieving data from couples who make errors on their forms.

“Those follow-up calls take a lot of time,” Nolte said.

Beth Bazyn Ferrell, representing the Nebraska Association of County Officials, also spoke in support of the bill. She said the county fees for issuing copies of marriage documents should be increased to make them consistent with the price charged by state offices, which increased to \$16 in 2014.

No one spoke in opposition to the bill and the committee took no immediate action on it.

Changes to firearm restrictions considered

Recklessly firing a gun would be illegal anywhere in Nebraska under legislation heard by the Judiciary Committee Jan. 22.

Current statute specifies that anyone who unlawfully and intentionally fires a gun at a person, building or vehicle is guilty of a Class IC felony, punishable by up to 50 years imprisonment.

Introduced by Wahoo Sen. Jerry Johnson, LB137 would eliminate the population requirement of the current law, whereby the unlawful discharge



Sen. Jerry Johnson

of a firearm is an offense only within the boundaries of any first class city and counties containing primary or metropolitan class cities. The bill would not change the penalty.

Johnson said all Nebraska citizens should be protected from gun violence, not just those residing in larger communities. He called the bill a

public safety measure that would make the statute consistent across the state.

Julie Reiter, representing the Nebraska County Attorneys Association, testified in support of the bill. She cited two shootings in David City, which could be prosecuted only as misdemeanors despite the grave nature of the crimes.

“From my experience, this has limited my ability to prosecute heinous behavior that occurs in David City and Butler County,” Reiter said.

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

Concealed handgun rights discussed

Concealed handguns could be carried by permit holders at private schools under legislation heard by the Judiciary Committee Jan. 22.

LB184, introduced by Crete Sen. Laura Ebke, would remove private, denominational and parochial schools and private colleges from the list of places concealed handguns are prohibited in Nebraska. The bill would allow those institutions to authorize security personnel to carry handguns on their properties only after written notice is given to students and their parents or guardians.



Sen. Laura Ebke

Only individuals with concealed handgun permits would be allowed to carry guns on those properties, according to the bill.

Ebke said the bill would give private schools the option of arming their personnel, something Nebraska law already allows churches to do. Security teams at churches with attached or nearby schools currently

are unable to provide the same level of protection during the week as they do on Sundays.

“This bill is a reasonable solution to offer some form of protection without having to resort to hiring less discrete police protection,” Ebke said.

Rod Moeller, president of the Nebraska Firearms Owners Association, spoke in favor of the bill. Like churches, he said, private and parochial schools should be able to devise security policies that protect children.

“It’s a scary world,” he said. “It’s up to us on how to respond.”

Dick Clark, security team coordinator for Lincoln’s Temple Baptist Church, also testified in support of LB184, saying it would give institutions additional security options to consider. Armed staff make institutions safer, he said, because offenders in mass shootings typically continue until confronted.

“Killers choose to keep killing until someone stops them,” Clark said.

Courtney Lawton, a public school teacher and graduate teaching assistant at the University of Nebraska—Lincoln opposed the bill. She said the training required for a concealed handgun permit is inadequate because people learn how to defend only themselves, not others.

Further, she said, allowing guns on campuses puts students and teachers in danger because some mass shootings are committed by those who have obtained guns legally.

“A good guy with a gun often becomes a bad guy with a gun,” she said.

Amanda Gailey, representing Nebraskans Against Gun Violence, agreed with Lawton that the minimum eight hours of training required to acquire a concealed handgun permit is inadequate. Speaking in opposition to the bill, she pointed out that 2,100 hours of training are required to be a

barber in Nebraska.

“Gun legislation ought to protect the people,” she said. “This is a great bill for the gun lobby, but a bad bill for our state.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Custodial plans for children of deployed parents discussed

Children of deployed military parents would have custodial plans in place under legislation heard by the Judiciary Committee Jan. 23.

LB219, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Sue Crawford, would adopt the Uniform Deployed Parents Custody and Visitation Act. The act would provide a legal framework for parents and judges regarding care for children when a military parent is deployed. The bill also would clarify parenting arrangements required when a deployed parent returns.



Sen. Sue Crawford

Crawford said the bill would minimize the amount of disruption in a child’s life when a military parent with custodial responsibilities is deployed. Children in families with deployed parents are at greater risk for depression and substance abuse, Crawford said. Because those behavioral health challenges are magnified when military parents divorce, Crawford said, custodial plans are critical.

“A custodial plan brings consistency and predictability for military families,” she said. “The bill creates a framework for that discussion.”

LB219 would allow families with deployed parents to create a temporary custodial agreement that specifies how decisions for the child would be made,

frequency and duration of contact with parents and nonparents and how the agreement could be changed.

Further, the act would permit courts to grant temporary caretaking authority to parents or nonparents, grant decision-making authority to nonparents and enforce a prior written agreement by the parents regarding custodial responsibility.

Lawrence Stunkel, an attorney with the state Department of Veterans Affairs, testified in support the bill, saying it would clarify what options are available to military parents with custody disputes.

Danelle Nelson, a Nebraska National Guard Airman and mother of two, also spoke in favor the bill. Not having a detailed custodial arrangement during her most recent deployment resulted in a disruption in family routines that were extremely stressful, she said. Without a family plan in place for her next deployment, Nelson said she might have second thoughts about remaining in the military.

"I'd probably hang it up," she said of her 15-year career. "I would not do that to my children again."

No one spoke in opposition to the bill and the committee took no immediate action on it.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Fee proposed to address aquatic invasive species

The potential impact of aquatic invasive species on local ecosystems and surface water was the focus of a bill heard by the Natural Resources Committee Jan. 21.

LB142, introduced by Ogallala Sen. Ken Schilz, would create the Nebraska Aquatic Invasive Species

Program to prevent and mitigate the damage caused by species such as the zebra mussel and silver carp.

