

## Property tax relief through increased school funding proposed

A bill that seeks to reduce local property taxes by increasing state funding for public schools was considered Feb. 10 by the Education Committee.

LB303, introduced by Seward Sen. Jana Hughes at the request of Gov. Jim Pillen, would make several changes to the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act, or TEEOSA. The bill would increase school foundation aid by 6% — from \$1,500 to \$1,590 per student — beginning in fiscal year 2025-26.

According to the measure's fiscal note, the impact would be a \$112.9 million increase in state general funds for Nebraska schools over the next two fiscal years.

The measure would lower the maximum property tax rate that schools may levy from \$1.05 to \$1.02 per \$100 of taxable valuation. It also would create a base levy adjustment to reduce TEEOSA aid if the potential general fund levy is less than 30 cents.

Finally, LB303 would create a 15-member School Finance Reform Commission, which would evaluate the TEEOSA formula and provide annual advisory recommendations regarding school funding in the state.

Hughes said 111 Nebraska schools saw a decrease in state aid during FY2024-25 due to rising property valuations. Lowering the maximum levy cap and increasing foundation aid would reset state aid closer to 2023-24

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## Additional medical abortion protocols considered



Sen. Rick Holdcroft said the goal of LB512 is enhanced safety for Nebraska women.

Members of the Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Feb. 13 on a bill that would tighten restrictions on Nebraska providers of medications used to perform chemical abortions.

LB512, introduced by Bellevue Sen. Rick Holdcroft, would create the Chemical Abortion Safety Protocol Act to establish additional regulations for medications used to induce abortions through a chemical process rather than through surgery.

Under the bill as introduced, a physician would be required to verify the pregnancy through an in-person examination, determine if the patient has an ectopic pregnancy, document gestational age and perform Rh factor

screening before providing abortion-inducing medication.

An amendment brought by Holdcroft to the committee hearing would remove all provisions related to Rh factor testing and treatment because its value in reducing future miscarriages is no longer clear, he said.

The bill also would require a physician to schedule a follow-up appointment between three and 14 days after medication is provided to confirm the pregnancy has been completely terminated and perform an assessment for any adverse events resulting from the medication — such as shock, infection, heavy or prolonged bleeding, hemorrhage or sepsis.

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# Property tax relief through increased school funding proposed

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levels while also providing some relief to taxpayers, she said.

“While LB303 doesn’t fully restore all districts to their previous state aid levels – and doesn’t significantly reduce property taxes – it is a step in the right direction,” Hughes said.

Pillen testified in support of the bill, saying the recent rise in property valuations have made the funding formula under TEEOSA increasingly unpredictable.

The measure would allow Nebraska to continue working toward a long-term school funding solution and reduce the state’s over-reliance on property taxes to finance education, he said.

“We must start managing the [TEEOSA] formula and not allowing the formula to manage us,” Pillen said.

Tim Royers also supported the bill on behalf of the Nebraska State Education Association, describing the measure as “the best school funding bill to come from the governor’s office in at least a decade.”



Sen. Jana Hughes said LB303 is an incremental step toward reforming Nebraska’s school funding formula.

A continued investment in school funding, especially in light of concerns about a fiscal deficit, showcases the state’s commitment to fulfilling its constitutional obligation to provide public education, Royers said.

Andy Rikli, superintendent of Papillion La Vista Community Schools, testified in support of LB303. In 2024, only 58 of Nebraska’s 244 public school districts received equalization aid under the TEEOSA formula, he said, disproportionately benefiting the

state’s largest districts.

“While most of Nebraska’s biggest systems – OPS, Lincoln, Millard and Papillion La Vista Community Schools – have long received TEEOSA equalization aid, the fact that so many smaller, rural districts often do not receive any equalization aid has proven to be problematic,” Rikli said.

Shane Rhian, chief financial officer of Omaha Public Schools, opposed the measure, citing budget concerns.

OPS anticipates no longer qualifying for district-wide free school meals under the National School Lunch Program, he said, which may reduce the district’s property allowance under TEEOSA and result in a loss of up to \$30 million in state aid.

“Lowering the levy lid to \$1.02 under LB303 would effectively prohibit the district from replacing approximately one-third of that projected \$30 million loss in state aid,” Rhian said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB303. ■

## UNICAMERAL UPDATE

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# Additional medical abortion protocols considered

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Physicians also would be required to file a report with the state Department of Health and Human Services within 30 days of providing abortion-inducing medication to a patient. The bill would prohibit the report from including any personally identifiable information about the patient.

