

## Repeal of concealed handgun permit requirement considered



Sen. Tom Brewer introduces his proposal before a packed hearing room Jan. 26.

A bill that would remove the requirement for a concealed handgun permit in Nebraska was heard in the Judiciary Committee Jan. 26.

Current state law requires that an individual pass a background check, submit a \$100 permit fee and complete a gun safety course to obtain a concealed carry permit. LB77, introduced by Gordon Sen. Tom Brewer, would waive those requirements. An individual not otherwise prohibited from possessing or carrying a gun in Nebraska would be allowed to conceal carry without a permit.

The bill would prohibit counties, cities and villages from regulating ownership, possession and transportation of a concealed handgun.

A similar proposal introduced by Brewer last year stalled on select file, falling two votes short of the number needed to cease debate and force a vote

on the bill's advancement.

Brewer said he brought the measure back, and designated it as his priority bill, because of his belief that the Nebraska Constitution does not allow cities or counties to limit a resident's right to conceal carry.

With the exception of Colorado, all of Nebraska's neighboring states allow for "constitutional carry" — a term proponents use to refer to efforts to remove concealed carry restrictions — Brewer said. Additionally, the current training requirements are "one-size-fits all" and may not meet the needs of a particular individual, he said.

"I agree with the fact that training is essential, but it should not be a part of what's mandatory for a constitutional right," Brewer said.

Several individuals who spoke in support of the bill said the cost and time it takes to obtain a permit

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## Governor prioritizes property tax relief, education investment

Calling the upcoming session "the most important time in the history of our state," Gov. Jim Pillen outlined a series of tax proposals and funding changes to the state's education system in his first State of the State address to senators Jan. 25.

Property taxes are a "burden" on Nebraskans, Pillen said, and his state budget proposal includes \$2.4 billion in additional property tax relief, funded in part by adding \$390 million in general funds to the Property Tax Credit Relief Fund and calling for full reimbursement of property taxes paid toward community colleges through a refundable income tax credit.

The governor emphasized the importance of retaining young Nebraskans and bringing in new residents as one impetus behind his push for property tax relief — particularly at a time when the state is in a strong fiscal position.

"Like many of our neighboring states, we have more money in our coffers than anyone can believe or quite frankly comprehend," he said.

The governor detailed a number of additional "transformative" proposals to address what he called the state's "broken tax system," starting with a measure that would change the valuation of agricultural and horticultural land from market-based to income-based assessment and cap agricultural

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## Governor prioritizes property tax relief, education investment

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land valuation growth.

The budget also recommends \$1.5 billion in additional tax cuts to individuals, families, businesses and Social Security recipients. This would be accomplished by lowering individual and corporate income tax rates to 3.99 percent by 2027 and exempting Social Security income from taxation by next year.

Doing so would make Nebraska more competitive, Pillen said.

He also asked lawmakers to support his “vision and strategy” to shrink the scope and size of state government. To achieve that goal, the governor’s budget proposal calls for a two-year average growth rate of 1.3 percent, and would limit the University of Nebraska to a 2 percent increase in its operational budget.

“We must have the courage to say ‘no’ to overspending and maintain a focus of investing in our kids and giving this money back to Nebraskans via historic property and income tax cuts,” Pillen said.

The governor also unveiled a proposal to provide “structural reform” in how the state funds public schools



Gov. Jim Pillen urged lawmakers to reform the state’s tax system and invest in education.

by providing \$1,500 annually to every public school student in the state, which he said would ensure that education funding is distributed more equitably.

Pillen’s budget proposal also would create an Education Future Fund, with an investment of \$1 billion in fiscal year 2023-24 and an additional \$250 million each year going forward. Dollars would be used to fund special education in Nebraska, and to provide \$50 million for private school “opportunity” scholarship tax credits.

Additional projects in the governor’s budget proposal include \$574.5 million to fully fund the Perkins County canal project, \$100 million for bridges and roads and \$95 million toward completion of a replacement for the aging Nebraska State Penitentiary.

“We, the people of Nebraska, have the grit and determination needed to solve our problems — overcome the difficult obstacles — no matter the circumstances,” Pillen said. “Together we can; together we will; together we win.” ■

## UNICAMERAL UPDATE

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## Repeal of concealed handgun permit requirement considered

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negatively impacts low-income individuals who may desire a gun for self protection, or women who are facing domestic violence or stalking.

Aaron Clements testified in favor of LB77, saying it would return the right to bear arms to the status of an actual right. If one needs a permit to carry a gun, it is a privilege and not a right, he said.

“This bill would make it possible for all Nebraskans to exercise their right, regardless of income,” Clements said. “Constitutional carry would also reduce government bureaucracy and in turn reduce government spending on staffing and licensing agencies.”

Also in support of the bill was Patricia Harrold, president of the Nebraska Firearms Owners Association. The firearm community is supportive of gun training, she said, however the community is not supportive of “forced, bureaucratic and poorly designed” training and education.

Patrick Peterson, speaking on behalf of the Nebraska Freedom Coalition, also spoke in support of the bill. The current permit system requires law-abiding citizens to jump through costly and time-consuming hoops to exercise their constitutional right, Peterson said, which negatively impacts low-income and minority communities who may not have the resources to comply with the requirements.

“The Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees the rights of citizens to keep and bear arms,” Peterson said. “This right is not only fundamental to our individual freedoms, but also for the preservation of a free society.”

Michelle Cahn, the Otoe County representative for the Nebraska Firearms Owners Association, also spoke

in favor of LB77. Cahn said she has worked with over 50 women whose lives were at risk due to excessive delays and costs associated with the permitting process.

“These women needed training and the ability to carry immediately, but with our current Concealed Handgun Permit Act, they were left defenseless outside their homes and in their cars,” she said.

Those testifying in opposition expressed concern that the bill would result in unintended loopholes, an increase in violent crime and an undermining of law enforcements’ ability to de-escalate dangerous situations.

Omaha Police Chief Todd Schmaderer spoke in opposition to the proposal. In 2022, the Omaha Police Department seized 1,458 firearms – the highest number in department history, he said. Schmaderer expressed concern that LB77, which would remove Omaha’s gun registration ordinance that requires all concealable firearms within city limits to be registered, would allow criminals to conceal carry in a variety of situations.

“[The ordinance] plays a role in how we address violent crime,” Schmaderer said. “The ordinance helps us prevent the mentally ill, substance users, gang members and known criminals from purchasing a firearm. Without the ordinance, there is no way to prevent the carrying of an assault weapon.”

Additionally, Schmaderer expressed concern that LB77 would reverse the current downward trend in the city’s violent crime rate.

Lincoln Police Chief Teresa Ewins also spoke in opposition to the bill, which she said would jeopardize the safety of citizens, those who serve the

community and all peace officers in the state.

“Those that obtain a conceal carry weapon permit are taught safe handling of a firearm,” Ewins said. “This is like any skill set – you must learn and practice continuously to become proficient.”

Additionally, Ewins said, the bill as written would approve the concealment of any deadly weapon. The proposal would make public spaces and large gatherings – where mass shootings and terrorism are more likely to happen – less safe, she said.

Christy Abraham spoke against the bill on behalf of the League of Nebraska Municipalities. Local elected officials are in the best position to make decisions for the good of the community, she said, and LB77 would remove a municipalities’ ability to regulate concealed carry laws.

Jayden Speed, representing the Nebraska chapter of Students Demand Action, also spoke in opposition.

“LB77 would allow people to carry hidden, loaded guns in public without a background check or safety training,” he said. “[Additionally, it] would ... make it easier for violent criminals to carry guns in crowded towns, town centers and city streets.”

Testifying in a neutral capacity, Douglas County Sheriff Aaron Hanson said he supports the rights of law-abiding citizens to conceal carry, but expressed concern that Omaha no longer would have the tools to prevent individuals from engaging in the reckless and negligent use of firearms.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill. ■

# MEET THE SENATOR

## Fredrickson brings a focus on service to the Capitol

Sen. John Fredrickson has always known he wanted to help make a difference in people's lives. The only question was how best to be of service.

The newest representative of District 20 left his hometown of Omaha for New York City to attend college and pursue a career path that had long been his passion – social work. Fredrickson said he imagined himself working on larger scale issues through policy reform, but he discovered a new passion for clinical work through his undergraduate coursework at NYU.

“When I started my education and field placements, I really just fell in love with working one-on-one with clients,” he said. “I loved getting to

really connect with people.”

After completing his bachelor's degree, Fredrickson went on to attend Columbia University where he earned his master's in social work with a focus on clinical practice. His experience in graduate school led to opportunities to work in LGBTQ+ health centers, federal prison, university counseling centers and several housing organizations.

But New York didn't just yield Fredrickson the education and experience he was looking for, it also brought his husband, Jeff, into his life.

After many attempts by both Fredrickson's sister and one of Jeff's friends to set the two up, they finally met at an annual holiday party hosted

by Fredrickson – who joked that it was his costume that won Jeff over.

“He couldn't miss the tall elf in the room,” he laughed. “We started talking that night and honestly, the rest is history ... we've been together almost 12 years now.”

After adopting their son, Leon, in 2019, the two decided to relocate to Omaha to raise their family. Back in his hometown, Fredrickson began working in private practice where he provided individual outpatient counseling and mental health treatment. It was this work that Fredrickson credits for reigniting his passion for public policy.

“When you work with patients clinically over a long period of time, you really start to pick up on different themes affecting their lives,” he said. “I needed to find the root of it all.”

Fredrickson realized that the Legislature lacked a representative with a mental health background who could provide critical expertise regarding the potential impact of legislation on communities. It's that role – drawing on his diverse experiences in the social work field – that he hopes to fill as a lawmaker.

