

Legalization of medical cannabis proposed

A bill that would approve certain forms of cannabis for medical use was heard by members of the Judiciary Committee March 10.

LB474, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Anna Wishart, would create a framework for legalizing medical cannabis use in Nebraska.

Wishart said a 2017 study showed

that more than 70 percent of Nebraskans support legalizing medical cannabis. While supporters span the political, age and geographic spectrums, she said, they all share a common desire to assist those struggling with chronic illnesses who could be helped by medical cannabis.

"I'm here for the fifth year in a row to have Nebraska's elected leaders step up and represent the will of the people and pass a safe and regulated medical cannabis system," Wishart said.

To qualify for a medical cannabis registration card under the bill, a person must receive written certification that medical cannabis would improve their condition from a health care practitioner with whom they have an established, bonafide relationship.

Registered medical cannabis users could purchase cannabis through regu-

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Sen. Anna Wishart said the vast majority of Nebraskans support legalizing medical cannabis.

Bill broadened to include to-go alcohol sales, advanced

Lawmakers amended a bill to create a package of changes to Nebraska's liquor laws before advancing it from general file March 9.

LB274, as introduced by Sen. John Lowe of Kearney, would create a new promotional farmers market special designated license. Under the bill, farm wineries, craft breweries and micro-distilleries that currently are licensed to manufacture alcoholic beverages could apply for the SDL, which would allow sales at any farmers market for one year, subject to local approval.

Currently, such entities must apply for an SDL for each event at which they sell alcohol. Lowe said some farm wineries apply for 100 SDLs a year and virtually all of them are approved.

"This is a waste of time for small business and for the

[Nebraska] Liquor Control Commission," he said.

A General Affairs Committee amendment, adopted 30-1, added provisions of two additional bills.

LB72, introduced by Sen. Suzanne Geist of Lincoln, would allow the holder of a Class C liquor license to sell alcohol not in the original package — such as a mixed drink or cocktail — for consumption off the premises. The holder of a Class I liquor license could do the same if the alcohol is not partially consumed and is purchased with food.

Farm winery license holders would be allowed to sell products such as sangria or wine slushies for consumption off premises under the amendment. All alcohol sold would be in a sealed, labeled container with a tamper-evident

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Sen. John Lowe



Sen. Suzanne Geist

Bill broadened to include to-go alcohol sales, advanced

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lid, cap or seal and, if placed into a car, be out of reach of the driver or passengers.

Geist said the provisions would make permanent an executive order signed by the governor during the pandemic that helped bars and restaurants survive.

“The whole intention of bringing the bill was to help recoup the revenue stream that was lost by these establishments because of the [pandemic-related] shutdown,” Geist said.

Also included in the amendment were provisions of LB578, introduced by Omaha Sen. Tony Vargas. The provisions would create a new category of alcoholic beverage and set the excise tax at 95 cents per gallon. Ready-to-drink cocktails would be charged \$3.75 per gallon without creation of the new category, which defines a ready-to-drink cocktail as spirits in an original container with up to 12.5 percent



Sen. Tony Vargas

alcohol by volume.

“We are overtaxing this specific product and it is making it cost prohibitive for [manufacturers] to be able to enter into the market,” Vargas said.

Sen. Mike Groene of North Platte said he supported the underlying bill and the amended provisions. He said LB274 would allow small businesses to expand their customer base while LB72 would help restaurants recover from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Lowering the excise tax on ready-to-drink cocktails is a matter of fairness, he said.

Sen. Robert Hilkemann of Omaha said lowering the tax on ready-to-drink cocktails would lead to alcohol abuse and drunk driving and would cost the state an estimated \$5 million annually in lost tax revenue. He offered an amendment to strip those provisions from the bill, which failed on a vote of 2-17.