Holdcroft said LB512 is not intended as an “anti-abortion” measure, but rather to ensure that patients who receive a chemical abortion are not endangered by “careless” providers. He said an abortion clinic located in Bellevue recently was investigated by DHHS for dispensing abortion-inducing medication without a license.

“The recent history of the Bellevue facility ... is a big part of the reason I think it’s important to bring LB512,” Holdcroft said. “No matter how any of us feel about the issue of abortion, we can all agree that no pregnant woman should ever be neglected or endangered by a careless abortion provider.”

Speaking in support of LB512 on behalf of the Nebraska Family Alliance, Elizabeth Nunnally. She said it was “appalling” that over 200 women over a three-month period reportedly were prescribed “potentially dangerous drugs” by unlicensed providers in Bellevue.

“Clearly, more protections are needed to keep Nebraska women safe from dangerous abortion practices,” Nunnally said.

Timothy Tesmer, chief medical officer for DHHS, also testified in support of the measure. Approximately 80% of abortions performed in Nebraska are medication induced, he said, but it is difficult to know the exact complication rate due to a lack of follow-up and reporting requirements.

Abigail Delaney, a physician spe-

cializing in reproductive endocrinology and infertility, testified in opposition to the proposal.

She said the same medications used to provide chemical abortions often are used in miscarriage and ectopic pregnancy management. These medications are safe and well-known treatments for early pregnancy loss, Delaney said, and forcing patients to return to the facility where their pregnancy loss occurred could be especially traumatic.

“While attempting to further regulate abortion, [the bill] will also de facto regulate miscarriage management,” she said. “There are multiple things that are interconnected about women’s health, and by legislating one, you are affecting [all].”

OB-GYN and reproductive endocrinologist, Elizabeth Constance, also testified in opposition on behalf of the Nebraska Medical Association, noting the challenges associated with legislating the practice of medicine.

Medical research is constantly expanding, she said, and physicians who provide chemical abortions in the state need the flexibility to follow evolving guidelines based on the most up-to-date and accurate scientific evidence.

Bailey Joy Aanenson of the League of Women Voters also opposed the measure. She expressed concern about the impact it could have on Nebraskans like her who are considering starting families.

The state already has a shortage of maternal care providers, Aanenson said, and LB512 could put providers at risk of losing their license for things that are out of their control, such as a patient not returning for a scheduled follow-up visit.

“The reality is, if you have [fewer] maternal care doctors in your state,

you are just going to have more maternal deaths,” she said.

Emily Patel, an OB-GYN and maternal fetal medicine specialist, also testified in opposition, calling the proposal a “thinly veiled attempt” to make abortion care more difficult to access and provide “under the guise” of enhanced safety.

If safety were the priority, she said, regulation of abortion-inducing medication would be consistent across all its uses, including labor induction, postpartum hemorrhage and gastric ulcers.

“LB512 will not improve patient safety or health outcomes,” Patel said. “It is about controlling women’s reproductive choices.”

The committee took no immediate action on the bill. ■

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# MEET THE SENATOR

## Storer journeys from Cherry County to the Capitol

She may be settling into her Capitol office in Lincoln, but there is no mistaking where Sen. Tanya Storer's heart lies. One office wall holds a portrait of her competing in cutting — one of three events she qualified in for National High School Finals Rodeo during her teen years.

It was commissioned for the freshman senator by her grandmother as a high school graduation gift. Another portrait of Storer's grandfather, also by Callaway artist Mariel Klingbeil, is waiting to be hung.

"I grew up on the back of a horse and only left Cherry County long enough to come to Lincoln and get a college degree," Storer laughed.

After finishing high school in Valentine, Storer said she was "bound and determined" to leave Nebraska behind and head to California, but her parents convinced her to stay in the state for one year. She reluctantly agreed, and within a few months met her future husband, Eric, at the Arthur County Fair.

That was the end of the West Coast plan.

The couple married in 1989 and a year later moved to the ranch where Storer's mother grew up, which had been leased out for more than 30 years. Her three children attended a one-room elementary schoolhouse, just as Storer had until 5th grade.

It was the decision by lawmakers back in 2005 to consolidate those class one schools that would eventually spur Storer to seek her own seat at the Capitol.

"My fire was lit when the Legislature made that decision

and I'm still passionate about the issue," Storer said. "We can talk about rural economic development until the cows come home, but if we don't have access to education and other basic infrastructure, it's fruitless."

After 11 years on her local school board, Storer served eight years as a Cherry County Commissioner. With her children grown and an open seat in District 43, she decided it was time to take her experience and perspective to the state level.