“That perspective needs to be at the table,” Fredrickson said. “I am ready to bring it.” ■



Sen. John Fredrickson (left) relaxes with his husband Jeff and their son Leon in the family's front yard.

**BANKING, COMMERCE  
& INSURANCE**



**Pet insurance proposal considered**

The Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee heard testimony Jan. 24 on a proposal that would create a state regulatory framework for the sale of pet insurance, which covers pet illness and accidents.

Lincoln Sen. Beau Ballard, sponsor of LB296, said pet insurance is one of the fastest growing areas of the insurance industry — having expanded by more than 30 percent over the past year — but Nebraska currently lacks a legal framework to govern the product.



Sen. Beau Ballard

The bill is based on model legislation endorsed by the National Association of Insurance Directors, he said, and is the result of more than two years of negotiations among stakeholders.

“The provisions of LB296 will provide needed protections for Nebraskans interested in purchasing pet insurance so they can make informed decisions that are right for their family and their pet,” Ballard said.

Among other provisions, the bill would require pet insurers to provide disclosures regarding waiting periods, claim schedules and exclusions for preexisting conditions. It also would require training for agents who sell pet insurance.

LB296 would take effect Jan. 1, 2024, and violations of the bill’s provisions would be considered an unfair trade practice.

Michelle Muirhead, representing Physicians Mutual Insurance of Omaha and the North American Pet Health Insurance Organization, testified in support of the bill. She said the measure would offer needed “clarity and consistency” for providers regarding definitions and industry requirements.

Pets are considered members of the family, she said, and advanced medical treatments for domestic animals are becoming more common and more expensive.

“Our goal is to enable pets to receive the treatment their veterinarian recommends, not the treatment that can be afforded on a given day,” Muirhead said.

Robert Bell, executive director of the Nebraska Insurance Federation, also spoke in favor of the bill. Pet insurance “looks and acts” like a health or life insurance policy, he said, but is actually property insurance. As such, Bell said, there is a need for additional consumer protections beyond those currently found in Nebraska’s insurance code.

No one testified in opposition to LB296 and the committee took no immediate action on the bill.

**EDUCATION**



**Temporary teaching certificate for veterans considered**

Qualifying veterans would receive a temporary certificate to teach full-time in Nebraska under a bill heard Jan. 23 by the Education Committee.

LB188, introduced by Sen. Ben Hansen of Blair, would require the commissioner of education to grant the temporary certificate to veterans who meet certain requirements.

Hansen said the proposal could help address the state’s teacher shortage and provide job opportunities for veterans, many of whom have special training and experience that make them “highly qualified” to work in the classroom.



Sen. Ben Hansen

To qualify for the temporary certificate, an applicant would have to be a veteran with at least 48 months of military service, have a minimum of 60 college credits with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 and pass a subject area examination as designated by the State Board of Education.

Temporary certificate holders would be assigned a “teacher mentor” for at least two school years. Mentors would be required to hold a valid Nebraska teaching certificate and have at least three years of teaching experience.

The temporary certificate would not be renewable and would be valid for no more than five years. The holder would have to obtain a regular teaching certificate during that time.

Kevin Naumann, a Catholic school principal in Lincoln and former Nebraska Air National Guard member, testified in support of the bill. He said the number of teaching candidates has “dwindled” in recent years and that the Legislature should consider any initiative that could increase the number of people entering the teaching profession.

“While LB188 does not require a principal like me to hire a veteran,” Naumann said, “I am confident that the skills and experiences of these veterans will make them attractive candidates.”

Testifying in opposition to the bill was Nicole Hochstein, a substitute

teacher. Hochstein said she completed months of student teaching and training as part of her teacher education program but still felt “ill-prepared” when managing a classroom on her own for the first time.

Under Hansen’s proposal, Hochstein said, veterans would be allowed to teach without first being trained to plan lessons, manage classroom behaviors and provide individual support and feedback to all students.

Isau Metes testified in opposition to LB188 on behalf of the Nebraska State Education Association. She said temporary teaching certificates generally are granted to those who have completed a teacher education program, have a bachelor’s degree or hold a teaching certificate from another state.

LB188 would require none of those and does not specify that a veteran’s college credits must be related to education, Metes said.

Under the bill’s provisions, veterans who are discharged or released from service under conditions other than honorable would be eligible for the temporary certificate. Metes said such discharges are not the same as an honorable discharge and could be the result of misconduct that might violate Nebraska’s teacher code of ethics.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

### **Student poll workers, civics committee reps proposed**

Nebraska high school students could fulfill a graduation requirement by completing a shift as a poll worker under a bill heard Jan. 23 by the Education Committee.

Under LB225, introduced by Lincoln Sen. George Dungan, each school district could offer that option — in addition to three current options — to

students over 16 as part of its social studies curriculum.

Students also would have to complete a project or paper in which they demonstrate what they learned from their experience.

Dungan said the new option could foster a sense of civic engagement in students and help address a statewide shortage of poll workers.

“Hands-on experience with the voting process will help educate students about our electoral process and solidify the importance of participating in that voting process moving forward,” he said.

The bill also would require school boards to appoint a student to their districts’ committee on American civics.

The committees, currently composed of three school board members, ensure that a district’s social studies curriculum aligns with state standards and gives students “foundational knowledge” in civics, economics, financial literacy, geography and history, among other duties.

Dungan said the proposal is intended to ensure that students have an “active voice” on the civics subcommittee.

Heidi Uhing, public policy director at Civic Nebraska, testified in support of LB225. She said providing additional opportunities for young people to engage with their government would help them become more civically engaged adults.

“Having students on school committees and boards also provides an important diversity of experience for the adults serving on those boards,” Uhing said. “It’s a direct line of communication for us to hear about students’ experiences at the schools about learning from this curriculum.”



Sen. George Dungan

Gavin Geis, executive director of Common Cause Nebraska, also testified in support. He said youth participation in recent elections was the highest in 30 years, indicating that young people care about elections and voting.

Encouraging youth to serve at the polls not only could help the poll worker shortage but could boost student confidence in elections at a time when some question their integrity, Geis said.

Harris Payne, a retired educator, testified in support of offering students the option to serve as poll workers. He said a recent study of a youth poll worker program in Minneapolis found that when students are engaged in public leadership positions, it can encourage other young people to get involved.

Payne said the proposal to add a student to the civics committee is “problematic,” however, because it does not specify how the student would be selected or what qualifications they must have.

Testifying in opposition to the bill was Colby Coash of the Nebraska Association of School Boards. He said it is common for Nebraska school districts to include a student representative on their school boards.

Requiring student representation on the civics committee, however, could interfere with its statutory duties if a student’s absence — due to sports or other obligations — prevents the committee from meeting, Coash said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB225.

### **Free school meal opt-in requirement proposed**

The Education Committee heard testimony Jan. 24 on a bill intended to maximize participation in a federal

program that allows school districts with high poverty rates to serve free breakfast and lunch to all of their students.

LB285, introduced by Fremont Sen. Lynne Walz, would require public schools that serve a certain percentage of students in poverty to opt in to the reimbursement program, called the community eligibility provision.



Sen. Lynne Walz

“Removing financial barriers, especially in both rural and urban low-income areas, will help us make sure that some of our most vulnerable children are getting their nutritional needs met,” Walz said.

Although Omaha Public Schools adopted the CEP in 2021, she said, eligible Nebraska school districts have been slow to opt in due to concerns that the program is too burdensome to administer or that it could affect a district’s state aid.

Under LB285, the state Department of Education could waive the requirement if a district shows that participation in the CEP is not “financially viable.” The department would provide technical assistance to those schools to help them adopt the CEP in the future.

Anahí Salazar of Voices for Children in Nebraska testified in support of the bill, saying it would benefit students, families and teachers in school districts with the highest needs. She said research shows that access to free breakfast at school improves students’ academic performance, behavior and attendance rates.

Another benefit of the CEP is that it allows schools to serve free meals to all of their students without collecting financial information from households to prove eligibility, Salazar said.

“When schools are able to offer no-cost meals without the barrier of this additional paperwork, stigma around eating assistance decreases,” she said. “No student has to go hungry because his form or her form wasn’t turned in yet.”

Eric Savaiano of Nebraska Appleseed also testified in support, saying Nebraska consistently ranks last among states in CEP participation by eligible schools. Under LB285, he said, approximately 12,800 additional students would receive free breakfast and lunch at school.

The federal government would reimburse most of the meal costs, Savaiano said, but the bill could result in a small number of school districts having to direct more of their own funding to meals than they do currently.

Schools that adopt the CEP, however, often see increased participation in the free meal programs, he said, which results in an economy of scale that helps districts offset some of those additional costs.

No one testified in opposition to LB285 and the committee took no immediate action on it.

### **Voter approval for certain school bonds proposed**

The Education Committee heard testimony Jan. 24 on a bill intended to ensure that voters must approve certain bonds issued to pay for the construction of school buildings.

LB299, introduced by Elkhorn Sen. Lou Ann Linehan, would prohibit any joint entity that includes a Nebraska school district or educational service unit from issuing bonds without approval from a majority of their quali-



Sen. Lou Ann Linehan

fied voters in a special election. The restriction would apply to joint public entities created on or after the bill’s effective date.

If the bond question fails, it could not be submitted to voters again for at least six months.

Linehan said school districts typically must ask their voters to approve a bond issue for a specific amount to pay for a new building. However, districts can get around that requirement by partnering with another political subdivision to form a joint public entity, which can issue bonds without voter approval, she said.

Linehan said LB299 would close this “loophole” and ensure that school districts cannot ignore the will of voters when incurring debt.

“When you don’t get buy-in from your community,” she said, “you’re going to have lingering hurt feelings.”

Jessica Shelburn, state director of Americans for Prosperity-Nebraska, testified in support of the proposal. In some cases, she said, school districts have formed joint public entities to issue bonds for new buildings after a traditional bond election has failed.