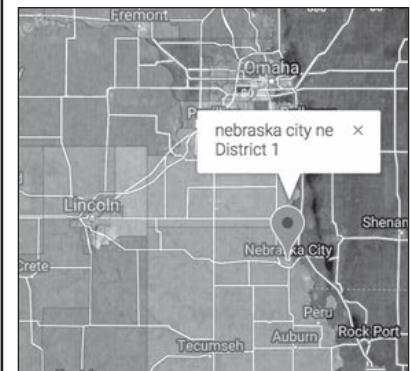
Following a failed motion by Hilkemann to recommit LB274 to committee, the bill advanced to select file on a vote of 33-0. ■

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lated in-state dispensaries or home delivery from out-of-state suppliers. Patients would be limited to no more than two and one-half ounces of cannabis – or a greater amount approved by a medical necessity waiver – or cannabis infused products with no more than 2,000 milligrams of THC.

Cannabis infused edible products – other than pills – and cannabis used in vaporizers would not be permitted.

LB474 would prohibit any registered user of medical cannabis from driving, operating a boat, train or aircraft or undertaking any task that would be negligent or constitute malpractice while under the influence of cannabis. They also could not work on transportation equipment, property or facilities.

Medical cannabis would not be covered by Medicaid under the bill and private insurers would not be required to cover its costs. Any registered user who sells their medical cannabis would suffer immediate revocation of their registration card.

Amanda McKinney, a physician and medical educator specializing in medical cannabis, spoke in support of the bill. She said the government should stop forcing otherwise law-abiding citizens to become criminals when they drive across state lines to purchase “life-sustaining” medications.

“We are fortunate to have the medical and industry experience in [Nebraska] to create a program that is well regulated and safe for consumers and patients while also providing revenue that can offer relief in other areas, such as property taxes,” McKinney said.

Former college and professional football player Grant Wistrom also supported LB474. He started consum-

ing marijuana early in his professional career, he said, and began sleeping better, recovering faster and dealing with less pain.

“I believe to my core that this plant was given to us to promote healing,” Wistrom said. “We have an opportunity to end emotional and physical pain through plant-based medicine for thousands of good, kind, hard-working citizens in this state that I love.”

Nicole Hochstein, speaking on behalf of Nebraska Families for Medical Cannabis, also testified in support of the bill. She said the evidence in favor of medical cannabis use is clear, concise and plentiful.

“Our children deserve medications that could provide them with relief [from] these debilitating seizures, but their zip code is preventing it,” Hochstein said.

Speaking in opposition to LB474 was Gary Anthonie, chief medical officer for the state Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health. He said that legalizing marijuana for any purpose – including medicinal use – poses risks for the health and safety of Nebraskans.

“Doctors and pharmacists are not able to prescribe drugs like marijuana as a treatment because they are not federally approved and dosing and drug interactions remain unknown,” Anthonie said.

John Kuehn, speaking on behalf of Smart Approaches to Marijuana-Nebraska, opposed the bill, which he said seeks to establish a commercial industry for the sale of THC products under the guise of medicine.

“The FDA has currently approved forms of THC and CBD – verified for their purity, safety and standardized

dosing – that are already available to Nebraska clinicians to prescribe for patients whom evidence has demonstrated will have a clinical benefit,” Kuehn said.

Nebraska State Patrol Superintendent John Bolduc also spoke in opposition. He said that other states with approved medical marijuana programs have issues with the sale of legal marijuana to unqualified individuals.

“Because of the demand and potential profit, decriminalizing the distribution and possession of even medical marijuana contributes to the dangerous problem the black market poses to public safety, including the rise in violent crime,” Bolduc said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB474. ■

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BUSINESS & LABOR

Compensation for first responders' families advanced

Lawmakers gave first-round approval March 10 to a bill that would provide a one-time death benefit to families of Nebraska first responders killed in the line of duty.

LB255, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Matt Hansen, would provide monetary compensation to the family of a law enforcement officer, firefighter or public EMS ambulance squad member killed in the line of duty, including those who work on a voluntary basis.



Sen. Matt Hansen

The concept is common practice in other states, Hansen said, and is long overdue in Nebraska.

"Many of our neighboring states have some form of compensation for those who die in the line of duty," he said. "I believe it is time for Nebraska to join our neighbors and make sure those first responders know that we value their work, their service and their lives."