When asked about navigating the 300-plus-mile distance between Lincoln and her home during the legislative session, Storer said the schedule won't be much different than when her kids were in high school.

Like many rural families, she and her husband spent weekdays apart for eight years — she was at a second home they'd bought in Mullen so their kids wouldn't have to commute two hours a day between school and home, while Eric managed the ranch. The family

joined him there on the weekends.

It was manageable, she said, but it's hard to be apart for long stretches of time.

"My husband and I have set the goal that we won't go more than a week without me going home or him coming to Lincoln," Storer said. "It's a sacrifice, but one that people have been willing to make since the Legislature has existed."

To make the sacrifice worth it, Storer said she hopes to do what she's always done — be a voice for the unique way of life that rural Nebraskans hold dear. ■



Sen. Tanya Storer and Gator at the senator's Cherry County ranch.



**BANKING, COMMERCE  
& INSURANCE****Class action data breach bill  
clears first-round**

Lawmakers advanced a bill from general file Feb. 12 that would prevent a private entity from being liable in a class action resulting from a cybersecurity event in certain circumstances.

Under LB241, introduced by Syracuse Sen. Bob Hallstrom, private entities that experience a data breach would not be liable in a class action unless the cybersecurity event was caused by the entity's "willful, wanton or gross negligence."



Sen. Bob Hallstrom

The bill defines a cybersecurity event as one that leads to unauthorized access to, disruption or misuse of nonpublic information, such as Social Security or driver's license numbers or financial account information, security codes or passwords.

Qualifying private entities under the bill would include corporations, religious or charitable organizations, associations, businesses and nonprofits.

Hallstrom said the bill is meant to address a recent "surge" in class action lawsuits related to data breaches. Such suits have the potential to clog up the courts, he said, and often focus on potential losses, such as identity theft, rather than any actual monetary loss.

The results, he said, are higher cybersecurity premiums for businesses with little or no payout to those whose data is compromised. Despite a company's best efforts, Hallstrom said, data breaches happen and companies should not have to face class action

lawsuits if they are accused only of negligence and not "willful" negligence.

"Even with the existence of reasonable precautions — patches, updates [and] things that are taken care of by businesses on a regular and routine basis — they still face hackers and ransomwares," Hallstrom said. "The bad actors are always a step ahead of them."

Elmwood Sen. Robert Clements supported the bill. The bank he heads has a "military-grade" firewall, he said, but still has difficulty obtaining cyber security insurance.

"Even though we're really trying hard, if we did have a breach, I think we could probably face a lawsuit in the millions of dollars and it could shut down my business," Clements said.

Sen. Megan Hunt of Omaha opposed the bill. She said state and local level consumer protections are more important than ever now that the Trump administration has begun "dismantling" such protections at the national level.

Expressing concern that LB241 would limit access to legal redress, Lincoln Sen. George Dungan also opposed the measure. He said the difference between regular negligence and willful negligence is "huge" in a legal context and that the latter would be very difficult to prove against an entity involved in a data breach.

Also speaking against the proposal was Lincoln Sen. Danielle Conrad, who called it a "sweetheart deal" for a wide range of entities that would "favor big business over hardworking Nebraskans."

Conrad also questioned the premise that reducing class action lawsuits, which can bundle hundreds or thousands of complaints into one case, would free up the state's courts to tackle other issues, or that the bill would have a positive impact on cybersecurity premiums for businesses.

"LB241 provides a license to corporations large and small to act unreasonably — to act negligently — and to thus evade accountability through class action in state court," Conrad said.

After rejecting a Conrad amendment on a 14-30 vote, lawmakers advance LB241 to the second round of debate 33-9.

**HMO assessment program  
advanced**

Lawmakers gave first-round approval Feb. 11 to a bill intended to increase Medicaid provider reimbursement rates without the use of general fund dollars.

Modeled on a proposal approved by lawmakers last year to levy an assessment on all Nebraska hospitals, LB527, introduced by North Platte Sen. Mike Jacobson, would use a similar mechanism to levy an assessment on the state's health maintenance organizations.



Sen. Mike Jacobson

Under the bill, the state Department of Health and Human Services would be required to submit a state plan amendment to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services by Aug. 1, 2025.

If approved, the state plan amendment would authorize collection of a 6% tax on all non-Medicare premiums written in Nebraska under an HMO certificate of authority, to be collected by the state Department of Insurance.