Circumventing the will of voters in such a way is “disrespectful,” Shelburn said.

Jason Alexander, superintendent of Beatrice Public Schools, testified in opposition to LB299, saying it would override the authority of local elected officials.

Alexander said the district recently formed a joint public entity with its ESU to issue bonds for a new elementary school after four existing schools were cited for more than two dozen safety violations. This approach allows the district to pay off the bonds without raising its property tax levy or imposing an additional bond issue tax, he said.

The Beatrice school board con-

sidered a traditional bond election, Alexander said, but decided against it because five of six school bond issues had failed since 1991.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

### Racial, disability impact statements proposed

Certain bills introduced in the Nebraska Legislature would be required to include a statement of their potential impact on communities of color and disability under two proposals considered by the Executive Board Jan. 27.

LB54, sponsored by Omaha Sen. Terrell McKinney, would require any bill related to criminal or juvenile justice to be accompanied by a statement informing lawmakers of the effect the bill would have on communities of color or other marginalized groups.



Sen. Terrell McKinney

Statements would be produced by the Legislative Research Office beginning next session and would summarize the estimated impact on racial minority populations in Nebraska and could include any relevant research on the historical racial impact of similar legislation.

The research office could request the cooperation of other state agencies, political subdivisions, accredited academic institutions or other subject matter experts in the preparation of a racial impact study.

McKinney said nine other states currently require racial impact statements, including Colorado and

Iowa. Bills often have unforeseen policy ramifications, he said, especially measures dealing with the criminal justice system. This can be seen in the pronounced racial disparities in incarceration rates among minority groups, he said.

“It is paramount that we keep all Nebraskans in mind while implementing legislation that would apply to people of the state, especially some of its most vulnerable who are most susceptible to negative outcomes of legislation that isn’t equitable nor written with the intent of lessening the disparities between people of different races,” McKinney said.

Kimara Snipes, representing Nebraska Civic Engagement Table, testified in support of LB54. Everyone has biases that need to be challenged with facts and data, she said, and lawmakers in particular need to acknowledge the historic impact of laws on people of color.

“[The bill] really gets to the heart of promoting a legislative process that ensures that no community in Nebraska is left behind,” Snipes said.

Ruby Méndez López of Nebraska Appleseed also spoke in support of the proposal. Structural racism does not rely on individual beliefs or intent, she said, and racial inequalities will continue unless the intentional choice to change them is made.

“Past history is not our fault, but it is our opportunity and responsibility to understand and fix it together to prevent future disparities and harm,” Méndez López said.

LB39, sponsored by Bellevue Sen. Carol Blood, outlines the same requirement for bills related to persons with disabilities.



Sen. Carol Blood

Blood said lawmakers have long ignored the impact of potential legislation on Nebraskans with disabilities. It’s important for senators to have all the relevant data when debating proposals, she said, and that includes the ways in which bills may disproportionately impact specific communities.

“The goal of the statement is to review any legislation [designated] by the board to ensure that it is equitable and creates no additional burden to Nebraskans with disabilities,” Blood said.

Disability rights advocate Kathy Hoell testified in support of the proposal, saying “hundreds” of bills have been introduced in the Legislature this session with the potential to negatively impact Nebraskans with disabilities, including measures related to voting, housing, education and more.

“Our community is very frustrated with able-bodied people making decisions for us with no consideration of the repercussions we have to deal with,” Hoell said.

Brad Meurrens of Disability Rights Nebraska also spoke in support of LB39. Roughly 11 percent of Nebraskans have a disability, he said, and live in every county in the state. People with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty, be under-employed and lack access to appropriate housing, he said.

“These are our family, our friends, our neighbors and our community,” Meurrens said. “And the state’s major policymaking body must do its best to adequately and accurately evaluate how its choices will impact Nebraskans with disabilities and their families.”

Benjamin Thompson, director of the Legislative Research Office, testified in a neutral capacity on both bills, saying his office is happy to provide any additional research or assistance as directed in order to help lawmakers engage in meaningful debate on proposed legislation.



No one testified in opposition to either proposal and the committee took no immediate action on the bills.



**Asian American commission proposed**

The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard testimony Jan. 27 on a proposal to create the state Commission on Asian American Affairs.

Sponsored by Bellevue Sen. Rita Sanders, LB2 would create a 14-member commission composed of individuals of Asian descent and appointed by the governor. The commission would promote state and federal legislation beneficial to Asian Americans in Nebraska, and coordinate programs relating to housing, education, welfare, medical and dental care, employment and other programs.



Sen. Rita Sanders

The commission would meet at least quarterly and commissioners would receive a \$50 per diem for each day spent performing their duties, as well as reimbursement for travel and other allowable expenses.

Sanders said that with the growing Asian American population in Nebraska, it is important to gather representatives to enhance the rights of Asian Americans in the state.

“The Asian American community in Nebraska comprises 3.5 percent of Nebraska residents and are the fastest growing minority group in the state,” Sanders said. “With the rise of

instances of anti-Asian hate crimes across the nation, it is more important than ever to establish a commission that can educate the population about the very contributions that different Asian cultures bring to our state.”

Maria Arriaga testified in support of LB2. She said her time leading the Nebraska Commission on Latino-Americans has helped her realize the importance of such organizations.

“It is important to have a voice that can be heard on these issues where, in many cases, there are no other entities fighting for you and your rights,” Arriaga said. “[The state commission] helps bring the population closer to the government and shows that Nebraska has a genuine interest and investment in this specific population.”

Also testifying in support of the bill was Sheila Dorsey Vinton, executive director and CEO of the Asian Community and Cultural Center. The Asian American community experiences many barriers, she said, including a lack of mental health resources, translation and interpretation resources and insufficient support for survivors of domestic violence and racially motivated aggression.

“With the establishment of a commission on Asian affairs, there is the potential to research these issues and develop culturally relevant resources that are unique to impacted communities,” Dorsey Vinton said.

Testifying in the neutral capacity was Marianne Williams. She said that while she is in complete support of LB2, she had concerns that the proposal grouped Pacific Islanders in with the Asian American community.

“As a Samoan and Pacific Islander, I was a little concerned that we were not represented,” Williams said. “I’m hoping to see some changes in the bill that could reflect my heritage, too.”

Sanders indicated that she would

be open to renaming the commission to the Asian American and Pacific Islander Affairs Commission.

No one testified in opposition to the bill and the committee took no immediate action on LB2.



**Review of maternal near-death data sought**

A bill that would allow for the review of instances of severe maternal morbidity was heard by the Health and Human Services Committee Jan. 25.

LB75, introduced by Omaha Sen. Tony Vargas, would grant the state’s Maternal Death Review Team the authority to conduct reviews of the rates, trends and causes of severe maternal morbidity in Nebraska.



Sen. Tony Vargas

The bill defines severe maternal morbidity as the unexpected outcomes of labor and delivery resulting in significant short or long-term consequences to a woman’s health.

Vargas said the study of severe maternal morbidity, also referred to as ‘near miss events’ – when a mother almost dies during labor – can improve care for mothers and babies in the future.

“We all want to see better, healthier outcomes for all of our families,” he said.

Severe maternal morbidity can be preventable, Vargas said, but the data necessary to make recommendations to prevent its occurrence often isn’t shared because of privacy concerns. Al-

lowing the state team to review the data could help resolve that issue, he said.

Ann Anderson Berry, medical director for the Nebraska Perinatal Quality Improvement Board, spoke in support of LB75. She said the ability to assess potential causes, frequencies and outcomes of pregnancy complications — such as severe hemorrhaging, hypertensive seizures, stroke and infection — would allow professionals to improve perinatal care in Nebraska.

“It is concerning that we don’t fully understand the rates or causes of severe maternal morbidities in our state,” Berry said. “These are near miss events that put mothers in life-threatening medical situations, require expensive intensive care admission and transfusions and can cause neonatal injury at the time of delivery.”

Also testifying in support of the bill was Chad Abresch. As the leader of a national public health organization, Abresch said he found the one common factor among all high-performing areas of the country is a commitment to collecting and using high-quality data. LB75 would provide the necessary supplemental data Nebraska has been missing by reviewing only instances of maternal death, he said.

“Maternal morbidity is about 100 times more common, which allows us to study these more plentiful events to unearth key strategies we can use to lower both severe maternal morbidity and maternal mortality,” Abresch said. “Data can provide a factual foundation for action.”

I Be Black Girl representative Nyomi Thompson also testified in support, saying LB75 would provide adequate data collection to reveal health disparities and yield solutions to the maternal health crisis experienced by the Black community. In addition to being two to four times more likely to die from childbirth than their white

counterparts, she said, Black individuals also are two times more likely to experience severe maternal morbidity when giving birth.

“Equitable, evidence-based intervention can only begin when there is a holistic understanding of the problem,” Thompson said. “Severe maternal morbidity goes further than birth outcomes — it carries into systemic oppressions, racism, inaccessible health care and other social determinants of health.”

No one testified in opposition and the committee took no immediate action on LB75.

### **Behavior analyst licensure proposed**

Behavior analysts could become licensed and practice independently in Nebraska under a bill heard by the Health and Human Services Committee Jan. 26.

LB123, introduced by Omaha Sen. John Fredrickson, would create a licensure process for applied behavior analysts and includes a provision to allow behavior analysts licensed in another state to apply for a temporary license to practice in Nebraska until their full licensure is approved.

Under LB123, the Board of Behavior Analysts would be required to establish minimum standards for licensure and adopt a code of conduct based on the Ethics Code for Behavior Analysts.

According to the bill, the practice of applied behavior analysis includes the empirical identification of functional relations between behavioral and environmental factors. Fredrickson noted applied behavior analysts do

not diagnosis disorders or engage in psychological testing, psychotherapy, cognitive therapy, psychoanalysis or counseling.