Schilz said in the bill's statement of intent that "these species have proven destructive to the ecosystems and usability of surface waters in surrounding states, and steps must be taken to prevent their establishment in Nebraska."

The bill would impose a fee every three years on motorboat registrations, both new and renewal, of between \$5 and \$10. The collected fees could be used to:

- monitor and sample waters for aquatic invasive species;
- hire personnel;
- purchase equipment to inspect and decontaminate water;
- provide additional enforcement, education and research relating to aquatic invasive species; and
- conduct aquatic invasive species projects as needed.

Owners of motorboats registered outside Nebraska would be required to purchase an annual aquatic invasive species stamp for between \$10 and \$15. These fees would be remitted to the state Game Fund.

Karie Decker, an assistant division administrator with the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, testified in favor of the bill, saying that zebra mussels in particular filter water and remove food particles that would normally support other native aquatic species.

"Aquatic invasive species can threaten the quality and availability of our water resources and infrastructure," she said. "We have a unique opportunity to prevent the spread of some of the most devastating aquatic invasive species."

Jeff Buettner, public relations coordinator for the Central Public Power and Irrigation District, also supported



Sen. Ken Schilz

the bill. He said the prevalence of out of state boaters at Ogallala's Lake McConaughy places Nebraska's water resources at particularly high risk.

"Nebraska's waters are considered a public resource and a public benefit," Buettner said. "We believe it is in the best interests of Nebraskans for the Legislature to take the necessary steps to fund [LB142]."

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

NEBRASKA RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

Change to county retirement system advanced

The Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee heard testimony Jan. 20 on a bill that would change contributions to the Lancaster County retirement system.

LB126, introduced by Omaha Sen. Jeremy Nordquist, would increase the combined employee and employer



Sen. Jeremy Nordquist

contribution rates from a maximum of 13 percent to a maximum of 16 percent of the employees' salaries.

Nordquist said the bill would allow the county to help employees better prepare for retirement.

Kerry Eagan, chief administrative officer for the Lancaster County Board of Commissioners, testified in support of the bill. Workers who don't save enough for retirement remain employed longer, he said, which means the county pays more for salaries and benefits.

"Most employees simply aren't able to save enough for retirement," Eagan

said, adding that increased contributions also would help the county attract highly skilled new employees.

Nordquist offered an amendment that would change the population size for counties authorized to create their own county retirement plan. The changes would increase the minimum population size from 200,000 to 250,000 and the maximum population size from 300,000 to 500,000.

“The county population descriptions are changed to accommodate anticipated population growth,” he said.

The amendment also would clarify that employees receiving a 150 percent employer contribution match could elect to switch to a 100 percent employer match for all future contributions. The election would be irrevocable.

No opposition testimony was given.

The committee voted 6-0 to advance the bill to general file with the amendment attached.

TRANSPORTATION & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Road rules to protect cyclists discussed

Motorists would be required to give bicyclists more room on Nebraska roadways under legislation heard by the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee Jan. 20.

LB39, introduced by Omaha Sen. Rick Kolowski, would require motorists to follow the same passing laws for bicycles



Sen. Rick Kolowski

as they do for cars, such as changing lanes when the roadway permits. On narrower roads, motorists would be required to maintain at least a three-foot

gap around bicyclists while passing.

The bill also would allow bicyclists to ride two abreast on adequately-sized highway shoulders and would give bicyclists the right of way in bike lanes and crosswalks. Additionally, the proposal would repeal the law prohibiting bicyclists from riding on highways when a path has been provided adjacent to the roadway.

Kolowski said the bill has personal significance to him because a former colleague and friend recently was struck and killed while cycling.

“The highly tragic loss of Jim Johnston had an impact on his family and the entire community that could have been avoided,” he said. “It’s time to make a change in laws to better protect people who ride bicycles.”

Clarifying that motorists should pass bicycles the same way as cars makes the law easier for drivers to remember and easier for law enforcement to enforce, Kolowski said.

First-time offenders who cause a collision with a bicyclist would be guilty of a Class III misdemeanor, punishable by three months imprisonment and up to a \$500 fine. Second and subsequent offenses would be a Class I misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year of imprisonment and a \$1,000 fine.

Julie Harris of the Nebraska Bicycle Alliance testified in favor of the bill. She said the proposal fits with the changing face of cycling.

“It’s crucial to remember that bicycling is not just a recreational activity,” Harris said. “This is a transportation issue and should be recognized as such.” Harris said. “

Harris said that LB39 provides a much needed update because Nebraska is one of only four states that still prohibits cyclists from riding on roads when a path is nearby.

“It’s time for Nebraska to catch up with the rest of the country on this provision,” she said.

James Blue, president of Cedars Youth Services, testified in favor of the bill, saying he suffered a concussion and broken ribs after being hit by a motorist while cycling. He said he hopes the measure would help change drivers’ attitudes about cyclists.

“I don’t know why people are so angry out there, so impatient,” Blue said.

Chief Deputy Jeff Bliemeister of the Lancaster County Sheriff’s Office also testified in favor of the bill. He said it is hard to enforce the current law that requires drivers to maintain a three-foot gap while passing cyclists, especially at high speeds.

“Usually, the only time we issue a citation is when the bicyclist is struck,” he said.

The new proposal would provide clear direction to motorists on how to treat cyclists, Bliemeister said, and requiring drivers to change lanes is much easier to objectively enforce.

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

Senators consider updating bicycle definition

Riders of bicycles with electric motors would enjoy the same rights as traditional cyclists under a proposal heard by the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee Jan. 20.