Revenue generated by the tax would be remitted to a newly created Medicaid Access and Quality Fund. DHHS would use the fund to leverage federal matching dollars to enhance Medicaid reimbursement rates paid to nonhospital providers of physical

health services, with an emphasis on evaluation and management, labor and delivery and rural health services.

The fund also would be used to pay a monthly per-member fee of at least \$75 to qualified primary care providers who meet criteria to serve as a primary care medical home for target populations. Any remaining funds would be used within the state’s Medicaid and CHIP programs.

Jacobson said the bill, when combined with federal matching funds, would generate approximately \$115 million to enhance rates for providers. Those enhanced rates would help increase access to health care services, he said, noting that more than half of Nebraska counties currently are defined as maternity care deserts.

“This bill is incredibly important to the future of health care in our state, especially in rural areas and especially for pregnant women and Nebraska children,” Jacobson said.

Following adoption of a technical amendment from the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee, senators voted 39-0 to advance LB527 from general file.

### Cryptocurrency kiosk regulation advanced

A measure that would make operators of controllable electronic records, such as cryptocurrency, subject to regulation under the Nebraska Money Transmitters Act advanced from the first round of debate Feb. 11.

Lincoln Sen. Eliot Bostar, sponsor of LB609, said the use of gift cards and cryptocurrency kiosks has become a major avenue for fraud in recent years. Scammers convince vic-



Sen. Eliot Bostar

tims to purchase gift cards or deposit money into kiosks, he said, which is then transferred to a digital wallet that is impossible to trace.

Among other provisions, LB609 would require kiosk operators to be licensed and submit quarterly reports to the Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance. Operators also would be required to:

- provide risk, fee and exchange rate disclosures;
- create and implement anti-fraud measures;
- offer refunds for fraudulent transactions;
- provide consumer warning; and
- abide by transaction limits.

Scammers stole more than \$228 million from unsuspecting consumers in 2022 using these methods, Bostar said, and most victims never recover their funds.

“These measures aim to give consumers enough information to recognize and avoid scams before they become a victim and to help law enforcement investigate these crimes promptly,” he said.

A Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee amendment, adopted 37-0, would increase the daily limit on kiosk transactions from \$5,000 to \$10,500 in certain situations. It also would require the Consumer Protection Division of the Office of the Attorney General to develop and release model notice language.

Among other changes, the amendment also would add controllable electronic records as a type of property that may be seized in criminal investigations.

North Platte Sen. Mike Jacobson, committee chairperson, supported the amendment and the bill. Electronic records kiosks are effectively unregulated, he said, unlike banks and other financial institutions that currently

must report transactions of \$10,000 or more, for example.

Such regulations can help curb financial fraud, Jacobson said.

“This is a big improvement from what we have today,” he said. “It’s kind of the wild west right now and this is going to bring some structure to it.”

Senators voted 40-0 to advance LB609 to select file.

## BUSINESS & LABOR

### Youth employment pilot program considered

The Business and Labor Committee heard testimony on a bill Feb. 10 that seeks to provide employment opportunities for historically underserved youth in Nebraska.

LB45, introduced by Omaha Sen. Terrell McKinney, would create a grant program to provide job training, employment and mentorship opportunities to individuals under 18 who have experienced homelessness, live in low-income communities or been involved in the foster care or juvenile justice systems.



Sen. Terrell McKinney

The state Department of Labor would be responsible for implementing the bill as a five-year pilot program in a metropolitan class city, a primary class city and two rural communities before expanding it statewide. Omaha currently is the state’s only metropolitan class city and Lincoln is the only primary class city.

The bill states legislative intent to appropriate \$20 million annually from

the Nebraska Training and Support Cash Fund to carry out the program. Grants would be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis to community organizations that commit to providing paid opportunities to historically underserved youth.

The department also would be required to compile a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot program, including successes, obstacles and recommendations before expanding the program.

Tim Clark, chairperson of the Nebraska African American Affairs Commission, spoke in support of the bill. Many businesses across the state struggle to fill critical positions, Clark said, while underserved youth experience significant barriers to employment and career growth. The proposal would directly address both those challenges by providing industry-recognized training opportunities, he said.

“LB45 fosters a direct connection between youth and employers – ensuring long-term career growth, not just short-term employment,” Clark said.

Nadia Spurlock also testified in support of the proposal, sharing the impact a similar youth employment program, Step-Up Omaha, had on her career development. Spurlock said she learned important job skills through that program and connected with local businesses in her area of interest, eventually leading to employment when she graduated.

“The same impact can be expanded across the state of Nebraska with additional support and collaboration,” Spurlock said.