“Thirty-six other states now license behavior analysts,” Fredrickson said. “This becomes a workforce issue, as behavior analysts may receive education here in behavioral analysis, and then go to neighboring states to practice [where they] provide licensure.”

Desiree Dawson, a board certified behavioral analyst, testified in support of the bill. Currently, the practice of applied behavior analysis in Nebraska is unregulated, she said, and as a result, someone without the proper education, training and oversight could practice without any clear repercussions for potential harm done to patients.

“This profession deliberately attempts to change another person’s behavior,” she said. “Think about the harm that’s possible when therapeutic approaches are not applied properly at the hands of someone not upheld to the standard of our ethical code for practice.”

Also testifying in support of LB123 was professor of psychology Mark Shriver. Several students each year leave Nebraska to practice in a state with licensure that allows for the independent practice of behavior analysts, he said, and LB123 would help keep qualified practitioners in Nebraska to provide safe treatment as demand for services increases.

“As more companies come into the state to develop ... it is imperative that consumers have a means to report problematic or unethical behavior and for a process to be in place to examine and take appropriate action,” Shriver said.

Vicky McHugh, a representative from the Nebraska Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association, testified in a neutral capacity. The association supports the licensing



Sen. John Fredrickson

and regulation of behavioral analysts, she said, but believes the bill lacks the specific language necessary to ensure the safety of Nebraskans.

For example, McHugh said, LB123 uses ambiguous terminology such as “functional assessment and analysis,” which could make it difficult for patients to understand the difference between the roles of a behavior analyst and a physical therapist.

Fredrickson indicated that he would offer an amendment to the bill to address concerns regarding the language.

No one testified in opposition and the committee took no immediate action on LB123.

### Lower prescription drug costs sought

A bill that would create a framework for the importation of prescription drugs from Canada to Nebraska was heard by the Health and Human Services Committee Jan. 25.

LB200, introduced by Albion Sen. Tom Briese, would create the Canadian Prescription Drug Importation Act. Under the bill, the state Department of Health and Human Services would be required to submit a request to the federal Secretary of Health and Human Services for approval of the program by Sept. 1, 2024. The program would start no later than six months after receiving federal approval.

Briese said a 2019 study conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 11.4 percent of adults between the ages of 18 and 64 did not take their prescription drugs as prescribed in an attempt to

reduce how much they spent on medication. LB200 would help provide Nebraskans access to safe, more cost effective prescription drugs, he said.

“In 2020, patented drug prices in the U.S. averaged 3.57 times higher than Canadian drugs,” Briese said. “For many folks in Nebraska, being able to afford their medication really is a matter of life or death.”

Among other provisions, the bill would require that:

- a surety bond of at least \$250,000 be held by each vendor;
- vendors seeking to import Canadian prescriptions identify medications with the highest potential cost savings;
- the department review the drug importation list every three months and set a maximum profit margin for vendors;
- vendors ensure that a statistically valid sample of each shipment is tested for authenticity and degradation; and
- the department report annually on the program to the Legislature and the governor.

Jina Ragland from AARP Nebraska testified in support of LB200. She said that between 2015 and 2019, the average cost of prescription drug treatment in Nebraska increased 26.3 percent, while the average income for Nebraskans increased only 10.4 percent over the same period.

“It’s no secret the U.S. pays the highest price for prescription drugs in the world,” Ragland said. “[LB200] is not a complete solution ... but safe and legal importation would be a step forward in putting downward pressure on the prices.”

Also testifying in support of the bill was John Hansen, president of the Nebraska Farmers Union. Nebraskans need prescription drug

markets that are accessible, transparent, competitive and fair, he said. The obvious difference between the price structure of prescription drugs in the U.S. and Canada needs to be evaluated, he added.

“We are talking about, in some cases, the same manufacturers but at significantly different price points,” Hansen said.

Testifying in opposition to LB200 was Marcia Muetting, CEO of the Nebraska Pharmacists Association. Muetting expressed concern that objections to such programs from the Canadian government and Canadian drug regulators would expose Nebraska patients to unsafe medications.

“Canada implemented a regulation blocking any bulk export of medication that would have the potential to create a shortage of drugs in Canada,” she said. “I’m concerned that any attempt to implement the plan outlined in LB200 would create significant risk of exposing Nebraska patients to substandard and counterfeit medications.”

The committee took no immediate action on LB200.

### Bill would expand optometry scope of practice

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Jan. 26 on a bill that would authorize optometrists to perform selective laser trabeculoplasty – a procedure commonly used for glaucoma treatment that reduces intraocular pressure.

Under current Nebraska law, SLT can be performed only by licensed ophthalmologists. LB216, introduced by Seward Sen. Jana Hughes, would allow doctors of optometry to perform



Sen. Tom Briese



Sen. Jana Hughes

SLT under certain conditions.

An optometrist who is certified for therapeutic pharmaceutical agents and is licensed prior to Jan. 1, 2025, would be required to complete at least 16 hours of education and hands-on training from an accredited school of optometry before receiving their certification. Following successful completion of the course, a minimum of three proctored cases would be required.

An optometrist licensed on or after Jan. 1, 2025, would be authorized to use successful passage of the laser skills final examination, or an equivalent exam portion, of the National Board of Examiners in Optometry as qualification for certification. The licensee also would need to have completed at least three proctored cases before certification could be granted.

Hughes said that outside of the Omaha metropolitan area, only seven cities in Nebraska have a provider who is authorized to perform the SLT procedure.

“The extremely limited access to SLT is not serving the best interest of Nebraskans,” she said. “Allowing optometrists to become certified for this procedure and offer SLT in their offices will significantly increase access to care for glaucoma patients across our state.”

Teri Geist, an optometrist practicing in Omaha, testified in support of LB216. Nebraskans are at a distinct disadvantage in accessing eye care services, she said, and the state is only falling further behind the rest of the country by not updating the types of services that optometrists can provide.

“In 23 states, patients can receive more advanced care from an optometrist than our state allows,” Geist said. “Doctors of optometry provide the vast majority of primary eye care in Nebraska, but our patients – unlike those of our colleagues in other

states around the country – can’t get the highest standard of care from us.”

Amy DeVries, former president of the Nebraska Optometric Association, also testified in support of the bill, saying SLT is a procedure optometrists are trained and qualified to perform. There has been no evidence of harm done to the public in any of the states where optometrists are licensed to perform SLT, she said.

“It is important to remember that optometrists in Nebraska have been safely managing glaucoma and performing the pre and post-operative care for SLT procedures for over 20 years,” DeVries said.

Glaucoma and SLT specialist Vikas Gulati testified in opposition to LB216. SLT is a technically delicate and difficult procedure to master, Gulati said, and he expressed concern that the proposal would result in the frequent misdiagnosis of glaucoma due to the expanded availability of SLT. In addition, he said, the training requirements outlined in LB216 are not sufficient.

“Plenty can go wrong with a laser if it is not appropriately performed,” Gulati said.

Will Wagner, a fourth-year ophthalmology resident, agreed. Also testifying in opposition to the bill, he said residents spend hundreds of hours watching SLT procedures and working in glaucoma clinics before performing a partial SLT themselves. Due to the difficulty, residents often perform five to ten partial SLT procedures before completing a full SLT treatment on a patient, Wagner added.

The committee took no immediate action on LB216.

## JUDICIARY

### Exemption to school firearm prohibition considered

A bill that would add off-duty peace officers to the list of individuals allowed to carry a firearm on school property was heard by the Judiciary Committee Jan. 26.

Current state law prohibits an individual from carrying a firearm on school grounds with the exception of on-duty law enforcement, members of the Armed Forces and National Guard and certain individuals in other limited circumstances. LB17, sponsored by Lincoln Sen. George Dungan, would add full-time, off-duty peace officers to that list.



Sen. George Dungan

Dungan brought an amendment to the hearing to specify that off-duty peace officers would be authorized to carry a firearm only when on school property for the purpose of picking up or dropping off a child.

“This bill would not allow off-duty peace officers to enter school grounds with firearms for any other purpose – for example, a sporting event or a parent-teacher conference,” he said.

Off-duty peace officers currently face logistical challenges when picking up or dropping off their children due to the nature of their work, Dungan said. An amended version of LB17 would address that issue, he said, without adding any additional risks to students.

“The presence of armed, off-duty officers would not pose a safety hazard in these limited instances,” Dungan said. “Law enforcement officers undergo rigorous weapons training and

therefore have a clear understanding of firearms and their capabilities.”

Jim Maguire testified in support of the bill on behalf of the Nebraska Fraternal Order of Police. Peace officers are highly trained in handling firearms and in the laws that address when, and if, the use of force is justified, he said.

“The last thing we want to have is some kind of an inadvertent violation of the law where an officer leaves work armed to pick up their kids,” Maguire said.

Capt. William Rinn of the Douglas County Sheriff’s Office also testified in favor of the proposal. Law enforcement officials in Nebraska are some of the most highly trained in the use of firearms, he said, and are the most qualified to intervene in a violent situation.

“Success of this bill will remove obstacles that will allow officers to provide immediate support to arriving armed uniform officers [in the event of a violent situation], which is active-shooter protocol,” Rinn said.

Speaking in opposition to LB17 was Melody Vaccaro, representing Nebraskans Against Gun Violence. Society expects police officers to protect the public, Vaccaro said, but officers also are expected to uphold the law themselves. Off-duty peace officers shouldn’t have a law changed just because the current prohibition might be difficult for them to follow, she said.

“We’re increasingly concerned about law enforcement being carved out of following the laws that the rest of us need to follow,” Vaccaro said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB17.