Introduced by Papillion Sen. Jim Smith, LB95 would add electric-assist bicycles, or e-bikes, to Nebraska’s definition of bicycles. The new definition would include two- or three-wheeled vehicles that can be propelled by pedaling or by an electric motor no larger than 750 watts, producing up to one brake horsepower, with a maximum speed of 20 miles per hour.



Sen. Jim Smith

Smith said Nebraska law does not clearly distinguish e-bikes from other motorized vehicles such as motorcycles or mopeds. He said the change is needed to ensure that riders of electric-assist bicycles be allowed to follow the same rules of the road and accepted on the same paths as traditional bicycles. Because e-bikes are attractive to older riders and those with health concerns, he said, the number of e-bike riders inevitably will increase.

“With an aging population that tends to be more active and health conscious, I anticipate e-bikes increasing in popularity,” Smith said.

Bill Moore, publisher of EV World, testified in favor of LB95. E-bikes present older riders the opportunity to stay active, he said, and the bill would enable them to legally access the same safe trails as traditional cyclists. Additionally, Moore said, Nebraska will benefit economically from increased e-bike sales and the resulting tourism when those riders vacation here.

“It’s good for the state and its citizens, for its physical and economic health,” Moore said.

John Winkler, representing the Nebraska Association of Resource Districts, also spoke in support of the bill, saying that e-bikes give people, especially handicapped and elderly citizens, increased options to experi-

ence the environment.

“It just allows more access for those folks,” he said. “It opens up our outdoors for more people to enjoy.”

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

URBAN AFFAIRS

Borrowing authority for municipalities proposed

Cities and towns in Nebraska would have the express authority to borrow funds to purchase property or construct improvements under a bill heard by the Urban Affairs Committee Jan. 20.

LB152, introduced by the committee, would allow municipalities to borrow from state- or federally-chartered banks, savings banks, building and loan associations and savings and loan associations.

Under the bill, funds could be borrowed for any purpose for which a municipality is authorized by law to purchase property or fund improvements. Loans would not be restricted to a single year and could be repaid in installments.

Lynn Rex of the League of Nebraska Municipalities testified in support of the bill. Municipalities sometimes need to borrow on a short-term basis to deal with cash flow issues and for cost-saving purposes, she said.

Rex said that some city attorneys believe this authority to borrow funds already exists, and having the authority spelled out in state law would remove any ambiguity.

“We need to have express authority,” she said.

Jack Cheloha, representing the city of Omaha, also supported LB152. He said Omaha likely would rarely use the bill’s authority but would like to see state law be made consistent on the subject.

“It typically isn’t necessary for us to borrow on a short-term basis,” Cheloha said.

Mary Jane Truemper of Omaha testified in opposition to the bill, saying it was moving too fast through the legislative process. In addition, she said, while voters know exactly what cities and towns use bonds for, that may not be the case when municipalities borrow from financial institutions.

“I also think the term public purpose is a little ‘loosey goosey,’” Truemper said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill. ■

NEW BILLS

Bill Introducer One-line description

Jan. 20, 2015

LB431	Baker	Change provisions relating to public school district construction
LB432	Baker	Change provisions relating to access to and copying of public records
LB433	Baker	Create the offense of false presentation of proof of liability insurance and provide penalties
LB434	Cook	Require law enforcement agencies to use theft notification web sites as prescribed
LB435	Cook	Adopt the Time to Teach and Time to Learn Act
LB436	Cook	State intent relating to appropriations for pediatric oral health services
LB437	Ebke	Change provisions relating to the Parenting Act
LB438	Morfeld	Change distribution of sales and use tax revenue and create and provide for a fund
LB439	Morfeld	Change Nebraska Liquor Control Act penalty provisions for certain violations
LB440	Morfeld	Provide for a study of rates for care by an Alzheimer’s special care unit as prescribed
LB441	Bolz	Change provisions relating to the bridge to independence program

