

UNICAMERAL UPDATE

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Leadership changes as Legislature convenes



Senators who were newly elected or re-elected were sworn into office the opening day of session.

Seventeen new members and eight re-elected senators were sworn into office Jan. 4 as the 105th Nebraska Legislature convened for its 90-day first session. Senators then elected the chairpersons of the Legislature's standing committees.

Sen. Jim Scheer of Norfolk defeated Gothenburg Sen. Matt Williams to become speaker of the Legislature. Scheer replaces former speaker Sen. Galen Hadley of Kearney, who left the Legislature due to term limits.

Scheer said he has served 30 years in public office as a local school board and state board of education member, mayor of Norfolk, and chairman of the Legislature's Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee. In these roles, he said, he has worked to treat all sides fairly—a practice he vowed to continue as speaker.

"I promise to do my best to bring dignity and honor to this body," he said.

Term limits also opened leadership posts in five of the Legislature's 14 standing committees; election defeats of sitting chairpersons in November opened two more.

Sen. Dan Watermeier of Syracuse unseated Omaha Sen. Bob Krist to serve as chairperson of the executive board, which oversees all legislative services and employees. Watermeier said his experience as vice-chairperson of the board

has prepared him for the new role.

Lawmakers chose Sen. Mike Groene of North Platte over Sen. Roy Baker of Lincoln to serve as chairperson of the Education Committee. Groene said that, as chairperson, he would focus on ensuring safe classrooms in Nebraska's public schools, protecting the rights of parents and maintaining local control of curriculum. He also emphasized that the state's school aid formula relies too heavily on property taxes and should be reassessed this session.

"With the looming budget shortfall, public education funding must be part of the conversation," he said. "The Education Committee, families and the statewide education establishment must be part of the solution."

Sen. Merv Riepe of Ralston defeated Sen. Sara Howard of Omaha to serve as chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee. Riepe said that the Legislature must address the recent deaths of foster children who were under the care of the state's child welfare system and lapses at the state Department of Health and Human Services that cost the state millions of dollars in payments to the federal government. As chair, Riepe said he would promote affordable, accessible care for all Nebraskans.

"We must address the needs of the most vulnerable, give hope and opportunity, while being fiscally responsible," he said.

Sen. Dan Hughes of Venango was chosen over Sen. Rick Kolowski to chair the Natural Resources Committee. Hughes said living and farming in the Republican River basin, working with natural resources districts and learning about energy and environmental issues while a member of the Natural Resources Committee would make him an effective chairperson.

"I have opinions like any human being does," he said, "but I do not pursue this chair with an agenda other than to serve this body and the men and women who sent us here."

Finally, Sen. Tyson Larson of O'Neill remains chairper-

son of the General Affairs Committee despite a bid by Sen. John McCollister of Omaha. Larson said that during his time as chair, the committee has helped create legislation to modernize the state's liquor control laws and boost Nebraska's economy.

"We have led the nation in craft brewing policies," he said, "and paved the way for those in agriculture to partner with our local brewers and distillers to utilize Nebraska's inputs in producing local products."

Two first-year senators also were elected in contested races to chair standing committees. Sen. Joni Albrecht of Thurston defeated incumbent Sen. Burke Harr of Omaha to serve as chairperson of the Business and Labor Committee. Albrecht said her experience as a member of the Papillion City Council, chair of the Sarpy County Board of Commissioners and co-owner of a family farm have prepared her to vet bills dealing with economic development.

"I look forward to working with you to help grow not only our rural communities but our urban districts as well," she said.

Lawmakers chose Sen. Justin Wayne of Omaha over incumbent Bellevue Sen. Sue Crawford to chair the Urban Affairs Committee. Wayne said

economic development tools like TIF need to be strengthened but used responsibly. As chair, he said he will work with all groups to promote economic development that will provide high-quality jobs to all Nebraskans, regardless of where they live.

"I believe in a team of rivals," he said. "We all need to work together to come up with solutions."

Elected in uncontested races were: Sen. Lydia Brasch of Bancroft to the Agriculture Committee; Sen. John Stinner of Gering to the Appropriations Committee; Omaha Sen. Brett Lindstrom to the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee; Crete Sen. Laura Ebke to the Judiciary Committee; Sen. Jim Smith of Papillion to the Revenue Committee; and Sen. Curt Friesen of Henderson to the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee.