Under the bill, a qualifying family member must file for compensation within one year of the death. For first responders killed in 2022, compensation provided would be \$50,000. For each following year, compensation would be equal to the previous year's compensation increased by the percentage increase in the consumer price index for all urban consumers.

Omaha Sen. Mike McDonnell spoke in support of the bill. He said it was a small way to thank first responders, especially the many volunteers who receive no compensation for their work.

"[This bill] is telling them ... if they

answer that bell — they go to that call and they never come home to their families — that we're gonna give your family \$50,000," McDonnell said. "I don't think \$50,000 is enough but at least ... they know we stepped up and did something to recognize their service and their ultimate sacrifice."

Sen. Curt Friesen of Henderson expressed concerns that a one-size-fits-all approach could lead to duplicative benefits. He also suggested that technical changes be made to ensure that only individuals who die in the line of active duty would receive benefits under LB255.

"We have to remember that there are departments out there who do provide very adequate benefits on life insurance policies ... so we are duplicating, in some cases, what they might be receiving," Friesen said.

Opposing the bill was Thurston Sen. Joni Albrecht. Many fire departments have negotiated contracts that already provide death benefits, she said, echoing concerns that the state would be providing monetary payments to families on top of generous local, agency-provided benefits.

"In our communities that lose a loved one that was on a volunteer firefighter department or a police officer in our local towns — if something happens — Nebraska rises to the occasion," Albrecht said. "They can have money raised for these folks in minimal amounts of time."

Senators advanced LB255 to select file on a 37-1 vote.

EDUCATION

Statewide school safety reporting system advanced

Lawmakers gave first-round approval March 11 to a bill that would broaden

an existing school safety pilot program.

LB322, sponsored by Gothenburg Sen. Matt Williams, would require the state Department of Education to establish a statewide, anonymous reporting system to support threat assessment teams with the goal of reducing violent incidents.



Sen. Matt Williams

The reporting system — to be named the Safe2HelpNE report line — would allow students, school staff, parents and community members to report information about concerning behavior or possible harm to people or property anonymously and free of charge by telephone, mobile app, website or email.

"National statistics show that in most school incidents — in fact [in] over 80 percent of violent school incidents — someone has leaked the information prior to the actual incident," Williams said. "Safe2HelpNE will give Nebraska schools a tool to receive that information and safely help someone before a tragedy occurs."

He said the bill is modeled after a successful pilot program in Douglas County that logged 470 reports including suicide threats, drug use, bullying, mental health issues and threats against property. He said that 81 percent of the resulting contacts were diverted away from law enforcement interaction.

Similarly, information provided through the report line under LB322 would go directly to individuals trained in crisis management, Williams said, rather than directly to law enforcement. The report line would be available to any public or nonpublic school that has a threat assessment team and maintains a current list of contact information for at least five team members designated to receive alerts from report line staff 24/7.

Fremont Sen. Lynne Walz supported the bill, which she said reflects a top state priority of student and teacher safety by helping to identify potential crisis situations.

“Equally important, it makes it possible for us to then provide the necessary wrap-around services and supports to kids who might not otherwise get the help that they need,” Walz said. “I’m confident that it’s a bill that will save lives and keep our schools safe.”

Sen. Mike Groene of Norfolk opposed the bill, which he said could have long-term repercussions for young people based on anonymous accusations that may not be accurate.

“This could follow a kid his entire life,” Groene said.

LB322 would appropriate \$899,000 in general funds for the reporting system in fiscal year 2021-22 and FY22-23. The bill includes intent language that the Legislature would fund the system for ten years. At the end of that time, the department would report cost-benefit data and recommendations to the Legislature regarding the continued viability of the report line.

Bayard Sen. Steve Erdman expressed concern over the annual cost and the long-term commitment of state dollars.

“We’re adding to the base of our spending because we have all the CARES Act money and all the revenue that we have today ... and then we move forward a year or two and when the economy changes and we have no more CARES [Act] money, then we’ve established a base that we may not be able to fund,” Erdman said.