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LB442	Bolz	Appropriate additional funds to the Property Tax Credit Cash Fund
LB443	Bolz	Redefine support services for purposes of the Special Education Act
LB444	Groene	Eliminate the minimum levy adjustment for purposes of state aid to schools
LB445	Groene	Authorize audits of redevelopment plans that use tax-increment financing
LB446	Nordquist	Redefine compensation and change provisions for school employees retirement
LB447	Nordquist	Change provisions relating to the Class V School Employees Retirement Act
LB448	Nordquist	Make current and new Class V school employees members of the School Employees Retirement System of the State of Nebraska
LB449	Mello	Change provisions relating to funding for microloans
LB450	Mello	Authorize grants to aid tourism, create a fund, and change funding provisions
LB451	Hansen	Change and eliminate provisions relating to stacking of insurance coverage
LB452	Hilkemann	Provide advertising requirements under the Uniform Credentialing Act
LB453	Hilkemann	Change provisions relating to motor vehicle taxes
LB454	Garrett	Change provisions relating to the taxation of military retirement benefits
LB455	Gloor	Change provisions relating to employment of a full-time fire chief by cities of the first class
LB456	Gloor	Change provisions relating to the Nebraska Exchange Stakeholder Commission
LB457	Gloor	Change the Site and Building Development Act and terminate a fund
LB458	Kolterman	Authorize limited lines travel insurance producer licenses
LB459	Crawford	Change provisions relating to a deposition of a child victim or child witness
LB460	Nordquist	Provide for licensure of charter bus and limousine services and pedal-pub vehicles for the consumption of alcohol
LB461	Pansing Brooks	Change appropriations for the Nebraska Tree Recovery Program
LB462	Seiler	Change restrictions on campaigning by public officials and public employees
LB463	B. Harr	Adopt the Technology Information Management Act
LB464	B. Harr	Change information provided on effective financing statements
LB465	B. Harr	Adopt the Electronic Notary Public Act
LB466	B. Harr	Change provisions relating to deductions of municipal sales and use tax refunds
LB467	Nordquist	Change provisions relating to State Patrol retirement
LB468	Nordquist	Change benefit and contribution provisions relating to judges retirement
LB469	Smith	Provide powers and duties to the Department of Environmental Quality relating to the development of a state plan for regulating carbon dioxide emissions
LB470	Hansen	Provide an income tax credit for caregivers
LB471	Howard	Change provisions relating to prescription drug monitoring
LB472	Campbell	Adopt the Medicaid Redesign Act
LB473	Chambers	Eliminate the power of eminent domain for major pipelines
LB474	Chambers	Provide for Mountain Lion Protection Plates and create a fund
LB475	Davis	Change a provision relating to the construction or acquisition of certain electric generation facilities
LB476	Davis	Provide duties for county assessors and the Property Tax Administrator relating to tax-exempt real property
LB477	Davis	Change provisions relating to school districts maintaining the only public high school in a county
LB478	Baker	Provide bonding authority for educational service units
LB479	Bloomfield	Change provisions relating to memorials to veterans
LB480	B. Harr	Change provisions relating to computing compensation under the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act
LB481	Kintner	Permit school districts to opt out of a learning community as prescribed
LB482	Krist	Change provisions relating to juveniles
LB483	Pansing Brooks	Change provisions relating to indeterminate sentencing
LB484	Nordquist	Change county employee and employer retirement contribution rates for certain counties as prescribed
LB485	Stinner	State intent relating to appropriations for child welfare
LB486	Schilz	Provide for a limited bottling endorsement under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act
LB487	Schilz	Change the duties of the Auditor of Public Accounts
LB488	Scheer	Adopt the Transportation Network Insurance Act
LB489	Sullivan	Change provisions relating to grants for early childhood education as prescribed
LB490	Watermeier	Adopt the Provider Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment Act
LB491	Morfeld	Provide for an election day voter registration pilot project
LB492	Morfeld	Change provisions relating to fees charged by the register of deeds
LB493	Nordquist	Adopt the Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act
LB494	Nordquist	Change minimum wage for persons compensated by way of gratuities
LB495	Pansing Brooks	Increase the earned income tax credit
LB496	Kuehn	Appropriate funds for the Yeutter Institute for International Trade and Finance
LR28	Friesen	Congratulate Nicholas Weber on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout
LR29	Friesen	Congratulate Trevor Alber on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout
LR30	Friesen	Congratulate Blake Vaught on achieving the rank of Eagle Scout
LR31CA	Bloomfield	Constitutional amendment to change legislative term limits to two consecutive full terms
LR32	Krist	Provide the Executive Board appoint a special committee to be known as the Developmental Disabilities Special Investigative Committee of the Legislature

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LR33	Krist	Provide the Executive Board appoint a special committee to be known as the ACCESSNebraska Special Investigative Committee of the Legislature
LR34	Krist	Provide the Executive Board reappoint the Department of Correctional Services Special Investigative Committee of the Legislature

Jan. 21, 2015

LB497	Hadley	Change provisions relating to distribution of marital assets
LB498	Hadley	Change sales and use tax provisions relating to all-terrain vehicles and utility-type vehicles
LB499	Krist	Provide duties for the Department of Health and Human Services relating to behavioral and mental health services
LB500	Howard	Require application for medicaid state plan amendment for multisystemic therapy and functional family therapy
LB501	Krist	Provide for use of audio or visual materials of legislative proceedings to be used for commercial or political advertising as prescribed
LB502	Krist	State intent to establish a family court pilot project
LB503	Krist	Provide authority for the Auditor of Public Accounts to issue subpoenas and request court orders
LB504	Krist	Change provisions relating to presentence reports and examinations
LB505	Krist	Change provisions of the Security, Privacy, and Dissemination of Criminal History Information Act
LB506	Krist	Increase funding for community-based developmental disability providers
LB507	Cook	Require certain examinations for special education teachers
LB508	Cook	Provide minimum requirements for acceptance to teacher education programs
LB509	Cook	Change and eliminate provisions relating to a poverty allowance under the state aid formula
LB510	Cook	Provide an income tax credit to employers of public assistance recipients
LB511	Cook	Provide for return to learn protocols for pediatric cancer survivors
LB512	Stinner	Provide powers and duties to the Nebraska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission regarding certain wastewater and charge an assessment for certain costs
LB513	Craighead	Change provisions relating to use and leasing of school property
LB514	Craighead	Change provisions relating to registering to vote and voting early at the same time
LB515	Craighead	Change an aggregate loan limit for agricultural projects under the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority Act
LB516	Bolz	Create the Brain Injury Council and the Brain Injury Trust Fund and provide powers and duties
LB517	Riepe	Prohibit certain uses of interactive wireless communication devices while driving
LB518	Riepe	Provide for changes to the medical assistance program
LB519	Sullivan	Provide for school and student aid, grants, and assistance as prescribed
LB520	Sullivan	Change provisions relating to transfers to certain education-related funds
LB521	Sullivan	Provide, eliminate, and change provisions relating to property tax levies and credits and state aid to schools and provide for a transfer from the Cash Reserve Fund
LB522	Sullivan	Provide for apportionment funds and student support aid relating to state aid to education
LB523	Sullivan	Change income tax rates and state intent relating to funding public education
LB524	Sullivan	Change provisions documenting eligibility relating to free and reduced-price school meals
LB525	Sullivan	Change provisions relating to education
LB526	Sullivan	Define a term related to teachers' and administrators' certificates
LB527	Sullivan	Change provisions relating to teachers' loan programs
LB528	Sullivan	Change and eliminate provisions relating to learning communities
LB529	Sullivan	Change provisions relating to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act
LB530	Sullivan	Provide a duty for the student achievement coordinator
LB531	Kolterman	Provide requirements for publication of insurance information
LB532	Hilkemann	Appropriate funds to the University of Nebraska
LB533	Stinner	Appropriate funds to the University of Nebraska
LB534	Groene	Provide for limitations on General Fund expenditures for state aid to education
LB535	Smith	Provide the Public Service Commission with exclusive jurisdiction over depth requirements for underground oil and natural gas pipelines
LB536	K. Haar	Provide for the filing of an annual report by public power suppliers with the Nebraska Power Review Board
LB537	Watermeier	Appropriate funds relating to natural resources
LB538	Performance Audit	Require audits of tax incentive programs under the Legislative Performance Audit Act and change tax incentive sunset dates
LB539	Watermeier	Change provisions relating to the office of Legislative Audit and the Auditor of Public Accounts
LB540	Crawford	Adopt updated international building code standards
LB541	Crawford	Change provisions of the Taxpayer Transparency Act relating to expired contracts
LB542	B. Harr	Provide a sales tax exemption for purchases by county agricultural societies
LB543	B. Harr	Provide for certification of community paramedics and reimbursement under medicaid
LB544	B. Harr	Adopt the Community Gardens Act
LB545	B. Harr	Provide for additional mandatory minimum sentencing as prescribed
LB546	Morfeld	Authorize administration of naloxone as prescribed