### **Suicide prevention strategy for gun owners considered**

The Judiciary Committee heard testimony Jan. 26 on a bill that seeks

to create a point of intervention for an individual who is buying a gun for the purpose of suicide.

LB314, introduced by Omaha Sen. John Fredrickson, would require the state Department of Health and Human Services to develop materials that provide licensed firearm dealers with information about suicide prevention. Materials would include information on the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and would be required to be distributed to all firearm purchasers.



Sen. John Fredrickson

Additionally, the bill would add suicide prevention training to the Nebraska State Patrol’s minimum training and safety requirements for a handgun training and safety course under the Concealed Handgun Permit Act.

According to the most recent data, Fredrickson said, the Nebraska suicide rate is higher than the national average. In 2020, there were 283 deaths by suicide in the state, which is equivalent to one suicide death every 32 hours, he said.

“Many are not aware that most firearm-related deaths are by suicide. In addition, of those suicide attempts by firearm, 90 percent are fatal,” Fredrickson said. “Because it can be so difficult to know if someone may be having thoughts of suicide, it’s vital to have these touchpoints.”

Julia Hebenstreit, speaking on behalf of the Kim Foundation and the Nebraska Association of Behavioral Health Organizations, testified in support of the bill. Suicide is a significant public health concern for Nebraskans, she said, and LB314 could prevent a number of suicides by providing a point of early intervention.

“We know that many people who are in suicidal crisis do not want to

die. They are in extreme pain and don’t know where to turn,” Hebenstreit said. “By providing resources at this crucial point of purchase and licensure, we could reach them with information that could save their life.”

Patricia Harrold, a Nebraska gun rights advocate whose husband died of suicide by firearm in 2012, also testified in support of the bill. She said it’s important to make sure that all firearm owners have suicide prevention resources.

“[LB314] reaches out to our community in an educational and thoughtful way,” Harrold said. “It is not a burden to the firearms community in any way and it can save one life — it can save thousands.”

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

### **Bill would limit debt collection**

A bill that would prohibit certain debt enforcement actions against individuals for treatment of injuries related to domestic abuse, sexual assault, trafficking or child abuse was heard in the Judiciary Committee Jan. 25.

LB315, introduced by Omaha Sen. John Fredrickson, would prohibit providers of medical services, transportation, medications or other services related to the examination or treatment of a victim of such crimes from referring the individual to collection agencies or distributing information that could affect the credit rating of a victim, their guardian or family.

The bill would not prevent health care providers from seeking reimbursement for services from the survivor, insurance or other forms of payment.

Victims of domestic abuse, child abuse, trafficking and sexual assault face a unique type of trauma and stigma, Fredrickson said, which can

create challenges for victims. Additionally, he said, potential medical bills can deter victims from seeking care.

“This bill will allow for greater access to medical care by alleviating the financial burden that is placed on survivors,” Fredrickson said. “As a result, medical providers can ensure that survivors are identified, situations are reported as needed and, most importantly, that [victims] are provided with appropriate support.”

Testifying in support of the bill was Angie Lauritsen, who said financial security is integral to recovery for victims in dealing with the aftermath of domestic or sexual assault. Collection notices can retraumatize a survivor, she said.

“Just looking at that [medical] bill is a reminder of the assault,” Lauritsen said. “The system is revictimizing assault victims through collection notices and threats of collections and that is why LB315 is needed.”

Katie Welsh, attorney and legal director at the Women’s Center for Advancement in Omaha, also spoke in favor of the bill. A survivor should not have to choose between fear of incurring debt and necessary medical care in the aftermath of domestic or sexual assault, she said.

“LB315 effectively ensures that victims will not be punished for the behavior of their abusers and subject to further trauma,” Welsh said.

No one testified in opposition to LB315 and the committee took no immediate action on it.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### Ban on certain out-of-state groundwater transfers considered

The Natural Resources Committee heard testimony Jan. 26 on a bill intended to protect Nebraska’s groundwater resources.

Currently, any entity that intends to withdraw groundwater from a well located in Nebraska and transport it for use in another state must apply to the state Department of Natural Resources for a permit.

LB241, introduced by Albion Sen. Tom Briese, would prohibit the department’s director from granting a permit that would allow groundwater to be transported more than 10 miles outside of Nebraska unless it is necessary to comply with an interstate compact or decree.

Briese said he introduced the bill in light of the current megadrought in southwestern states and population growth along Colorado’s Front Range.

As the value of water in western states increases, he said, it might someday be financially feasible to pipe water from the Ogallala Aquifer to those places. Briese said LB241 would prevent that from happening without future action by the Legislature.

“The health, safety and welfare of future Nebraskans truly hinges on the preservation of our water,” he said.

Eric Hansen testified in support of the bill on behalf of the Nebraska Cattlemen, saying Nebraska’s groundwater supplies are vital to agricultural operations across the state.



Sen. Tom Briese

Bruce Rieker testified in opposition to LB241 on behalf of the Nebraska Farm Bureau. He said the organization opposes any transfer of Nebraska’s groundwater to other states “whether it’s 10 feet or 10 miles,” in order to protect Nebraska’s resources.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

## REVENUE

### Sales tax exemption for diapers proposed

Diapers would be exempt from state sales and use tax under a bill heard Jan. 26 by the Revenue Committee.

Omaha Sen. John Cavanaugh, sponsor of LB58, said Nebraska has for many years exempted certain necessities, such as groceries, from state sales and use tax. Diapers are an essential item for young families and for adults who need diapers for medical purposes, he said, and also should be exempt.

LB58 would save the average Nebraska household approximately \$70 per year, Cavanaugh said, which is significant at a time when costs are rising due to inflation.

The state Department of Revenue estimates that the bill would reduce state general fund revenue by approximately \$1.6 million in fiscal year 2023-24 and \$2.5 million in FY2024-25.

Tegan Reed of the Nebraska Diaper Bank testified in support of LB58, saying 16 other states currently exempt diapers from sales tax. She said one in three Nebraska families struggles



Sen. John Cavanaugh

to afford enough diapers to keep their children clean, dry and healthy.

Most childcare facilities require parents to provide diapers for their children, Reed said, which means that families in “diaper need” miss an average of four days of school or work per month.

Scout Richters testified in support of the bill on behalf of the ACLU of Nebraska. She said the proposed exemption would benefit families financially and signal that caregivers, who disproportionately are women, are valued.

Alicia Christensen testified in support of LB58 on behalf of Together, a nonprofit that provides services to end hunger and homelessness in Omaha. She said making diapers more affordable would allow more elderly Nebraskans — or those who use incontinence products due to disabilities, injuries or illness — to live with dignity and maintain their well-being.

Christensen said children’s diapers are not covered by federal or state safety net programs. Even a small decrease in the cost of diapers could help reduce the number of low-income families who face housing insecurity or hunger, she said.

No one testified in opposition to LB58 and the committee took no immediate action on it.

**Sales tax exemption for twine used in agriculture proposed**

Twine used to bale hay would be exempt from state sales and use tax under a proposal heard Jan. 27 by the Revenue Committee.

Under LB96, introduced by Sen. Julie Slama of Dunbar, state sales and use tax



Sen. Julie Slama

could not be imposed on the gross receipts from the sale, lease or rental of twine purchased for use in commercial agriculture.

Slama said the bill is a follow-up to LB941, passed last session, which exempted net wrap used to bale hay from state sales and use tax. She said a pending amendment also would exempt baling wire.

The changes would ensure that Nebraska farmers do not face unexpected sales tax charges when buying their baling materials, Slama said.

The state Department of Revenue estimates that LB96 would reduce state general fund revenue by approximately \$37,000 in fiscal year 2023-24 and \$61,000 in FY2024-25.

Phil Erdman testified in support of the bill on behalf of the Iowa-Nebraska Equipment Dealers Association. He said it would clarify to dealers that they should not collect state sales tax on either net wrap or twine.

No one testified in opposition to LB96 and the committee took no immediate action on it.



**Bill would repeal helmet law for certain motorcyclists**

The Transportation and Telecommunications Committee heard testimony Jan. 24 on a bill that would alter Nebraska’s motorcycle helmet mandate.

Current state law requires that an individual wear a helmet while riding a motorcycle or moped. LB91, introduced by Blair Sen. Ben Hansen no longer would require an individual age 21 and older who has completed

a certified motorcycle safety course to wear a helmet, provided the rider uses protective eye equipment.



Sen. Ben Hansen

The choice to wear a helmet is an issue of freedom, Hansen said, and individuals who are in favor of LB91 support the right to take responsibility for their own safety.

“This is more than a medical or an economic issue; it’s a cultural issue,” he said. “There are over 83,000 proud motorcyclists residing in Nebraska that have a rich culture and history and want the option to choose for themselves to wear a helmet — not some rigid state mandate.”

Former Nebraska state senator Dave Bloomfield, who offered similar proposals during his time at the Legislature, spoke in support of LB91, saying thousands of motorcyclists avoid riding through Nebraska due to the state’s helmet law.

“[The bill] would encourage and increase tourism, increase revenue and positively encourage new business,” Bloomfield said. “More importantly, LB91 would restore a right that has been denied for too long.”

Also in support of the bill was motorcyclist Randall Geer. The required safety course would enhance motorcycle safety in Nebraska by assuring that riders have the necessary skills and abilities to prevent crashes, he said.

“I also believe that increasing motorcycle awareness through ... training riders and non-riders alike to share the road responsibly will do more to save lives and reduce crashes than trying to make it safer to crash by mandating helmets,” Geer said.

In opposition to the bill was Dr. Daniel Rosenquist, representing

the Nebraska Medical Association. Helmets reduce serious injury and lower health care costs, he said, saving taxpayers' money. In addition, he said, more than 5,500 motorcyclists in the U.S. lost their lives in accidents in 2020.