Williams acknowledged the cost of the program, which he said is the equivalent of approximately \$2 per student, and said he would continue to look for alternative funding sources.

“That’s less than a gallon of gas; less than a gallon of milk; less than one lunch at the school on a daily basis,”

he said. “It’s easy to talk about dollars and cents ... with this bill, I would prefer to talk about dollars and sense.”

Following the 35-4 adoption of an Education Committee amendment that made a series of technical changes, senators advanced LB322 to select file on a 33-5 vote.

Teaching certification reciprocity for military spouses advanced

Lawmakers gave first-round approval March 9 to a bill intended to speed the issuance of teaching certificates to military spouses.

LB389, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Rita Sanders at the request of Gov. Pete Ricketts, would require the State Board of Education to issue a certificate or permit to a military spouse who, among other requirements, holds a valid certificate or permit currently in force in another state to teach, administer or provide special services.

An applicant also must have held the certificate or permit for at least one year, be in good standing in all states where the certificate or permit is held, have no pending investigations or complaints, meet all residency and background check requirements and pay applicable fees.

Sanders said the bill would help military spouses who are teachers receive their Nebraska certification quickly and with minimal burden. The changes would meet U.S. Department of Defense policy goals meant to make Nebraska more friendly to military spouses and help schools by increasing the number of qualified teaching candidates, she said.

Under LB389, the certificate or

permit for a military spouse would be valid for at least three years and include the same or similar endorsements to teach in all subject areas for which the applicant had been certified in the other state if Nebraska offers a similar endorsement.

The board would issue a preliminary permit after submission of an application, payment of any fees and completion of a criminal history record check. It would remain in force until the state commissioner of education finishes reviewing the other requirements and either issues a certificate or permit or notifies the applicant of why it cannot be issued.

The bill also would require the board to regulate and expedite the processing of applications submitted by an individual whose spouse is serving on active duty.

Sen. Lynne Walz of Fremont supported LB389. She said it would help address Nebraska’s teacher shortage, which the pandemic has worsened over the past year.

“Reciprocity will help us fill the needs of teachers for our schools and help us continue to provide the high quality of education that Nebraska enjoys and appreciates,” Walz said.

Senators voted 46-0 to advance the bill to select file.



Sen. Rita Sanders



Fines for late reports clear first round

Cities, counties and other political subdivisions in Nebraska could be fined for filing late reports with the state under a bill advanced from general file March 9.

Government entities that fail

to file required reports with the state auditor of public accounts could be fined \$20 a day – up to \$2,000 total per filing – under LB368, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Rita Sanders.



Sen. Rita Sanders

Sanders said 309 reports were filed late in the 2019 fiscal year and 19 subdivisions have yet to file for that year.

“Chasing these reports down can be frustrating and expensive for the auditor’s office and it prevents the public from seeing the results of an audit in a timely manner,” she said. “There’s currently no enforcement mechanism for those that choose to ignore the set deadline.”

Norfolk Sen. Michael Flood supported the bill, saying it would make political subdivisions better stewards of taxpayer dollars.

“If you’ve got some renegade or lazy or non-conforming board that doesn’t think they’re subject to the transparency requirements of the auditor’s office, there should be some accountability,” he said.

Sen. Mike Groene said he supported giving the state auditor the flexibility to impose a fine on subdivisions that are negligent while possibly waiving fines on those that file late because of an oversight.

Lawmakers adopted a technical amendment 36-0 and advanced LB368 to select file on a 37-0 vote.



Audiology, speech therapy compact advances

A bill that would pave the way for Nebraska to join an interstate compact

for audiologists and speech-language pathologists advanced from general file March 9.

LB14, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Carol Blood, would adopt the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. Under the compact, individuals



Sen. Carol Blood

licensed in a member state could practice in any other member state without having to obtain a separate license.

Ten states are required to join the compact for it to take effect and Blood said six states have joined already. She said the bill would benefit military spouses who relocate frequently without lowering the quality of service that practitioners provide.

“Nebraska will continue to regulate the actual practice of audiology and speech-language pathology and maintain their individual scopes of practice,” she said.