Sen. John Murante of Gretna was re-elected to chair the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Com-



Sen. Jim Scheer of Norfolk is sworn in as speaker of the Legislature.

mittee in an uncontested race. Sen. Mark Kolterman of Seward also was re-elected to chair the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee.

Senators may introduce bills for the first 10 legislative days, or through Jan. 18.

Gov. Pete Ricketts will give his State of the State address Jan. 12 in the legislative chamber. Nebraska Supreme Court Chief Justice Michael Heavican will give his State of the Judiciary address Jan. 19. Committee hearings are scheduled to begin Jan. 17 and will continue through March.

The session will last 90 legislative days and is tentatively scheduled to end June 2. ■

UNICAMERAL UPDATE

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Printed copies of bills, resolutions and the Legislative Journal are available at the State Capitol room 1104, or by calling 402-471-2709 or 800-742-7456. Status of bills and resolutions can be requested at that number or can be found on NebraskaLegislature.gov. Live video of hearings and floor debate can be viewed on NET2 and at NetNebraska.org/capitol.

Senators may be contacted by mail at this address:
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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.

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NEW BILLS

Bill **Introducer** **One-line description**

Jan. 5, 2017

LB1	Exec. Board	Revisor bill to repeal obsolete provisions under the Ethanol Development Act
LB2	Exec. Board	Revisor bill to repeal obsolete provisions relating to a dairy industry report
LB3	Exec. Board	Revisor bill to repeal obsolete provisions that terminated July 31, 2011
LB4	Exec. Board	Revisor bill to repeal obsolete provisions that terminated June 30, 2014
LB5	Exec. Board	Revisor bill to repeal obsolete provisions that terminated December 31, 2014
LB6	Krist	Provide for release of a summarized report by the office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare
LB7	Krist	Provide for suspension of medical assistance under the medical assistance program for detainees in public institutions
LB8	Krist	Provide for graduated response sanctions and incentives relating to juvenile probation
LB9	Krist	Adopt the Radon Resistant New Construction Act
LB10	Krist	Increase number of judges of the separate juvenile court as prescribed
LB11	Krist	Change provisions relating to transfer of juvenile cases
LB12	Krist	Change homestead exemption requirements relating to income statements and certifications of status
LB13	Krist	Change provisions regarding state office space and the use of the State Capitol and its environs
LB14	Krist	Require successful completion of a civics examination as a prerequisite to high school graduation
LB15	Craighead	Adopt the First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account Act
LB16	Craighead	Change provisions relating to licensing, trust accounts, and unfair trade practices under the Nebraska Real Estate License Act
LB17	Craighead	Change and eliminate provisions of the Real Property Appraiser Act and the Nebraska Appraisal Management Company Registration Act
LB18	Kolterman	Change licensure and scope of practice for dental assistants and dental hygienists
LB19	Kolterman	Change requirements for the practice of acupuncture
LB20	Kolterman	Change provisions relating to homestead exemption certifications
LB21	Riepe	Change provisions relating to motor vehicle insurance coverage for loaned vehicles
LB22	Scheer	Provide, change, and eliminate provisions relating to appropriations and reduce appropriations
LB23	Scheer	Provide for transfers of funds and terminate funds
LB24	Scheer	Change provisions relating to the Cash Reserve Fund
LB25	Murante	Change provisions for presidential electors
LB26	Murante	Change service requirements for harassment protection orders
LB27	Murante	Change requirements for state agency contracts and powers and duties of the Auditor of Public Accounts as prescribed
LB28	Kolterman	Increase amount of funds offered by the state investment officer to financial institutions as deposits under the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act
LB29	Kolterman	Eliminate the Class V School Employees Retirement Cash Fund
LB30	Kolterman	Provide for a cash balance benefit plan by cities of the metropolitan and primary classes for certain police officers or firefighters as prescribed
LB31	Kolterman	Change school retirement plan provisions relating to service credits
LB32	Kolterman	Eliminate a duty of the Public Employees Retirement Board and change provisions relating to prior service retirement benefit payments for county employees
LB33	Ebke	Change fees for multiple copies of death certificates
LB34	Ebke	Change filing requirements for partisan candidates
LB35	Harr	Change provisions relating to the Nebraska Model Business Corporation Act
LB36	Harr	Provide for review by state agencies of occupational credentials and provide for a critical assessment document
LB37	Harr	Adopt the Uniform Wage Garnishment Act
LB38	Harr	Authorize electronic or digital signatures for instruments submitted to register of deeds