"While there are inherent risks in riding motorcycles, helmets are the single most effective way to save those lives," Rosenquist said.

Also in opposition was Julia Keown, representing the Nebraska Nurses Association. Helmets prevent many catastrophic head injuries, she said, and a requirement to wear protective eye equipment as outlined in the bill would not offer the same level of protection.

"As Nebraska nurses, we believe that preventive measures like helmets will result in longer and better quality of life and ultimately reduce lifetime health care costs for Nebraskans," she said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB91.

### Czech heritage license plate proposed

A new specialty license plate celebrating Czech heritage would be available under a bill considered by the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee Jan. 23.

LB140, introduced by Plymouth Sen. Tom Brandt, would authorize the state Department of Motor Vehicles – in consultation with the Czech Honorary Consul of Nebraska – to design and issue Czech heritage motor vehicle license plates.

The fee for alphanumeric plates would be \$5 and a personalized license



Sen. Tom Brandt

plate would cost \$40. All funds would be credited to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Brandt said, tens of thousands of Czechs made their way west, resulting in many Nebraskans with Czech ancestry.

"We're very fortunate to have many ways to celebrate Czech heritage and culture year-round in Nebraska, with August Czech Days in Wilber being one of the most popular," he said. "Czech heritage is an integral part of Nebraska history."

Layne Pierce, president of the UNL Czech Language Foundation, testified in support of LB140. The foundation was established in 1993 to preserve and promote Czech language, Pierce said, and UNL has offered Czech language and literature classes since 1907. Offering a Czech license plate would allow the community to continue to honor their heritage, he said.

"We take great pride in it," Pierce said. "We now have the largest undergraduate program in Czech in the entire country. Czech culture in Nebraska is something truly, truly special."

Linda Taborek, treasurer of Nebraska Czechs of Lincoln and the Czech Language Foundation, also spoke in support of the bill. Nebraska is said to have the most people with Czech heritage as a percentage of the population in the country, she said, and a license plate would honor the contributions that their ancestors made to the state.

"It is another way to show the love of our heritage and how important it is to continue the traditions that have helped make Nebraska what it is," Taborek said.

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

## URBAN AFFAIRS

### Bill would clarify SID requirements

The Urban Affairs Committee heard testimony Jan. 24 on a bill that would update state law relating to sanitary and improvement district regulations when an SID is located just outside the corporate boundaries of a municipality, known as a city's extra-territorial zoning jurisdiction, or ETJ.

LB246, introduced by Omaha Sen. Terrell McKinney, would require an SID located within a city's ETJ to comply with the comprehensive development plan, affordable housing action plan, municipal zoning regulations and any other reasonable planning requirements established by the municipality.



Sen. Terrell McKinney

Under the bill, an SID located within the ETJ of multiple municipalities would be subject to the regulations of the municipality with the largest population according to the most recent census data.

McKinney said his proposal would give cities the power to require affordable housing options in new SID developments that likely will become part of those cities through annexation as the municipalities grow.

"We have an affordable housing crisis in our state," he said. "We have to make sure we are building a community for everyone."

Christy Abraham, representing the League of Nebraska Municipalities, testified in support of LB246. SIDs often are formed with the intention of being annexed by the nearby city,



she said, and the bill would ensure that SIDs already are complying with the regulations of that municipality.

“What this bill is trying to do is just make clear in [state law] that if you are an SID that is in the ETJ, some of these zoning and other provisions need to be consistent with the city itself,” Abraham said.

Testifying in opposition to the bill was Welcome Home representative Jason Thiellen. He said a recent study commissioned by the National Home Builders Found that 23.8 percent of the cost of a newly constructed home is due to government regulations.

Requiring SIDs to abide by a city’s affordable housing action plan, which currently is undefined in state law, would affect the overall cost of a home for buyers, he said.

“In our opinion, undefined regulations create uncertainty,” Thiellen said. “Creating uncertainty in our marketplace, particularly as it relates to housing, just increases the cost and the unaffordability of housing.”

The committee took no immediate action on LB246. ■

## COMMITTEE HEARING SCHEDULING ANNOUNCEMENT

Speaker John Arch announced that from Jan. 30 to Feb. 10, legislative committees will conduct hearings in both morning and afternoon sessions.

Beginning Feb. 13, the Legislature will resume morning floor debate and public hearings will be held in the afternoons only. ■

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Friday, January 6, 2023 Latest: Gov. Pillen takes oath of office

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# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Current hearing schedules are available at: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar)

## **Monday, Jan. 30**

### **Banking, Commerce & Insurance**

#### **Room 1507 - 9:00 AM**

LB669 (Ballard) Provide powers for the Director of Banking and Finance regarding conditions on financial institutions

LB674 (Jacobson) Change provisions relating to digital asset depositories

LB67 (Slama) Provide a duty for the State Treasurer regarding deposits of public funds

LB68 (Slama) Increase limits on medical malpractice liability and change provisions of the Nebraska Hospital-Medical Liability Act

### **Banking, Commerce & Insurance**

#### **Room 1507 - 1:30 PM**

LB278 (Walz) Provide duties for the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority and the Department of Economic Development relating to housing for persons with disabilities

LB633 (McKinney) Provide duties for the Department of Economic Development regarding marketing for financial incentives offered by the State of Nebraska

LB621 (McDonnell) Change provisions relating to the Site and Building Development Act

LB644 (McDonnell) Change provisions relating to the use of the Site and Building Development Fund

### **Business & Labor**

#### **Room 1524 - 9:00 AM**

*Appointment:* John Albin - Dept. of Labor

LB469 (Kauth) Change composition of the state protective service bargaining unit

LB267 (Brewer) Adopt the Critical Infrastructure Utility Worker Protection Act

LB161 (McDonnell) Change provisions of the Workplace Privacy Act

LB56 (McKinney) Adopt the Diaper Changing Accommodation Act

LB57 (M. Cavanaugh) Adopt the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act

LB427 (Riepe) Eliminate fees relating to nonresident contractors under the Contractor Registration Act

LB426 (Riepe) Change the number of judges on the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Court

LB282 (Riepe) Provide for payment of claims against the state

LB283 (Riepe) Deny claims against the state

LB249 (Briese) Change provisions of the Rural Workforce Housing Investment Act

LB15 (Briese) Change provisions of the Wage and Hour Act

LB558 (Day) Require payment of a minimum wage for all school district employees

### **Education**

#### **Room 1525 - 9:30 AM**

LB413 (Blood) Adopt the Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact

LB324 (Wishart) Change provisions relating to reimbursements under the Special Education Act

### **Education**

#### **Room 1525 - 1:30 PM**

LB603 (Linehan) Change provisions relating to the Alternative Certification for Quality Teachers Act and authorize the Commissioner of Education to issue alternative certificates to teach as prescribed

LB519 (Walz) Eliminate certification fees for teaching certificates, create and terminate funds, state intent regarding an appropriation for school employees, change provisions of the Excellence in Teaching Act, and adopt the Student Teaching Assistance Act

LB385 (Linehan) Adopt the Nebraska Teacher Recruitment and Retention Act

### **General Affairs**

#### **Room 1510 - 9:00 AM**

LB258 (Lowe) Eliminate provisions relating to near beer under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB259 (Lowe) Allow farm wineries to obtain additional retail licenses under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB376 (Lowe) Change provisions relating to the importation of alcoholic liquor into the state under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB377 (Lowe) Change provisions relating to special designated licenses under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB596 (Hardin) Authorize a manufacturer or wholesaler to enter into a sponsorship or advertising agreement with certain licensees or organizations under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

### **General Affairs**

#### **Room 1510 - 1:30 PM**

LB301 (Linehan) Change a tax on ready-to-drink cocktails under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB452 (Murman) Change provisions relating to microdistilleries under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB512 (Brewer) Change the number of locations allowed for a craft brewery or microdistillery under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

LB667 (Hughes) Authorize wholesalers to implement channel pricing under the Nebraska Liquor Control Act

### **Transportation & Telecommunications**

#### **Room 1113 - 9:30 AM**

*Appointment:* Rhonda Lahm - Dept. of Motor Vehicles

LB37 (Dungan) Change motor vehicle identification inspection requirements

### **Transportation & Telecommunications**

#### **Room 1113 - 1:30 PM**

LB136 (Geist) Change provisions relating to the Motor Vehicle Certificate of Title Act, the Motor Vehicle Registration Act, and the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Act

LB138 (Geist) Adopt updates to federal law relating to motor vehicles and motor carriers, change provisions of the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Act, and change civil penalties as prescribed

## **Tuesday, Jan. 31**

### **Agriculture**

#### **Room 1524 - 9:30 AM**

LB321 (Brandt) Change provisions of the Nebraska Pure Food Act

LB262 (Agriculture Committee) Change and eliminate provisions of the Nebraska Pure Food Act

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Current hearing schedules are available at: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar)

## Agriculture

### Room 1524 - 1:30 PM

*Appointments:* Dawn Caldwell, Brett R. Lindstrom, Beth Smith - Nebraska State Fair Board

- LB591 (Hardin) Require notice of termination of an oral lease of agricultural land to be given by Jan. 1
- LB264 (Agriculture Committee) Change provisions of the Grain Dealer Act and the Grain Warehouse Act
- LB305 (Halloran) Change provisions relating to grain warehouse storage rates and charges

## Banking, Commerce & Insurance

### Room 1507 - 9:00 AM

- LB3 (Sanders) Change provisions for tax levies for bonds issued by political subdivisions
- LB113 (McDonnell) Appropriate funds for federal four and nine percent low-income housing tax credit programs
- LB93 (Slama) Change provisions relating to security deposits required by insurers with the Department of Insurance
- LB536 (Slama) Change provisions relating to authorized investments for insurers
- LB628 (Jacobson) Change provisions relating to professional service by limited liability companies and professional corporations