Glenvil Sen. Dave Murman spoke in support, saying the bill would expand the pool of health care workers in the state.

“I think we all recognize that Nebraska has a shortage of health care professionals,” he said. “Compacts in general, and LB14 specifically, are tools for addressing this shortage.”

A Health and Human Services Committee amendment, adopted 41-0, would require that the compact commission approve the educational institutions at which a covered service provider could earn a degree. It also would allow a member state to take disciplinary action against a provider’s license based on the findings of another member state.

Lawmakers advanced LB14 to select file on a 43-0 vote.

Telehealth expansion clears first round

Nebraskans would have greater access to telehealth services under a bill advanced from general file March 9.

LB400, introduced by Sen. John Arch of La Vista, would allow individuals to receive audio-only telehealth for behavioral health services.



Sen. John Arch

The bill also would allow an individual to receive telehealth services with verbal approval during a patient’s first telehealth visit. Under current law, Nebraskans must give written consent to receive telehealth services prior to those services being provided. LB400 would require that written approval be received within 10 days of a patient giving verbal consent.

In addition, LB400 would prohibit insurers from excluding coverage solely based on a patient’s originating location.

Arch said telehealth utilization has increased dramatically during the COVID-19 pandemic – particularly behavioral health services – and LB400 would improve access to care by making permanent some of the emergency measures put in place at the start of the pandemic.

“Studies show most behavioral health services can be delivered effectively through audio-only means,” he said.

Sen. Mark Kolterman of Seward supported the bill. Telehealth access will become even more critical as Nebraska expands broadband services into rural areas, he said.

“Telehealth is a way that we can deliver health care services across the state to everyone,” Kolterman said.

Lawmakers adopted an amendment 46-0 that narrowed the definition of audio-only behavioral health

services to individual services provided to established patients only. Arch said the change would ensure that group therapy was not included in the bill's provisions.

LB400 advanced to select file on a vote of 46-0.

JUDICIARY

Telehealth access proposed for medical abortion

A bill that would allow patients to receive medical abortion services through telehealth was considered by members of the Judiciary Committee March 12.

LB276, sponsored by Omaha Sen. Megan Hunt, would remove a current requirement that a physician be physically present to administer the first of two medications used in a medical abortion. The second medication typically is taken by the patient at home at a later time.

Hunt said the prohibition on telehealth abortions in Nebraska is based in moral and political opinions about abortion rather than science.

"Under current Nebraska statute, all treatments and consultations that do not involve a physical procedure can be performed through telemedicine, except for medical abortion," she said. "This means patients that are seeking abortions early in a pregnancy have to be in the same room as a doctor just to swallow a pill and go home."

Danielle Conrad, executive director of the ACLU of Nebraska, testified in support of LB276. She said the U.S. Supreme Court has found that any law

that imposes an undue burden on a woman's right to access abortion care is unconstitutional.

Of Nebraska's 93 counties, Conrad said, only three provide access to abortion. The current ban on telehealth abortion services was introduced in 2011 based on the bill sponsor's religious beliefs, she said, which makes the resulting burden on women's access constitutionally suspect.

Also testifying in support of the proposal was Tiffany Joekel, speaking on behalf of the Women's Fund of Omaha. Laws should safeguard women's health, she said, while at the same time not inhibit access to safe and effective medical care.

"We support this effort to eliminate medically unnecessary barriers that have singled out a woman's decision to access medication abortion care for more onerous treatment through telemedicine," Joekel said. "Ultimately, this in-person requirement simply creates more burdens and barriers for women and their families in accessing the care that they need."

Speaking in opposition to the bill was Marion Miner, representing the Nebraska Catholic Conference. He said the lack of an in-person meeting between an abortion provider and a woman seeking care would increase the likelihood that sexual abuse, trafficking or coercion would go undetected.

"When abortion pills can be prescribed over video conference or telephone, it is not difficult for an abuser to be present and to listen to the conversation without the knowledge of the provider," Miner said.