No one testified in opposition to LB45 and the committee took no immediate action.

## Bill would extend unemployment, other benefits to DACA recipients

Members of the Business and Labor Committee considered a bill Feb. 10 that seeks to provide public benefits to work-authorized immigrants in Nebraska.

LB299, introduced by Sumner Sen. Teresa Ibach, would grant access to public employment and retirement benefits – including unemployment insurance benefits, deferred compensation and educational financial aid – to all work-eligible Nebraskans regardless of immigration status. The bill also would extend eligible benefits to a qualified employee’s family members and dependents.



Sen. Teresa Ibach

Ibach said Nebraska is the only state in which work-authorized immigrants, such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Temporary Protected Status recipients, cannot access the unemployment benefits they have earned and that their employers have paid for.

The individuals the bills seek to benefit are not criminals or undocumented immigrants, Ibach said, they are “good people” who work hard, pay taxes and contribute to society.

“We, as a state, financially benefit from them being here,” she said. “I fully believe the least we can do is treat them equally.”

Speaking in support of the bill on behalf of the Nebraska Alliance for Thriving Communities, Matt Williams said the biggest challenge Nebraska businesses face is workforce. It’s a problem throughout the state, he said, and one that LB299 could help resolve.

“Over the last decade, 100% of our state’s population increase has come

from immigration,” Williams said. “Positive immigration solutions will create strong Nebraska communities, families and workforce all across our state.”

Several DACA recipients also testified in support of the proposal, including Zayra Navarrete. She said work authorization has allowed her to contribute to a pension and life insurance, but without unemployment benefits she would be forced to take out a loan or sell her assets if faced with an unexpected job loss.

“The contribution of DACA recipients in many work fields is substantial, but the care and respect [we receive] is minimal,” Navarrete said.

Tom Venzor of the Nebraska Catholic Conference also testified in support of the proposal. He said the current prohibition on unemployment benefits for work-authorized immigrants is an injustice for Nebraskans who have worked hard to support their families, contribute to local communities and grow the state economy.

“We have an opportunity through LB299 to adjust our state’s public policy and provide work-authorized migrants the same benefits their co-workers receive,” Venzor said. “This legislation makes not only economic sense ... but it also makes moral sense as the just thing to do.”

Speaking on behalf of the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Greater Omaha Chamber and Lincoln Chamber of Commerce, Hunter Traynor also testified in favor, calling the proposal a “no nonsense” way to ensure a strong labor force.

Opposing the bill was interim Commissioner of Labor Katie Thurber. LB299 essentially creates a new definition of “eligible alien,” she said, which is broad enough to potentially provide benefits even if an immigrant lost their work authorization.

Thurber said the department has

been advised by the federal government that the bill could jeopardize federal funds if the language causes the state to be out of conformity with federal regulations. The result could be the loss of nearly \$400 million in federal unemployment tax credits, she said.

Thurber also noted that maintaining conformity becomes “particularly concerning” given current uncertainties surrounding the future of the DACA program.

The committee took no immediate action on LB299.

## EDUCATION

### Professional leave for special ed staff considered

A proposal that would grant special education staff additional paid time to complete administrative tasks was discussed Feb. 11 by the Education Committee.

LB589, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Danielle Conrad, would require school districts to provide four days of onsite professional leave each year for special education staff to complete administrative tasks related to managing and supporting students with special needs. Costs associated with substitute teachers to cover for special education staff on professional leave would be reimbursable by the state under the bill.



Sen. Danielle Conrad

Conrad said the volume of required administrative tasks and paperwork special education teachers must complete, coupled with their classroom responsibilities, is spread-

ing teachers thin and forcing them to complete tasks outside their workday.

Providing special education teachers with additional paid time to complete their work could help reduce burnout, she said, while also supporting efforts to recruit and retain more teachers.

“In addition to money, [we have] another solution on the table to try and figure out how we can provide support to special education teachers so that we can really retain what we have and provide more recruitment incentives to get people to stay on the frontlines of education,” Conrad said.

Megan Andrews, a secondary special education teacher, testified in support of the bill.

Special education case management has expanded over the past 25 years, Andrews said, including extensive documentation requirements. These administrative duties create time management challenges for teachers who still have classroom instruction and lesson planning responsibilities, she said.

Melissa Burke, a special education teacher at Hastings Public Schools, also testified in support of the bill, saying she regularly works into the evenings to complete paperwork. Spending the school day focusing on students’ educational and emotional needs is more important than completing administrative tasks, she said.