## Banking, Commerce & Insurance

### Room 1507 - 1:30 PM

- LB617 (McDonnell) Create the Economic Development Cash Fund to award a grant relating to the federal Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) for America Act
- LB582 (Moser) Adopt the Manufacturing Modernization Pilot Investment Act
- LB709 (Wishart) Create the Convention and Event Center Capital Construction Program
- LB515 (Walz) Adopt the Rural Economic Development Initiative Act
- LB711 (Armendariz) Change provisions of the Nebraska Uniform Trust Code

## Education

### Room 1525 - 9:30 AM

- LB762 (DeBoer) Provide powers and duties to the State Department of Education relating to a teacher apprenticeship program
- LB787 (Wayne) Adopt the STEEM Development Act
- LB800 (Murman) Change provisions relating to the Superintendent Pay Transparency Act and provide a limit for superintendent and educational service unit administrator compensation

## Education

### Room 1525 - 1:30 PM

- LB673 (Hansen) Provide grants to schools that adopt a policy to provide emergency response mapping data to law enforcement agencies and provide powers and duties for the State Department of Education and State Board of Education
- LB374 (Murman) Adopt the Parents' Bill of Rights and Academic Transparency Act
- LB71 (Sanders) Change provisions relating to parental involvement in and access to learning materials in schools

## Transportation & Telecommunications

### Room 1113 - 9:30 AM

- Appointment:* Vicki Kramer - Dept. of Transportation
- LB122 (Bostelman) Change provisions relating to the One-Call Notification System Act

## Transportation & Telecommunications

### Room 1113 - 1:30 PM

- LB465 (Moser) Change the allocation of fees for operators' licenses and state identification cards
- LB484 (Moser) Provide for continuing education for licensed motor vehicle dealers and authorization to conduct an educational seminar for continuing education credit and eliminate a requirement for the Nebraska Motor Vehicle Industry Licensing Board to maintain an office in the State Capitol
- LB728 (McDonnell) Change provisions relating to registration of trailers under the Motor Vehicle Registration Act

- LB782 (DeKay) Change provisions relating to salvage branded certificates of title and consumer care of motor vehicles
- LB688 (Erdman) State intent to appropriate funds to the Department of Motor Vehicles

## Urban Affairs

### Room 1510 - 9:00 AM

- LB21 (Wayne) Change provisions relating to the city council of a city of the metropolitan class
- LB389 (Linehan) Restrict the use of tax-increment financing

## Urban Affairs

### Room 1510 - 1:30 PM

- LB33 (Jacobson) Change provisions relating to the powers of mayors in certain cities and eliminate obsolete 2020 redistricting provisions
- LB98 (Jacobson) Change provisions of the Community Development Law relating to substandard and blighted declarations and expedited reviews of redevelopment plans

## Wednesday, Feb. 1

## Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

### Room 1507 - 9:30 AM

- LB269 (Halloran) Eliminate obsolete provisions relating to redistricting and boundary changes after the 2020 federal decennial census
- LB313 (Lowe) Change provisions relating to special elections and filling vacancies in the United States Senate and House of Representatives

## Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

### Room 1507 - 1:30 PM

- LB535 (Slama) Require valid photographic identification and change provisions relating to voting under the Election Act and certain identification documents

## Health & Human Services

### 1525 - 9:30 AM

- LB12 (Blood) Create the Nebraska Human Breast Milk Bank
- LB181 (Hansen) Provide for filling and refilling prescriptions in certain

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Current hearing schedules are available at: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar)

circumstances  
LB245 (Walz) Change per diem compensation for members of the Board of Barber Examiners  
LB261 (Riepe) Change apprenticeship requirements under Funeral Directing and Embalming Practice Act

**Health & Human Services  
Room 1525 - 1:30 PM**

LB626 (Albrecht) Adopt the Nebraska Heartbeat Act

**Judiciary  
Room 1113 - 1:30 PM**

LB368 (Conrad) Create a grant program to expand and enhance criminal justice programs in a county with a city of the primary class  
LB163 (McKinney) Provide for various reforms to jails and prisons, provide certain protections for prisoners, prohibit construction or expansion of prisons and jails as prescribed, and provide for oversight of the Department of Correctional Services during an overcrowding emergency by the Judiciary Committee  
LB432 (McKinney) Adopt the Second Look Act, change provisions relating to sentences and certain offenses, provide for good time for offenders serving mandatory minimum terms, provide for expanded parole eligibility and for geriatric parole, and change provisions relating to parole  
LB50 (Geist) Change criminal justice provisions including set-asides, restitution, and parole; create criminal justice pilot programs; terminate an oversight committee; and create a task force  
LB352 (Wayne) Change criminal justice provisions including offenses, sentencing, set asides, restitution, pretrial diversion, and parole; provide for benefits under the Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act; create criminal justice pilot programs; terminate an oversight committee; and create a task force

**Natural Resources  
Room 1510 - 9:30 AM**

LB599 (Armendariz) Change provi-

sions relating to recycling under the Environmental Protection Act and the Integrated Solid Waste Management Act and provide for an additional use of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Fund  
LB565 (Bostelman) Provide a grant program related to hydrogen hub designations

**Natural Resources  
Room 1510 - 1:30 PM**

LB769 (Holdcroft) Authorize use of the Critical Infrastructure Facilities Cash Fund to develop a sewer system  
LB556 (Brandt) Adopt the Capacity Grant Act to provide grants to non-profit organizations that administer weatherization programs through the low-income home energy assistance program

**Revenue  
Room 1524 - 9:30 AM**

LB589 (Briese) Adopt the School District Property Tax Limitation Act

**Revenue  
Room 1524 - 1:00 PM**

LB74 (Linehan) Change sales tax provisions relating to purchasing agents  
LB146 (Kauth) Change provisions relating to assessment of improvements on leased lands and methods for giving notice by the Tax Commissioner  
LB147 (Kauth) Change procedures for property tax refunds

## Thursday, Feb. 2

**Government, Military & Veterans Affairs  
Room 1507 - 9:30 AM**

LB194 (Halloran) Adopt the Second Amendment Preservation Act  
LB195 (Halloran) Adopt the Faithful Delegate to Federal Article V Convention Act  
LR31 (Halloran) Resolution to rescind a prior resolution and apply to Congress for a convention of the states to propose amendments to the United States Constitution

**Government, Military & Veterans Affairs  
Room 1507 - 1:30 PM**

LB390 (Clements) Change provisions relating to ballots for early voting under the Election Act  
LB514 (Brewer) Change provisions relating to elections

**Health & Human Services  
Room 1510 - 9:30 AM**

LB189 (Kauth) Change and provide exemptions for natural hair braiding and natural hairstyling  
LB280 (Blood) Adopt the Interstate Massage Compact  
LB78 (Day) Redefine massage therapy under the Massage Therapy Practice Act

**Health & Human Services  
Room 1510 - 1:30 PM**

LB65 (Day) Change provisions relating to the complaint tracking system and disciplinary action under the Child Care Licensing Act  
LB64 (Day) Require the Department of Health and Human Services to provide notice in certain cases of child abuse and neglect  
LB115 (Raybould) Adopt the Family Home Visitation Act  
LB419 (Wishart) Require submission of a medicaid state plan amendment to extend postpartum coverage

**Judiciary  
Room 1113 - 9:30 AM**

LB83 (DeBoer) Adopt the Uniform Community Property Disposition at Death Act and change provisions relating to court jurisdiction  
LB330 (DeBoer) Change provisions relating to small estate affidavits under the Uniform Probate Code  
LB579 (DeBoer) Change provisions of the Nebraska Uniform Real Property Transfer on Death Act

**Judiciary  
Room 1113 - 1:30 PM**

LB19 (Wayne) Change dollar amount thresholds for criminal penalty classifications  
LB18 (Wayne) Provide for motions for new trial based on newly discovered evidence

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Current hearing schedules are available at: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar)

LB553 (J. Cavanaugh) Provide for automatic review of bail and conditions of release for misdemeanors or violations of city or village ordinances

LB555 (J. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to the indigent defense fee and the Commission on Public Advocacy Operations Cash Fund

LB27 (Dungan) Change provisions relating to appointment of counsel for defendants

## Natural Resources

### Room 1525 - 1:30 PM

*Appointment:* Donald P. Batie - Natural Resources Commission

LB723 (Bostelman) Adopt the Public Water and Natural Resources Project Contracting Act

## Natural Resources

### Room 1525 - 9:30 AM

LB567 (Bostelman) Change provisions relating to public power and irrigation districts and electric suppliers

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 9:30 AM

LB804 (von Gillern) Change corporate income tax rates

LB806 (von Gillern) Change individual income tax rates

LB754 (Linehan) Reduce individual and corporate income tax rates

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 1:30 PM

LB750 (Albrecht) Change provisions relating to the valuation of agricultural land and horticultural land

LB783 (Murman) Eliminate the levy authority of community college areas

## Friday, Feb. 3

### Executive Board

#### Room 1525 - 12:00 PM

LB552 (J. Cavanaugh) Change requirements for the Legislative Mental Health Care Capacity Strategic Planning Committee

LB713 (J. Cavanaugh) Provide a correctional forecasting tool for the Committee on Justice Reinvestment Oversight

LB215 (Briese) Provide, change, elimi-

nate, and transfer provisions regarding the offices of Inspector General of Child Welfare and Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System

### Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Room 1507 - 9:30 AM

*Appointment:* Patrick Guinan - State Personnel Board

*Appointment:* John Andrew Bolduc - Neb. State Patrol

*Appointment:* John Hilgert - Dept. of Veterans Affairs

### Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Room 1507 - 1:30 PM

*Appointment:* Andrew N. Reuss - Accountability and Disclosure Commission

*Appointment:* Edward A. Toner - Office of the Chief Information Officer

*Appointment:* Jason Jackson - Department of Administrative Services

## Health & Human Services

### Room 1510 - 9:30 AM

LB345 (Armendariz) Define palliative care under the Health Care Facility Licensure Act