Karen Bowling, executive director of Nebraska Family Alliance, also spoke in opposition to LB276. Women deserve the best standard of care when pursuing a medication abortion, she said, including the presence of a physician.

"The health and safety of women and pre-born lives should be protected," Bowling said. "Mail-in, delivered and self-managed abortion should not be the standard of care in Nebraska."

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Bill would ban release of private donor information

A proposal meant to protect the privacy of certain personal information was heard March 11 by the Judiciary Committee.

Under LB370, sponsored by Bellevue Sen. Rita Sanders, local or state government agencies could not compel a nonprofit organization to release the personal information of its members, supporters, volunteers or donors.

Sanders said the U.S. Supreme Court consistently has upheld the individual right to privacy in association.

"There is a vital relationship between the freedom to associate and privacy in one's associations," she said. "Transparency is for the government, but privacy is for the people."

The bill's provisions would not apply to legally required disclosures under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act or for use in criminal or civil investigations.

Sanders offered an amendment to the committee that, if adopted, also would exempt the University of Nebraska, the secretary of state and auditor of public accounts from disclosure restrictions under LB370 when otherwise legally required.

Doug Kellogg, speaking on behalf of Americans for Tax Reform, testified in support of the bill. He said the courts alone cannot be relied upon to protect Nebraskans from harassment based on disclosure of their associations.

"While often sold under the wrap-



Sen. Megan Hunt

ping of ethics reform, disclosure is an anti-ethics and anti-transparency policy,” Kellogg said. “Whether it is doxing or hackers — online or real mobs — unfortunately, it has been made perfectly clear that people can and will be targeted for their beliefs, if made public.”

Also testifying in support was Spike Eickholt, representing the ACLU of Nebraska. He said LB370 represents an important protection of First Amendment rights.

“This bill provides for an affirmation of freedom of association and does balance [that with] the idea that the government can compel information from nonprofits and other organizations for certain purposes, including campaign finance disclosures,” Eickholt said.

Opposing the proposal was Korby Gilbertson, testifying on behalf of Media of Nebraska. Some nonprofit groups have blurred the lines between legally acceptable educational activity on political issues and electioneering, she said, while maintaining tax-exempt status.

“It’s not that we don’t believe in people’s First Amendment rights,” Gilbertson said. “We don’t believe people [should] have no accountability for exercising their First Amendment rights.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

REVENUE

Full tax exclusion for military retirement pay advanced

Nebraskans could exclude all of their military retirement benefit pay from state income tax under a bill that advanced from the first round of debate March 10.

Beginning in taxable year 2022, individuals may exclude 50 percent of their military retirement benefit

income to the extent it is included in federal adjusted gross income.

LB387, introduced by Gordon Sen. Tom Brewer at the request of Gov. Pete Ricketts, would allow individuals to exclude 100 percent of that income.



Sen. Tom Brewer

Brewer said the bill would help Nebraska retain U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base and increase its chances for being selected to host U.S. Space Command headquarters.

The state Department of Revenue estimates that LB387 would reduce state income tax revenue by approximately \$13 million in fiscal year 2022-23, \$13.7 million in FY23-24 and \$14.4 million in FY24-25.

Senators voted 45-0 to adopt a Revenue Committee amendment that includes provisions of LB6, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Carol Blood. They would allow a military retiree to provide a form 1099 from either the U.S. Department of Defense or the Office of Personnel Management to claim the exemption.



Sen. Carol Blood

Creighton Sen. Tim Gragert supported the bill. He said it would show gratitude to service members and encourage talented and disciplined military retirees to start their civilian careers in Nebraska.

“The increased revenue the state will receive from income taxes paid at their new jobs will more than offset the income tax exemption for the military retirement benefits,” Gragert said.

Sen. Curt Friesen of Henderson said he voted against advancing the bill from the Revenue Committee. In addition to LB387, he said, the

committee is considering proposals to exempt Social Security income from state income tax and cut state inheritance tax rates.

Friesen said approving those measures and others could limit the Legislature’s ability to provide additional property tax relief in future years.