“If that means I work late every day or work on the weekends, then I will do that,” Burke said. “However, I would be grateful if you would support and pass LB589 to help compensate me and other special education teachers for at least some of the time we spend outside of contracted hours completing compliance paperwork.”

Speaking on behalf of the Nebraska State Education Association, Nicole Lopez-Bettendorf also testified in favor of LB589, saying it would lead to

a “collective sigh of relief” for special educators across Nebraska if passed.

Jeff Schneider, superintendent of Hastings Public Schools, opposed the measure and cautioned lawmakers against adopting a “blanket approach” to the problem. Providing professional leave to teachers may not work as well in some districts as others, Schneider said, and alternatives like compensatory time also should be considered.

The committee took no immediate action on LB589.

## GENERAL AFFAIRS

### Bill would grant state auditor casino revenue oversight

The state auditor of public accounts would be able to scrutinize the books of authorized Nebraska gaming operators under a bill heard by the General Affairs Committee Feb. 10.

Currently, the Nebraska Racing and Gaming Commission’s rules and regulations require an annual independent audit of gaming operators to ensure that the proper amount of state tax revenue is being remitted.

LB280, introduced by Elkhorn Sen. R. Brad von Gillern, would expand and codify those requirements in state law.



Sen. R. Brad von Gillern

Under the bill, each gaming operator would pay for an independent audit of its financial transactions and affairs, which would be filed with the commission and with the auditor of public accounts.

The bill also would allow for review of those audits by the state auditor and



give the auditor authority, at his or her discretion, to examine the books, records, funds and accounts of an authorized gaming operator. The auditor also could order an additional audit.

The expense of the review by the state auditor would be paid from the Nebraska Racing and Gaming Commission’s Racetrack Gaming Fund.

Describing the current process as “basically self-reporting,” von Gillern said the commission lacks the resources and expertise to review gaming operators’ annual audits and the state auditor lacks the authority in state law to audit private entities.

The state’s casino gaming industry produced \$29 million in tax revenue in 2024, von Gillern said, and gross revenues for January of 2025 alone total nearly \$18 million. Of the tax revenue generated by gaming operators, 70% is dedicated to property tax relief, he said.

“LB280 is intended to ensure that the state of Nebraska is receiving the full amount of gaming taxes to which it’s entitled under [state] law,” von Gillern said.

Jeff Schreier of the Nebraska Office of Public Accounts testified in support of the proposal on behalf of the office and State Auditor Mike Foley. History indicates that entities are less likely to engage in improper behavior if they know they are subject to the office’s scrutiny, he said.

“LB280 could best be summarized in the words of President Ronald Reagan: ‘trust but verify,’” Schreier said.

Nate Grasz, executive director of the Nebraska Family Alliance, also testified in support of the proposal. The group opposes gaming, he said, but supports greater oversight of casinos because of the “serious social and economic consequences” they have on the state.

“When voters approved casino gambling at our licensed race tracks in 2020, they did so with the promise

of property tax relief,” Grasz said. “By requiring annual independent audits to be filed with our auditor of public accounts, we can ensure greater levels of oversight and accountability and transparency of the gambling industry in our state.”

Speaking in opposition was Lynne McNally, representing WarHorse Casino. Current regulations go far beyond self-reporting, she said, and the commission already has access to all gaming data at authorized casinos.

“This would result in a triple audit,” McNally said. “We already pay for two audits – we pay for the [commission] to do an audit; we pay for our own audit.”

Korby Gilbertson, representing the Nebraska Society of Certified Public Accountants, also opposed LB280. She said the bill implies that there are CPAs who are “acting in a nefarious manner” or aren’t performing audits appropriately.

CPAs are rigorously trained and adhere to high ethical standards, she said.

“These standards are designed to ensure that auditors maintain independence, objectivity and commitment to the public interest, regardless of whether they’re in public practice or are employees of an agency such as the state auditor’s office,” Gilbertson said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB280.

testimony Feb. 13 on a proposal to modify or eliminate more than three dozen state-established entities.

LB346, introduced by La Vista Sen. John Arch at the request of Gov. Jim Pillen, proposes modification or elimination of 46 boards, commissions, committees and councils.



Sen. John Arch

Arch said such entities, which are created by Legislative action, often arise in reaction to a specific event or crisis and are not revisited to see if they remain relevant. There currently are more than 225 such entities statewide, he said, and LB346 is part of an effort by the governor’s office to create efficiencies in state government.

“Periodic review of these government-created boards, commissions, committees and councils is imperative to ensure that they aren’t performing tasks that can be efficiently absorbed by another entity, aren’t carrying out duplicative functions or are no longer serving a purpose as originally intended,” Arch said.