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LB547	Campbell	Change provisions of the Quality Child Care Act
LB548	Campbell	Adopt the Surgical Assistant Practice Act
LB549	Campbell	Adopt the Health Care Transformation Act
LB550	B. Harr	Change provisions relating to the Municipal Equalization Fund
LB551	Nordquist	Adopt the Local Government Employees Retirement Act
LB552	Nordquist	Change a duty of the Auditor of Public Accounts relating to written reviews of reports
LB553	Gloor	Change insurance provisions relating to dental services
LB554	Business & Labor	Provide for payment of claims against the state
LB555	B. Harr	Deny claims made against the state
LB556	Kolowski	Waive workers' compensation as the exclusive remedy if an employer is willfully negligent
LB557	Kolowski	Redefine a term under the Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act
LB558	Kolowski	Provide an exception for certain food operations under the Nebraska Pure Food Act and provide a duty for the Department of Agriculture
LB559	Schumacher	Change provisions relating to the treatment of tax credits under the New Markets Job Growth Investment Act
LB560	Williams	Appropriate funds to the University of Nebraska and create a fund
LB561	Sinner	Name the Irrigation District Act and change election provisions for irrigation districts
LB562	Morfeld	Adopt the Nebraska Treasures Act
LB563	McCollister	Change provisions relating to school fiscal year
LB564	Lindstrom	Change duties and obligations relating to the mowing of weeds along county roads
LB565	Kuehn	State intent relating to appropriations for education and training in high-need fields
LB566	Coash	Change provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act
LB567	Johnson	Permit transfer of prescription information between pharmacies as prescribed
LB568	Brasch	Change certain administrative license revocation provisions relating to commercial drivers' licenses
LB569	Brasch	Change the Business Innovation Act
LB570	Brasch	Change operation restrictions on golf car vehicles
LB571	Brasch	Provide requirements for the Nebraska Tourism Commission to mark tourism attractions
LB572	Davis	Provide duties for the state school security director relating to cyberbullying and digital citizenship issues
LB573	Davis	Adopt the Health Enterprise Zone Act and provide for tax credits
LB574	Davis	Adopt the Intangible Personal Property Tax Act
LB575	Murante	Change provisions relating to ballots for early voting, write-in candidates, and filling vacancies
LB576	Murante	Change election and membership provisions for learning community coordinating councils
LB577	Murante	Permit counties to regulate peddlers, hawkers, and solicitors
LB578	Murante	Change provisions relating to elections
LB579	Murante	Change traffic accident reporting requirements as prescribed and authorize a fee for a copy of a peace officer report
LB580	Murante	Adopt the Redistricting Act
LB581	Nordquist	Adopt the Nebraska Clean-burning Motor Fuel Development Act
LB582	Nordquist	Change provisions relating to a focus school and program allowance
LB583	Schilz	Require a state energy plan
LB584	Schilz	Transfer funds of the Cash Reserve Fund for a dental clinic and oral health training facility
LB585	Schilz	Change provisions relating to director qualifications and employment of personnel at the Department of Natural Resources
LB586	Morfeld	Prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity
LB587	McCollister	Change the motor vehicle tax schedules
LB588	Pansing Brooks	Provide for electronic application for ballots to vote early by mail
LB589	Pansing Brooks	Provide for allocation of the Nebraska Education Improvement Fund as prescribed
LB590	Friesen	Change provisions relating to a taxable value certified under the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act
LB591	Bolz	Create the achieve a better life experience program and provide for adjustments to taxable income
LB592	Bolz	Change provisions relating to corrections and parole and mentally ill offenders
LB593	Nordquist	Appropriate funds to the University of Nebraska to study current health data systems
LB594	Kolowski	Change contribution rates for certain police officers and county employees
LB595	Davis	Create the Task Force on School Construction Assistance
LB596	Davis	Change the Community Development Law and create the Tax-increment Financing Division of the Auditor of Public Accounts
LB597	Davis	Adopt the Contract Carrier Safety Act
LB598	Schumacher	Change and provide requirements regarding treatment and segregation of mentally ill inmates
LB599	Ebke	Provide a minimum wage for certain young student workers
LB600	Ebke	Change provisions relating to the investment of trust funds for self-insurers under the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act
LB601	Bloomfield	Prohibit a school board member and an immediate family member from being employed with the school district
LB602	Retirement	Change collection provisions relating to judges retirement fees
LB603	Bloomfield	Provide for processing and certification of federal firearms forms as prescribed
LB604	Bloomfield	Change provisions relating to reimbursement to political subdivisions under the Governor's Emergency Program