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LB39	Harr	Prohibit the sale and trade of ivory
LB40	Hilkemann	Prohibit use of an interactive wireless communication device by a school bus operator as prescribed
LB41	Hilkemann	Change child passenger restraint system enforcement from a secondary to a primary offense
LB42	Hilkemann	Change occupant protection system provisions for children and adopt certain federal safety provisions
LB43	Hilkemann	Change provisions relating to surcharges for 911 service
LB44	Watermeier	Adopt the Remote Seller Sales Tax Collection Act
LB45	Watermeier	Change provisions relating to Military Honor Plates
LB46	Watermeier	Provide for Choose Life License Plates
LB47	Watermeier	Change provisions relating to the payment of fees and costs associated with grand juries and the deaths of incarcerated persons
LB48	Schumacher	Provide an income tax adjustment relating to certain gains on the sale of real estate
LB49	Schumacher	Provide for the treatment of certain amendments to the Internal Revenue Code
LB50	Schumacher	Provide reporting duties relating to behavioral health entities
LB51	Schumacher	Change provisions relating to sales of real property for nonpayment of taxes
LB52	Schumacher	Adopt the Modern Tax Act
LB53	Schumacher	Change provisions relating to mandatory minimum sentencing and sentencing of habitual criminals
LB54	Schumacher	Change provisions relating to unattended motor vehicles
LB55	Schumacher	Change a duty of landowners relating to the frequency of mowing roadside weeds
LB56	Morfeld	Change provisions relating to issuance of a permit under the Public Accountancy Act
LB57	Morfeld	Adopt the Uniform Unsworn Foreign Declarations Act
LB58	Kintner	Change provisions relating to participation in extracurricular activities
LB59	Kintner	Require the Department of Health and Human Services and health care facilities to provide information regarding abortion
LB60	Lindstrom	Change Parenting Act provisions relating to limitation or denial of custody or access to a child
LB61	Kolterman	Adopt the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact
LB62	Scheer	Eliminate prohibition on teachers wearing religious garb
LB63	Scheer	Eliminate a sales and use tax exemption relating to political events
LB64	Hansen	Adopt the Adrenal Insufficiency Diagnosis Information and Support Act
LB65	Hansen	Provide income tax credits for caregivers
LB66	Hansen	Change provisions relating to stacking of coverage under the Uninsured and Underinsured Motorist Insurance Coverage Act
LB67	Brasch	Adopt the Fair Repair Act
LB68	Hilgers	Prohibit certain regulation of firearms, ammunition, and firearm accessories by counties, cities, and villages as prescribed
LB69	Pansing Brooks	Increase the earned income tax credit
LB70	Pansing Brooks	Change provisions relating to operator's license revocation
LB71	Pansing Brooks	Change appropriations relating to the Nebraska Tree Recovery Program
LB72	Schumacher	Provide for governmental unit bond priority under the Nebraska Governmental Unit Security Interest Act and rename the act
LB73	Riepe	Prohibit the sale or transfer to or use by persons under twenty-one years of age of tobacco, vapor products, and alternative nicotine products
LB74	Crawford	Change population thresholds relating to annexation, suburban development, and planned unit development by a city or village
LB75	Wayne	Provide for restoration of voting rights upon completion of a felony sentence or probation for a felony
LB76	Wayne	Require notice for Secretary of State regarding completion of felony sentence for purposes of voting rights