Kenny Zoeller, director of the Governor’s Policy Research Office, testified in support of the measure. The governor is directly responsible for appointing members to more than 1,300 board and commission positions, he said, and it often is difficult to find individuals who meet the specific appointment criteria.

LB346 would eliminate 400 of those appointments, Zoeller said, resulting in more streamlined and efficient government. He said the governor’s office sees the measure as a starting point and is willing to reconsider any entity’s continued inclusion in it.

“We understood that this legislation would not be perfect and would require input from all stakeholders,”



**Modification, elimination of state boards and commissions proposed**

The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard

Zoeller said. “Since the introduction of this bill, we have worked to be open with anyone and everyone who has contacted our office. There is no intent to cut people off at the knees.”

Opponents to the measure included Bob Ripley, former Nebraska State Capitol Administrator, who testified against a proposed change to the qualifications for that position included in LB346.

Currently, the Capitol administrator is required to hold a bachelor’s degree or higher degree in architecture from an accredited college or university and have at least five years of administrative experience in historic preservation and planning, design and completion of major construction projects.

LB346 would lower the requirement to either an architectural degree or five years of historic preservation experience.

“The difference of this one word is enormous,” Ripley said, adding that his 40-year career as head of the Capitol Commission involved more than \$225 million of work on the Capitol.

He said that work required applying his architectural degree and licensure experience, knowledge of building materials and construction techniques, architectural history, knowledge of city planning and contract administration.

“I ask [you] to uphold a high standard for the long-term care of our landmark Capitol by not changing the existing statute and keeping a licensed architect overseeing the future of the most valuable building in this region of the country,” Ripley said.

Sage Leis of the Nebraska Children’s Commission also opposed the measure.

The 22-member commission was created in 2012 after an investigation by the Legislature discovered gaps in service delivery in the state’s child

welfare system, she said, and LB346 would eliminate two subcommittees that are necessary to the commission’s duties and mission.

Leis said members of the Foster Care Reimbursement Rate Committee and the Bridge to Independence Advisory Committee are subject matter experts who are invaluable to the Nebraska Children’s Commission’s work.

“It would be a shame for us to not be able to provide the level of information and detail that we do to you all if we were to lose [those subcommittees],” Leis said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB346.

### **State regulatory management agency proposed**

Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard testimony Feb. 12 on a measure that would create a new state agency to analyze and review Nebraska’s regulatory requirements.

LB472, sponsored by Amherst Sen. Dan McKeon, would create the Office of Regulatory Management within the executive branch, with a supervisor appointed by the governor. Under the bill, each state agency, board and commission would conduct an internal review of all current regulatory requirements within six months of the measure’s passage.

Following establishment of a baseline catalog of existing regulatory requirements, the entities would complete subsequent reviews every two years or within 60 days of a request from the Office of Regulatory Management.

If feasible, the reports would

contain estimates of monetized and nonmonetized costs and benefits of all regulations, any change in number and estimated impact of the agency’s regulatory requirements and a cost estimate per citizen.

The Office of Regulatory Management also would be required to analyze any new regulatory requirement enacted by an agency to ensure best practices.

McKeon said a similar office in Virginia served as a blueprint for LB472, which he said would decrease unnecessary regulations and simplify those that remain.

“The bottom line is that we want to reduce barriers for businesses and individuals to succeed [and] to make the government accountable to its citizens,” he said.

Laura Ebke of the Platte Institute testified in favor of the proposal. She said a centralized office could act as a “hub” for the executive branch in its efforts to streamline state government and be a source of important information for the Legislature.

Ebke said Virginia’s experience has shown that any upfront costs to establish such an office “pay for themselves pretty quickly” and encourage economic growth.

Jaime Hegr, agency compliance and privacy officer at the state Department of Health and Human Services, provided neutral testimony. She said DHHS would have difficulty complying with the bill’s initial assessment timeline due to the complex and overlapping state and federal regulatory requirements involved in the agency’s work.

No one testified against LB472 and the committee took no immediate action on the proposal.



Sen. Dan McKeon

## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

### Postpartum home visitation program narrowed, advanced

A proposal intended to connect postpartum mothers and infants enrolled in Medicaid with in-home support services was amended and advanced from general file Feb. 10.

LB22, as introduced by Lincoln Sen. George Dungan, would implement targeted case management for evidence-based nurse home visiting services for postpartum mothers and infants younger than 3 who are enrolled in Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program.