LB337 (Riepe) Change provisions relating to disclosure of patient information under the Mental Health Practice Act

LB548 (Ballard) Change examination and compounding requirements under the Pharmacy Practice Act

## Health & Human Services

### Room 1510 - 1:30 PM

LB561 (Blood) Adopt the Cosmetology Licensure Compact

LB572 (Riepe) Provide, change, and eliminate provisions relating to the Medical Nutrition Therapy Practice Act

LB430 (Walz) Prohibit a multiple procedure payment reduction policy from being applied to physical therapy, occupational therapy, or speech-language pathology services as prescribed under the Uniform Credentialing Act

## Judiciary

### Room 1113 - 1:30 PM

LB81 (Aguilar) Change number of county judges in Buffalo and Hall counties

LB363 (Dorn) Provide for transfer of duties of clerks of the district court to clerk magistrates

LB260 (Wayne) Designate Nebraska Appellate Reports Online Library as the repository for published judicial opinions of the Nebraska Supreme Court and the Nebraska Court of Appeals

LB236 (Wayne) Provide for appointment and powers of problem-solving court judicial officers

LB793 (Wayne) Provide duties for judges relating to problem solving courts

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 9:30 AM

LB641 (Kauth) Change provisions relating to the taxation of social security benefits

LB602 (Linehan) Exclude certain pensions and annuities from income taxes

LB38 (Blood) Provide an income tax adjustment relating to federal retirement annuities

LB820 Albrecht Adopt the Agricultural Valuation Fairness Act

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 1:30 PM

LB753 (Linehan) Adopt the Opportunity Scholarships Act and provide tax credits

## Tuesday, Feb. 7

### Agriculture

#### Room 1524 - 9:30 AM

LB116 (Brandt) Change provisions of the Beginning Farmer Tax Credit Act

LB442 (Albrecht) State intent to transfer funds to the Livestock Growth Act Cash Fund

### Agriculture

#### Room 1524 - 1:30 PM

*Appointments:* Marie A. Farr, Steven F. Stroup - Nebraska Brand Committee

LB229 (Erdman) Change registered feedlot inspection requirements under the Livestock Brand Act

LB562 (Dorn) Adopt the E-15 Access Standard Act

LB218 (Ibach) Change provisions relating to intent to appropriate money for management of vegetation within the banks or flood plain of a natural stream

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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## **Banking, Commerce & Insurance Room 1507 - 9:00 AM**

- LB32 (Jacobson) Change requirements for issuers of medicare supplement insurance policies or certificates relating to coverage of individuals under sixty-five years of age who are eligible for medicare by reason of disability or end-stage renal disease
- LB145 (Bostar) Change provisions relating to coverage for screening mammography and breast examinations
- LB142 (Briese) Limit the amount an insured pays for prescription insulin drugs
- LB779 (Bostar) Limit the amount an insured pays for prescription insulin drugs

## **Banking, Commerce & Insurance Room 1507 - 1:30 PM**

- LB383 (Bostar) Change provisions relating to insurance coverage for screenings for colorectal cancer
- LB308 (Bostar) Adopt the Genetic Information Privacy Act

## **Transportation & Telecommunications Room 1113 - 9:30 AM**

- LB683 (Transportation & Telecommunications Committee) Create the Nebraska Broadband Office and provide duties
- LB412 (Geist) Provide powers for the Public Service Commission under the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act

## **Transportation & Telecommunications Room 1113 - 1:30 PM**

- LB119 (Bostelman) Redefine a term under the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act
- LB359 (Hughes) Change application deadlines under the Nebraska Broadband Bridge Act
- LB722 (Bostelman) Provide authority for the Public Service Commission regarding construction of broadband or other telecommunications infrastructure
- LB155 (DeBoer) Change provisions regarding the applicability of the Small Wireless Facilities Deployment Act

## **Wednesday, Feb. 8**

### **Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 9:30 AM**

- LB590 (Holdcroft) Change the personal needs allowance for eligible aged, blind, and disabled persons
- LB664 (Riepe) Provide powers and duties for the state medicaid fraud control unit and the Attorney General
- LB13 (Blood) Require coverage of human breast milk under Medical Assistance Act

### **Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 1:30 PM**

- LB574 (Kauth) Adopt the Let Them Grow Act

### **Natural Resources Room 1525 - 9:30 AM**

- LB400 (Brewer) Adopt the Nebraska Pheasant Restoration Act
- LB450 (Brewer) Prohibit land disposal of wind turbine blades and their component parts

### **Natural Resources Room 1525 - 1:30 PM**

- LB292 (M. Cavanaugh) Prohibit the use of eminent domain under the Jobs and Economic Development Initiative Act
- LB636 (Albrecht) Prohibit political subdivisions from restricting certain energy services

## **Thursday, Feb. 9**

### **Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 9:30 AM**

- LB433 (Jacobson) Provide requirements for distribution of funding for behavioral health regions
- LB451 (Brewer) Provide for the Department of Health and Human Services to award a grant to assist a rehabilitation hospital
- LB219 (Ibach) Require the Department of Health and Human Services to rebase rates for critical access hospitals
- LB458 (Ballard) Allow certain central fill pharmacies to deliver to a patient under the Prescription Drug Safety Act

## **Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 1:30 PM**

- LB286 (Walz) Provide for confidentiality of a physician wellness program under the Uniform Credentialing Act
- LB326 (Raybould) Provide for eligibility for certain children under the Medical Assistance Act
- LB468 (DeBoer) Create the position of State Dementia Director in the Department of Health and Human Services
- LB353 (Raybould) Provide for grants for projects that increase long-term care facility capacity

## **Natural Resources Room 1525 - 9:30 AM**

- LB397 (Erdman) Relocate the Game and Parks Commission headquarters to the city of Sidney, Nebraska
- LB425 (Bostelman) Change provisions relating to the Game and Parks Commission and the Game Law

## **Natural Resources Room 1525 - 1:30 PM**

- LB456 (Brewer) Provide for claims for monetary compensation for damage caused by elk or mountain lions and authorize the control of elk and mountain lion populations

## **Friday, Feb. 10**

### **Executive Board Room 1525 - 12:00 PM**

- LB90 (Day) Change provisions relating to tax incentive performance audits
- LB254 (Brewer) Require the Legislative Council to develop and maintain a publicly accessible digital Internet archive of closed-captioned video coverage of the Legislature and change powers and duties of the Nebraska Educational Telecommunications Commission

## **Health & Human Services Room 1510 - 9:30 AM**

- LB611 (Riepe) Provide requirements for certain health care facility-provided medications
- LB810 (Murman) Adopt the Medical Ethics and Diversity Act

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

Current hearing schedules are available at: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/calendar)

## Health & Human Services

### Room 1510 - 1:30 PM

LB227 (Hansen) Provide duties for the Department of Health and Human Services relating to reimbursing certain hospitals for nursing facility services under the Medical Assistance Act

LB434 (Jacobson) Require the Department of Health and Human Services to enroll long-term care

hospitals as providers under the medical assistance program and submission of a state plan amendment or waiver

LB517 (Walz) Require the Department of Health and Human Services to pay discharge incentives to post-acute placement facilities

LB772 (Hughes) Create the Residential Youth Parenting Facility Grant Program ■



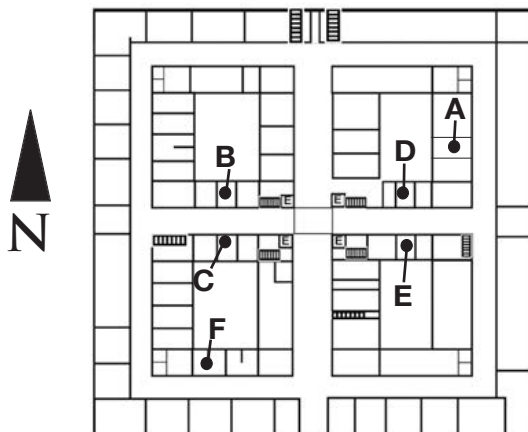
# PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public hearings on bills typically are held in the afternoons during the first half of the legislative session. Committees have regularly scheduled rooms and meeting days, although they sometimes meet in different rooms at varying times in order to accommodate testifiers or large audiences.

The weekly schedule of committee hearings is published on the last legislative day of the week throughout the legislative session. The schedule is available on a table in front of the Clerk's Office, in the Sunday editions of the Lincoln Journal Star and the Omaha World-Herald, in the weekly Unicameral Update and at [NebraskaLegislature.gov](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov).

Hearing Room	Committee	Meeting Days
1524 (B)	Agriculture	Tu
1307 (A)	Appropriations	M, Tu, W, Th, F
1507 (E)	Banking, Commerce & Insurance	M, Tu
1524 (B)	Business & Labor	M
1525 (C)	Education	M, Tu
1510 (D)	General Affairs	M
1507 (E)	Government, Military & Veterans Affairs	W, Th, F
1510 (D)	Health & Human Services	W, Th, F
1113 (F)	Judiciary	W, Th, F
1525 (C)	Natural Resources	W, Th, F
1525 (C)	Nebraska Retirement Systems	(call of the chair)
1524 (B)	Revenue	W, Th, F
1113 (F)	Transportation & Telecommunications	M, Tu
1510 (D)	Urban Affairs	Tu

## FIRST FLOOR



\* Hearing rooms labeled by letter – see chart at right

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Gov. Jim Pillen and First Lady Suzanne Pillen (right) are greeted by senators as they are escorted into the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the governor's State of the State address Jan. 25.