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LB605	Mello	Change classification of penalties, punishments, probation and parole provisions, and provisions relating to criminal records and restitution and provide for a special legislative committee
LB606	Mello	Adopt the Office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System Act, change provisions relating to the Public Counsel, and mandate a declaration by the Governor of a correctional system overcrowding emergency as prescribed
LB607	Mello	Adopt the Home Care Consumer Bill of Rights Act
LB608	Mello	Change revenue and taxation provisions
LB609	Smith	Adopt the Nebraska Bridge Repair Act
LB610	Smith	Change motor fuel excise taxes
LB611	Kintner	Require private employers to use the E-Verify Program
LB612	Kintner	Change provisions relating to force in self-protection
LB613	Kintner	Provide duties for the Department of Revenue and change income tax rates and the distribution of sales and use tax revenue
LB614	Kintner	Change provisions relating to the taxation of military retirement benefits
LB615	Kintner	Provide a property tax exemption for homesteads of certain persons
LB616	Larson	Adopt the Independent Public Schools Act
LB617	Larson	Adopt the Working to Improve Schools Act
LB618	Larson	Provide for redesignation of districts and changing at-large membership for certain commodities boards and commissions
LB619	Larson	Provide for a special designated poker license and a poker endorsement under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act
LB620	Larson	Change provisions relating to lawsuits against public participation
LB621	Larson	Change qualifications of the deputy director of the Auditor of Public Accounts
LB622	Larson	Change provisions relating to the Niobrara Scenic River Act
LB623	Nordquist	Provide for issuance of motor vehicle operators' licenses and state ID cards to persons with lawful status
LB624	Larson	Change provisions relating to vehicle load requirements
LB625	Krist	Adopt the Interstate Placement for Involuntarily Admitted Patients Agreement Act
LB626	Campbell	Create a fund and change motor vehicle fees and taxes and their distribution
LB627	Mello	Change provisions relating to pregnancy under the Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act
LB628	Schilz	Provide for electronic posting of property and casualty insurance policies and notices related to such policies
LB629	Mello	Provide for regulation of transportation network companies
LB630	Krist	Provide duties for the Nebraska State Patrol regarding criminal history record information checks
LB631	Scheer	Change medicaid provisions relating to acceptance of and assent to federal law
LB632	Scheer	Prohibit employers and associations from precluding certain contracts relating to health benefit plans
LB633	Stinner	Appropriate funds for state aid to municipalities and counties
LB634	Garrett	Provide for issuance of permits fees under the Game Law to prisoners of war
LB635	Garrett	Change where a permit holder may carry a concealed handgun under the Concealed Handgun Permit Act
LB636	Garrett	Provide for a discounted permit under the Game Law for deployed military members and spouses on leave
LB637	Garrett	Provide for resident permits under the Game Law for spouses of military personnel as prescribed
LB638	Garrett	Change permit expiration provisions for members of the armed forces or their spouses under the Concealed Handgun Permit Act
LB639	Garrett	Provide authority for the Department of Roads to issue permits to control roadside vegetation as prescribed
LB640	Garrett	Provide for retrocession of jurisdiction for land on which the Omaha National Cemetery is located
LB641	Garrett	Provide rights and duties for a person operating a manual or motorized wheelchair or bicycle as prescribed
LB642	Garrett	Change provisions relating to motorboat, motor vehicle, and trailer registration and titling
LB643	Garrett	Adopt the Cannabis Compassion and Care Act
LB644	Nordquist	Adopt the Nebraska Transit and Rail Advisory Council Act
LB645	Nordquist	Adopt the Early Childhood Workforce Development Opportunity Act and provide tax credits
LB646	Kintner	Eliminate provisions for secret ballots for leadership under the Open Meeting Act
LB647	Nordquist	Prohibit discrimination relating to child placement
LB648	Howard	Provide for adoption by two adult persons
LB649	Kintner	Require all votes taken by public officials to be a public record as prescribed
LB650	Nordquist	Encourage hospitals to offer vaccinations
LB651	Bloomfield	Change liability for certain court costs as prescribed
LB652	Transportation & Telecommunications	Adopt the 911 Emergency Services Communications Act
LB653	Johnson	Exempt certain purchases of energy star qualified products from sales and use taxes
LB654	Seiler	Appropriate funds to the Department of Correctional Services
LB655	Davis	Adopt the Cities of the First Class Firefighters Cash Balance Retirement Act
LR35	Ebke	Resolution to petition Congress to call a convention of the States to propose amendments to the Constitution of the United States

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

*Current hearing schedules are always available at: nebraskalegislature.gov/calendar

Monday, January 26

Banking, Commerce & Insurance

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB159 (Hadley) Define and redefine terms under the Public Accountancy Act

LB157 (McCollister) Change operative date provisions relating to the Nebraska Model Business Corporation Act

LB279 (Schumacher) Change provisions and fees relating to business entity reinstatement

LB247 (Sullivan) Change an interest rate provision in the Uniform Partnership Act of 1998

Business & Labor

Room 2102 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Albin, John - Department of Labor

LB83 (Cook) Provide certain protections for employees relating to wage disclosure

LB270 (Ebke) Create and eliminate funds administered by the Department of Labor

LB271 (Ebke) Change and eliminate provisions of the Employment Security Law

Education

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB109 (Crawford) Change residency requirements for veterans attending a public college or university

LB239 (K. Haar) Provide for a Coordinator for Educator Effectiveness and educator evaluation

LB54 (Scheer) Change provisions relating to postsecondary education statewide transfer-of-credit policies

LB144 (Davis) Reduce levy authority of community colleges and increase state aid to community colleges

General Affairs

Room 1015 - 1:30 p.m.