“I know we’re all feeling giddy about the huge budget increases that we’re going to see this year because of the revenue that’s coming in above projections,” he said. “Down the road ... somebody’s going to have to figure out how to pay for all this in a sustainable manner.”

North Platte Sen. Mike Groene said he supports the bill because it would improve the state’s workforce. However, he said, it would not benefit the many Nebraska veterans who do not receive military retirement pay.

Lawmakers voted 45-0 to advance LB387 to select file.

URBAN AFFAIRS

Extended TIF repayment approved

Lawmakers passed a bill March 11 that implements the provisions of a constitutional amendment approved by Nebraska voters in 2020.

LB25, introduced by Omaha Sen. Justin Wayne, extends the maximum repayment period for tax-increment financing from 15 years to 20 if more than one half of the land in a project is designated as extremely blighted.



Sen. Justin Wayne

LB25 passed on a 48-0 vote and takes effect immediately. ■

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LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY

“A” Bill - see Appropriation Bill.

Amendment On File - an amendment of 10 or more pages, not printed separately or in the Journal, that is available in the Clerk’s Office (Room 2018).

Amendment Printed Separate - an amendment of 10 or more pages, printed separately from the Journal, that is available in the Bill Room (Room 1102).

Appropriation Bill (“A” Bill) - a bill to appropriate funds to finance another bill bearing the same number.

Attorney General’s Opinion - a written analysis of a question of law prepared by the attorney general for the governor, the head of an executive department or any state senator.

Bill - see Legislative Bill.

Bracket - to delay consideration of a bill.

Call of the House - a procedure used to compel attendance of unexcused senators in the chamber.

Carry-over Legislation - bills and resolutions introduced during the regular session in an odd-numbered year and held over for consideration during the regular session in an even-numbered year.

Chair - the presiding officer.

Cloture - a parliamentary action to cease debate on a bill and vote immediately on its advancement. A motion for cloture may be made after eight hours of debate on most bills and after 12 hours on appropriation bills introduced by the Appropriations Committee.

Constitutional Amendment Resolution - a proposal to amend the state constitution, ratify or reject an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, or petition Congress about amending the U.S. Constitution. State CA resolutions have the suffix “CA” by the resolution number, and they must be approved by the voters as well as the Legislature.

Consent Calendar - a portion of the agenda in which relatively noncontroversial bills are considered and quickly advanced to the next legislative stage. Usually, a bill on consent calendar can be debated for no more than 15 minutes.

“E” Clause - see Emergency Clause.

E&R - see Enrollment and Review.

Emergency Clause (“E” Clause) - a provision that allows a bill or a portion of a bill to take effect immediately after the governor signs it or after the Legislature overrides the governor’s veto.

Engrossment - the process of preparing a bill for Final Reading by incorporating all adopted amendments.

Enrollment and Review (E&R) - the process of incorporating adopted amendments into a bill and reviewing the bill for technical and grammatical accuracy.

Executive Session - a closed meeting of a committee to discuss and act on bills and resolutions. An executive session is open only to committee members, committee staff and the media.

Final Reading - the third and last stage at which a bill is considered by the entire Legislature. The clerk reads the entire bill aloud, unless final reading is waived, and senators vote without debate on whether to submit the bill to the governor.

Fiscal Note - a statement prepared by the Legislative Fiscal Office estimating the effect a bill would have on state and/or local expenditures and revenue.

Floor - the area of the legislative chamber where the senators sit. When a committee advances a bill “to the floor,” it means the bill is being sent to the full Legislature for consideration.

General File - the first stage at which a bill is considered by the full Legislature. Bills on General File may be amended, returned to committee, indefinitely postponed or advanced to Select File.

Hearing - a regularly scheduled committee meeting to receive public comment on proposed bills and resolutions.

House Under Call - the term used when all unexcused senators are required to be in their seats in the chamber and unauthorized personnel must leave the floor.

Indefinitely Postpone (IPP) - to kill a bill.

Interim - the period between regular legislative sessions.

Interim Study Resolution - a resolution authorizing a committee to study an issue following adjournment of a legislative session.

IPP - see Indefinitely Postpone.