NEW BILLS

Bill	Introducer	One-line description
LB77	Crawford	Change provisions relating to access to sales and use tax information by municipalities
LB78	Crawford	Change provisions relating to relinquishment or abandonment of any portion of a state highway system
LB79	Blood	Adopt the Small Business Retirement Marketplace Act
LB80	Blood	Provide for unclassified service under the County Civil Service Act
LB81	Blood	Change the application fee for handgun certificates
LB82	Blood	Require the Department of Motor Vehicles to include certain traffic stop safety information in the Nebraska Driver's Manual
LB83	Blood	Allow physician medical directors to display emergency vehicle lights
LB84	Blood	Provide for admissibility in any civil action of evidence of damages as a result of driving under the influence
LB85	Blood	Provide a requirement for persons seeking appointive or elective office as prescribed and to provide a duty for the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission
LB86	Blood	Eliminate a requirement regarding opening bridge bids
LB87	Blood	Redefine a qualified facility and authorize local distribution utilities to waive certain requirements relating to net metering
LB88	Blood	Provide for temporary credentials under the Uniform Credentialing Act for military spouses
LB89	Hughes	Change published notice of hearing requirements under the Nebraska Budget Act as prescribed
LB90	Hughes	Require public entity to provide accommodations where Auditor of Public Accounts employee conducts audit or examination
LB91	Hilkemann	Change provisions relating to infant health screenings
LB92	Kolterman	Require health carriers to provide coverage for telehealth services
LB93	Hansen	Adopt the Automatic License Plate Reader Privacy Act
LB94	Kolterman	Increase amount of funds offered by the state investment officer to financial institutions as deposits under the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act
LB95	Crawford	Change provisions relating to the Community Development Law and tax-increment financing
LB96	Crawford	Provide an eligible activity for assistance from the Site and Building Development Fund as prescribed
LB97	Crawford	Adopt the Riverfront Development District Act
LB98	Friesen	Extend certain levy authority for natural resources districts
LB99	Stinner	Change provisions relating to conversion of corporations, partnerships, limited partnerships, and limited liability partnerships into other business entities
LB100	Stinner	Change provisions relating to removal of firearm-related disabilities under the Nebraska Mental Health Commitment Act
LB101	Stinner	Change duration requirements for certain state agency contracts
LR1CA	Murante	Constitutional amendment to require voter identification
LR2	Crawford	Congratulate the Bellevue West High School football team for winning the 2016 Class A state championship
LR3	Harr	Create the Task Force on the Nebraska State Flag
LR4	Blood	Interim study to explore if the development of a more comprehensive water quality study is needed

NEW BILLS

Bill Introducer One-line description

Jan. 6, 2017

LB102	Hilkemann	Change a penalty relating to tampering with witnesses or informants
LB103	Murante	Change provisions relating to accelerated or differentiated curriculum and require establishment of focus groups
LB104	Bolz	Provide for a surrogate to make health care decisions
LB105	Brasch	Change provisions relating to personal property exemptions in cases of forced sale on execution or attachment
LB106	Brasch	Change provisions relating to parental rights of a child conceived as a result of sexual assault
LB107	Crawford	Prohibit sexual assault of a patient, client, or student as prescribed
LB108	Crawford	Require guidelines to ensure safety of minor or dependent whose parent or guardian is arrested
LB109	Blood	Provide for a temporary teaching certificate or permit for military spouses
LB110	Kolterman	Change duties and requirements relating to certain retirement plan reporting and to change duties of the Auditor of Public Accounts and the Public Employees Retirement Board
LB111	Hansen	Provide for nonpartisan election of county officers
LB112	Hansen	Permit provisional voting for voters moving within Nebraska without reregistering to vote
LB113	Hansen	Change population threshold provisions relating to municipalities and eliminate obsolete provisions
LB114	Craighead	Change provisions relating to motor vehicle lighting requirements
LB115	Harr	Direct the Nebraska Tourism Commission to provide for certain uses of a fund
LB116	Harr	Redefine automobile liability policy and change coverage provisions
LB117	Hilkemann	Adopt the Investigational Drug Use Act
LB118	Hilkemann	Adopt the Education Savings Account Act and provide income tax adjustments
LB119	Groene	Change dates related to certifications and distributions of state aid to schools
LB120	Schumacher	Provide for Medical Assistance Act coverage for family planning services as prescribed
LB121	Kintner	Change provisions relating to the taxation of military benefits
LB122	Pansing Brooks	Provide for family member visitation petitions
LB123	Pansing Brooks	Provide for reimbursement when certain postsecondary institutions terminate operations
LB124	Baker	Increase the probationary period of community college staff
LB125	Brasch	Change application and fee requirements for feedlots and dairies registered under the Livestock Brand Act
LB126	Groene	Change sunset dates under the Nebraska Job Creation and Mainstreet Revitalization Act and the Nebraska Advantage Act
LB127	Groene	Change notice requirements under Open Meetings Act
LB128	Groene	Change eligibility provisions relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
LB129	Morfeld	Increase the earned income tax credit
LB130	Urban Affairs	Change municipal annexation provisions relating to certain districts
LB131	Urban Affairs	Change provisions relating to urban growth districts and urban growth bonds and refunding bonds
LB132	Urban Affairs	Change provisions relating to improvement districts and extraterritorial zoning jurisdictions
LB133	Urban Affairs	Change and eliminate provisions regarding cities of the second class and villages
LB134	Brasch	Change provisions of the Nebraska Pure Food Act as prescribed and repeal the Nebraska Graded Egg Act and terminate the Graded Egg Fund
LR5	Larson	Congratulate the O'Neill Public High School football team for winning the Class C-1 state championship