LB250 (Larson) Eliminate time restrictions on keno

LB17 (Krist) Change provisions relating to transfers to the Compulsive Gamblers Assistance Fund

LB118 (Larson) Provide for licensure of cigar shops

LB241 (Stinner) Change provisions relating to conveyances of cemetery lots

LB179 (Brasch) Require apprentice electricians to complete continuing education

LB160 (Larson) Allow financial institutions to operate gift enterprises

LR10CA (Schumacher) Constitutional amendment to permit the Legislature to authorize and regulate gaming

LB330 (Larson) Change provisions relating to alcoholic liquor

Transportation & Telecommunications

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Lahm, Rhonda K. - Dept. of Motor Vehicles

LB45 (Coash) Eliminate film vehicle provisions under the Motor Vehicle Registration Act

LB47 (Watermeier) Change provisions relating to anatomical gifts under the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Act

LB220 (Smith) Provide for Nebraska 150 Sesquicentennial license plates and distribute fees

LB181 (Smith) Change rotating and flashing light provisions for motor vehicles

Tuesday, January 27

Agriculture

Room 2102 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Marshall, William III - Neb. State Fair Board

Appointment: Ibach, Greg - Department of Agriculture

LB85 (Davis) To increase the maximum brand inspection fee amount that may be established by the Nebraska Brand Committee

LB183 (Johnson) Change provisions relating to the Grain Dealer Act

Banking, Commerce & Insurance

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Quandahl, Mark - Dept. of Banking and Finance

Appointment: Ramge, Bruce - Dept. of Insurance

LB269 (Hughes) Eliminate a requirement to prepare and distribute a roster of all registered abstracters

LB198 (Williams) Authorize licenses for limited line pre-need funeral insurance

LB139 (Johnson) Change and eliminate provisions relating to the Real Property Appraiser Act

Education

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Bernthal, John - Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

LB303 (Bloomfield) Authorize schools to adopt a child sexual abuse policy

LB371 (Sullivan) Create and provide duties for the Nebraska Council for Educational Success

LB49 (Scheer) Provide for allied school systems

Nebraska Retirement Systems

Room 1525 - 12:00 p.m.

LB40 (Nordquist) Grant investigative powers to the Public Employees Retirement Board

LB236 (Coash) Change and eliminate provisions relating to collection of judgments and public retirement plans

Transportation & Telecommunications

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB122 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to operation of utility-type vehicles

LB275 (Friesen) Change penalties for operating a motor vehicle during a revocation period

LB94 (Smith) Provide for issuance of printed motor vehicle certificate of title for nonresidents as prescribed

Urban Affairs

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB168 (Mello) Authorize expansion of existing business improvement districts

LB116 (K. Haar) Change election procedures and membership for certain sanitary and improvement district boards of trustees

LB131 (Craighead) Change provisions relating to annexation and prohibit sanitary and improvement districts from spending certain assets

LB149 (Urban Affairs) Change provisions relating to election procedures for sanitary and improvement districts

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

*Current hearing schedules are always available at: nebraskalegislature.gov/calendar

Wednesday, January 28

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB222 (B. Harr) Create the Fallen Heroes Memorial Commission and provide duties
LB272 (Crawford) Create a voluntary veterans preference in private employment
LB305 (Schnoor) Allow veterans aid fund to be used for transportation costs for veterans
LR23 (Riepe) Urge the United States Dept. of Veterans Affairs to provide veterans with direct access to health care services in each local community in Nebraska

Health & Human Services

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB12 (Krist) Suspend medical assistance provided to persons who become inmates of public institutions
LB129 (B. Harr) Require criminal background checks for applicants for an initial nursing license
LB77 (Nordquist) Require a medicaid state plan amendment for family planning services and state intent relating to appropriations for the Every Woman Matters program

Judiciary

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB38 (Kolowski) Change motor vehicle homicide penalties and provide penalties for causing serious bodily injury to vulnerable road users
LB120 (Schumacher) Provide for seizure of license plates of certain uninsured motor vehicles or trailers as prescribed
LB215 (Craighead) Change provisions relating to theft
LB167 (Mello) Provide duties for the Office of Violence Prevention and change funding provisions
LB189 (Davis) Change provisions and penalties relating to marijuana and alphabetize definitions

Natural Resources

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB141 (Schilz) Change provisions relating to the Public Entities Mandated

Project Charges Act

LB143 (Schilz) Provide training cost reimbursement relating to underground storage tanks

Revenue

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB63 (Schumacher) Provide an income tax deduction for the amount of income subjected to Social Security taxes
LB165 (Lindstrom) Change income tax provisions relating to Social Security benefits
LB267 (Crawford) Change the income tax exemption for military retirement income

Thursday, January 29

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB61 (Bolz) Change funding for county offices relating to administration of public assistance programs
LB132 (Ebke) Change joint public agency bonding powers and procedures
LB138 (Johnson) Name the Land Surveyors Regulation Act and provide for a code of practice
LB427 (Groene) Provide for payment of probation office costs by the state

Health & Human Services

Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB46 (Watermeier) Change provisions of the Statewide Trauma System Act
LB34 (Howard) Adopt the Carbon Monoxide Safety Act
LB146 (Crawford) Provide for disposition of unclaimed cremated remains in a veteran cemetery

Judiciary

Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.

LB338 (Brasch) Provide a docket fee for paternity determinations and parental support proceedings
LB314 (Hansen) State matters subject to county court jurisdiction
LB301 (Chambers) Change provisions relating to distribution of court opinions
LB194 (Seiler) Create the Supreme Court Attorney Services Cash Fund
LB297 (Seiler) Change the salaries of Supreme Court judges

Natural Resources

Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Barel, Brian - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Clouse, Stan - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Huggenberger, Steven - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Knutson, Thomas - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Kraus, Don - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Palmertree, Tom - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Smathers, Scott - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Smith, Lindsey - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Strauch, Walter Dennis - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
Appointment: Taylor, Loren - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
LB206 (Schilz) Change the Erosion and Sediment Control Act
LB207 (Schilz) Change provisions relating to civil penalties under the Nebraska Chemigation Act

Nebraska Retirement Systems

Room 1525 - 12:00 p.m.