Journal - see Legislative Journal.

Laws of Nebraska (Session Laws) - bound compilation of all laws and constitutional amendment resolutions passed in a legislative session, the state Constitution, and subject and section indexes.

Legislative Bill (LB) - a proposal to create, change or delete one or more laws.



Legislative History - the committee and floor debate records for any bill. A history includes transcripts of the bill's hearing and all floor debate.

Legislative Journal - official record of legislative floor action, including all motions, the number of yeas and nays on each vote, etc.

Legislative Resolution (LR) - a proposal to make a formal expression of opinion, intent or recognition; amend the state or federal constitution; or authorize a study of an issue during the interim. See also Constitutional Amendment Resolution, Interim Study Resolution.

Line-Item Veto - the power of the governor to make specific reductions in any part of a budget bill passed by the Legislature.

Machine Vote - a vote taken by electronic voting system. The voting board shows how each senator voted, but only vote totals are entered in the Legislative Journal.

Major Proposal - a bill or constitutional amendment resolution that the speaker designates as important enough for scheduling priority. Each session, up to five bills may be chosen as major proposals, all of which must be senator priority bills and must get the approval of two-thirds of the Executive Board.

One-liner - a one-line description of a bill or resolution.

Override a Veto - see Veto Override.

President of the Legislature - the lieutenant governor. While senators address whomever is in the chair as Mr. or Madam President, the lieutenant governor alone holds the official title.

Presiding Officer - the senator currently presiding over legislative proceedings.

Priority Bill - a bill that has priority status and generally is considered ahead of other bills in debate. Each senator may select one priority bill, each committee may select two priority bills, and the speaker may select up to 25 priority bills.

Record Vote - a vote on which a record is kept of how each senator voted. The vote is taken by electronic voting system and the senators' names and corresponding votes are then printed in the Legislative Journal.

Regular Session - the annual session that begins the first Wednesday after the first Monday in January.

Resolution - see Legislative Resolution.

Revisor Bill - a bill, prepared by the Office of the Revisor of Statutes, proposing a technical correction or the repeal of an obsolete statute.

Roll Call Vote - a vote during which the senators vote one at a time as the clerk reads their names. Senators cast their votes verbally, and their names and corresponding votes

may be printed in the Legislative Journal.

Select Committee - a permanent committee with a subject-matter jurisdiction related to the administration of the Legislature.

Select File - the second stage at which a bill is considered by the entire Legislature. Bills on Select File may be amended, returned to committee, indefinitely postponed or advanced to Final Reading.

Session - a period of time, usually a number of days, during which the Legislature meets and transacts business.

Session Laws - compilation of all laws and constitutional amendment resolutions passed in a session.

Sine Die - without setting a future date for reconvening. When the Legislature adjourns sine die, the legislative session is finished for the year.

Slip Law - a bill or constitutional amendment resolution printed individually in its approved form after being enacted into law or submitted to voters.

Speaker of the Legislature - the officer of the Legislature, elected from among the senators, who prepares the daily agenda and the session calendar and presides in the absence of the lieutenant governor.

Special Committee - a committee created by law for a specific reason. Except for the Executive Board, special committees have no jurisdiction over bills or resolutions.

Special Session - a limited legislative session called for a specific purpose by the governor or two-thirds (33 members) of the Legislature.

Standing Committee - a permanent committee with subject-matter jurisdiction related to an area of public policy. Almost all bills and resolutions are referred to one of the 14 standing committees.

Summary Sheet - a daily list of all legislative activity that has taken place in one legislative day, including action taken on bills and resolutions.

Veto - the power of the governor to reject bills passed by the Legislature. The governor has five days, excluding Sundays, to either sign or veto a bill. The Legislature then has an opportunity to override the veto.

Veto Override - the power of the Legislature to pass a bill over the governor's veto. A veto override requires the approval of three-fifths (30 members) of the Legislature.

Voice Vote - a vote in which senators cast their votes orally and no totals are recorded.

Worksheet - a list, prepared daily, that indicates the status of all bills and resolutions at the end of that legislative day.



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