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2017 LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

AGRICULTURE



Chairperson: Sen. Lydia Brasch

Members: Sens. Albrecht, Blood, Chambers, Halloran, Harr, Krist and Lowe

Meets: Tuesdays — Room 2102



Sen. Lydia Brasch

APPROPRIATIONS



Chairperson: Sen. John Stinner

Members: Sens. Bolz, Hilkemann, Kintner, Kuehn, McDonnell, Vargas, Watermeier and Wishart

Meets: Mon. and Tues. — Room 1524; Wed., Thurs. and Fri. — Room 1003



Sen. John Stinner

BANKING, COMMERCE & INSURANCE



Chairperson: Sen. Brett Lindstrom

Members: Sens. Baker, Brewer, Craighead, Kolterman, McCollister, Schumacher and Williams

Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays — Room 1507



Sen. Brett Lindstrom

BUSINESS & LABOR



Chairperson: Sen. Joni Albrecht

Members: Sens. Chambers, Crawford, Halloran, Hansen, Howard and Lowe

Meets: Mondays — Room 2102



Sen. Joni Albrecht

EDUCATION



Chairperson: Sen. Mike Groene

Members: Sens. Ebke, Erdman, Kolowski, Linehan, Morfeld, Pansing Brooks and Walz

Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays — Room 1525



Sen. Mike Groene

GENERAL AFFAIRS



Chairperson: Sen. Tyson Larson

Members: Sens. Blood, Brasch, Harr, Krist, Quick, Riepe and Wayne

Meets: Mondays — Room 1510



Sen. Tyson Larson

GOVERNMENT, MILITARY & VETERANS AFFAIRS



Chairperson: Sen. John Murante

Members: Sens. Blood, Brewer, Briese, Craighead, Hilgers, Lowe and Wayne

Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays — Room 1507



Sen. John Murante

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES



Chairperson: Sen. Merv Riepe

Members: Sens. Crawford, Erdman, Howard, Kolterman, Linehan and Williams

Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays — Room 1510



Sen. Merv Riepe

JUDICIARY

Chairperson: Sen. Laura Ebke

Members: Sens. Baker, Chambers, Halloran, Hansen, Krist, Morfeld and Pansing Brooks

Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays – Room 1113



Sen. Laura Ebke

NATURAL RESOURCES

Chairperson: Sen. Dan Hughes

Members: Sens. Albrecht, Bostelman, Geist, Kolowski, McCollister, Quick and Walz

Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays – Room 1525



Sen. Dan Hughes

NEBRASKA RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

Chairperson: Sen. Mark Kolterman

Members: Sens. Bolz, Groene, Kolowski, Lindstrom and Stinner

Meets: At the call of the chairperson – Room 1525



Sen. Mark Kolterman

REVENUE

Chairperson: Sen. Jim Smith

Members: Sens. Brasch, Friesen, Groene, Harr, Larson, Lindstrom and Schumacher

Meets: Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays – Room 1524



Sen. Jim Smith

TRANSPORTATION & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Chairperson: Sen. Curt Friesen

Members: Sens. Bostelman, Briese, Geist, Hilgers, Hughes, Murante and Smith

Meets: Mondays and Tuesdays – Room 1113



Sen. Curt Friesen

URBAN AFFAIRS

Chairperson: Sen. Justin Wayne

Members: Sens. Crawford, Hansen, Howard, Larson, Quick and Riepe

Meets: Tuesdays – Room 1510



Sen. Justin Wayne

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chairperson: Sen. Dan Watermeier

Members: Sens. Kuehn (vice chairperson), Bolz, Chambers, Crawford, Hughes, Larson, McCollister, Scheer and Stinner (nonvoting ex officio)



Sen. Dan Watermeier

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

Chairperson: Sen. Joni Craighead

Members: Sens. Smith (vice chairperson), Erdman, Friesen, Groene, Harr, Hilkemann, Howard, Kolterman, Kuehn, Morfeld, Pansing Brooks and Schumacher



Sen. Joni Craighead

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Seventeen newly elected senators were sworn in on the first day of the legislative session. Front row, from left: Sens. Lou Ann Linehan, Lynne Walz, Steve Halloran, Anna Wishart, Suzanne Geist and Joni Albrecht. Back row: Sens. John Lowe, Tom Briese, Dan Quick, Tony Vargas, Mike Hilgers, Carol Blood, Mike McDonnell, Justin Wayne, Tom Brewer, Bruce Bostelman and Steve Erdman.