LB446 (Nordquist) Redefine compensation and change provisions for school employees retirement
LB484 (Nordquist) Change county employee and employer retirement contribution rates for certain counties as prescribed

Revenue

Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB162 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to sales of real property for nonpayment of taxes
LB186 (Bolz) Adopt the Property Tax Circuit Breaker Act
LB178 (Watermeier) Change valuation of agricultural land and horticultural land
LB259 (Gloor) Adopt the Personal Property Tax Relief Act

Friday, January 30

Appropriations

Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.

LB430 (Mello) Change appropriation provisions

COMMITTEE HEARINGS

*Current hearing schedules are always available at: nebraskalegislature.gov/calendar

**Government, Military & Veterans Affairs
Room 1507 - 2:00 p.m.**

Appointment: Miller, Dana - State Emergency Response Commission
Appointment: Hofbauer, Tim - State Emergency Response Commission
Appointment: Schlegel, Carol E. - Neb. Tourism Commission
Appointment: Bohac, Daryl L. - Military Department
Appointment: Hilgert, John - Dept. of Veterans Affairs
Appointment: Heine, Jim - State Fire Marshal
Appointment: Seever, Samuel - State Personnel Board
Appointment: Waddle, Christopher - State Personnel Board

**Health & Human Services
Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.**

Appointment: Hilgert, John - Division of Veterans Homes-Department of Health & Human Services
Appointment: Acierno, Joseph - Division of Public Health-Department of Health & Human Services
 LB19 (Krist) Change provisions relating to laboratory certification under the Neb. Safe Drinking Water Safety Act
 LB148 (Crawford) Provide for medical assistance program coverage for certain youth formerly in foster care

**Judiciary
Room 1113 - 1:30 p.m.**

LB299 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to admission of evidence of alibi
 LB434 (Cook) Require law enforcement agencies to use theft notification web sites as prescribed
 LB244 (Pansing Brooks) Change provisions relating to motions for new trial based upon discovery of new evidence
 LB245 (Pansing Brooks) Change provisions relating to DNA testing of biological material

**Natural Resources
Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.**

Appointment: Christensen, Joel G. - Neb. Natural Resources Commission
 LB164 (Friesen) Provide a biennial budgeting option for natural resources districts

**Revenue
Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.**

LB216 (Hadley) Correct provisions relating to the streamlined sales and use tax agreement
 LB217 (Hadley) Revise statute relating to premium taxes
 LB218 (Hadley) Correct references to a federal act in income tax provisions
 LB73 (Schumacher) Adopt the Modern Tax Act
 LB75 (Schumacher) Adopt the Taxpayer Investment Program
 LB123 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to the payment of warrants

**Monday, February 2
Banking, Commerce & Insurance
Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.**

LB286 (Craighead) Revise powers of state-chartered banks, building and loan associations, and credit unions
 LB352 (Scheer) Change provisions relating to the issuance of a mortgage banker license and recordkeeping by licensees
 LB252 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to registration by coordination and federal covered securities under the Securities Act of Nebraska
 LB226 (Coash) Authorize crowdfunding as prescribed and exempt crowdfunding under the Securities Act of Nebraska

**General Affairs
Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.**

LB204 (Schilz) Provide a tax credit for certain beer manufacturers
 LB486 (Schilz) Provide for a limited bottling endorsement under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act
 LB619 (Larson) Provide for a special designated poker license and a poker endorsement under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act
 LB339 (Howard) Change provisions relating to payment of costs for proceedings before the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission
 LB439 (Morfeld) Change Nebraska Liquor Control Act penalty provisions for certain violations
 LB460 (Nordquist) Provide for licensure of charter bus and limousine services and pedalpub vehicles for the consumption of alcohol

Tuesday, February 3

Agriculture

Room 2102 - 1:30 p.m.

LB128 (Chambers) Repeat the Black-Tailed Prairie Dog Management Act
 LB242 (Stinner) Change provisions of the Dry Bean Resources Act

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

LB464 (B. Harr) Change information provided on effective financing statements
 LB180 (Scheer) Redefine terms relating to title insurance business
 LB298 (Schumacher) Change provisions relating to credit for reinsurance
 LB458 (Kolterman) Authorize limited lines travel insurance producer licenses ■

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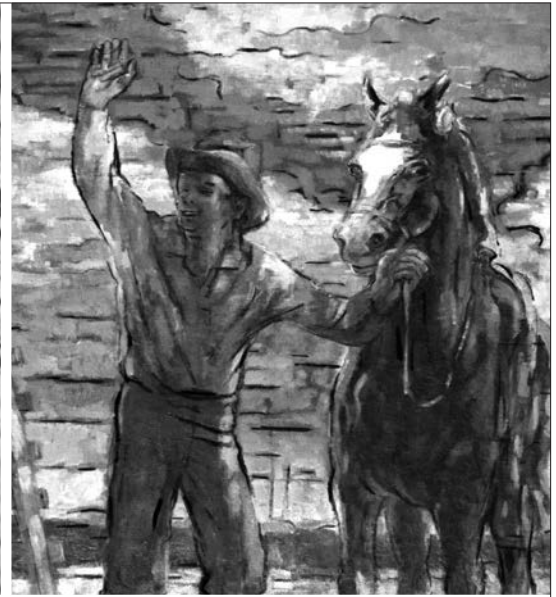
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