Sen. George Dungan

A Health and Human Services Committee amendment, adopted 43-0, would limit the service to postpartum mothers and infants younger than 6 months who are enrolled in Medicaid. Dungan said narrowing the proposal would better align it with the models it’s based on and would result in a higher federal reimbursement rate.

Under the bill, the state Department of Health and Human Services would be required to submit a state plan amendment to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services by Oct. 1, 2025, to allow nurse home visiting programs to bill Medicaid directly for services provided.

The bill also states legislative intent to use the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund for any remaining costs not covered by federal funds.

Dungan said the proposal is modeled after a program operating in

Lincoln and Omaha called Family Connects and seeks to expand those services statewide. Implementation of the Family Connects model in other states has led to fewer follow-up visits and resulted in a 400% return on investment, he said.

“[LB22 would] continue to ensure that we’ll have healthy moms and healthy babies while still being financially responsible,” Dungan said.

Lincoln Sen. Carolyn Bosn spoke in support of the bill and committee amendment, emphasizing the value of supporting mothers and newborns during the first weeks of postpartum. The program’s benefits go beyond the financial, she said, and help to set families up for long-term success.

“Having someone who is willing to come to your home [and] provide that support ... really does make a difference for those families and the success of the children,” Bosn said. “I think there’s real value in that.”

Sen. Ashlei Spivey of Omaha also spoke in support of LB22 and the committee amendment. She said the postpartum support she received helped her be a present, supportive and healthy parent.

Nebraska should prioritize programs that provide a safety net to help other new parents be successful, Spivey said.

Senators advanced LB22 to select file on a 43-0 vote.

### Bill would expand youth transitional services

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Feb. 12 on a bill that seeks to expand transitional services to young adults regardless of immigration status who are involved in the state’s foster care and juvenile justice systems.

The Bridge to Independence pro-

gram provides a monthly stipend, health care coverage through Medicaid and case management services to wards and certain other system-involved youth from age 19 to 21 as they transition out of state care.

LB181, introduced by Sen. Machaela Cavanaugh of Omaha, would extend eligibility for the existing program to include all otherwise qualified immigrant youth. The bill would apply to



Sen. Machaela Cavanaugh

young adults with an immigration status other than legal, including those with pending asylum applications and Special Immigrant Juvenile or Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status.

The bill also would require the state Department of Health and Human Services to submit a state plan amendment to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services by Oct. 1, 2025, to allow Medicaid coverage for immigrants who are enrolled in the program who are otherwise eligible under the Children’s Health Insurance Program.

Cavanaugh said the existing transitional program has been “enormously successful” in helping system-involved youth obtain postsecondary education, affordable housing and community support.

“Youth aging out of juvenile justice systems often lack adequate support to address the underlying factors leading to delinquency ... or homelessness,” she said. “It is especially crucial to reach these at-risk kids so that we can ensure they have proper support to guide them to productivity.”

Allison Derr of Nebraska Appleseed testified in support of the proposal. The Nebraska Supreme Court

has ruled that public benefits – such as those outlined in LB181 – could be provided to Nebraska immigrants, she said, but doing so would require explicit approval from the Legislature.

“Federal law allows this,” Derr said. “[But] these are choices that Nebraska has to make explicitly ... for it to happen in practice.”

Natasha Naseem, attorney for the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement, also spoke in support of the measure. Individuals impacted by LB181 already are under the jurisdiction of a Nebraska court due to their system involvement, she said, but the vital services and support they receive as a result end abruptly when they turn 19 – Nebraska’s age of majority.

The bill would broaden program eligibility explicitly to include otherwise qualified immigrant youth with the goal of preventing homelessness, criminal justice system involvement and revictimization, Naseem said.

“Our state has a public system in place designed to prevent these negative outcomes, but we’ve been choosing to allow immigrant youth to remain vulnerable to them,” she said.

Also testifying in support of the measure was executive director of the Nebraska Catholic Conference, Tom Venzor.

Young adults who are undocumented through no fault of their own live in vulnerable and “legally precarious” situations, he said, which are exacerbated by system involvement. Expansion of the existing transition program would provide community support to individuals who are navigating the difficulties of early adulthood largely on their own, Venzor said.

“Bridge to Independence provides important continued support to those who have been in our foster care system and have been previously cared for by the state, regardless of their

immigration status,” he said.

DHHS CEO Steve Corsi, testified in opposition to the bill. Corsi indicated that Medicaid would not be available to the bill’s target population and that general funds would be required instead. Public benefits funded by state taxpayer dollars should be used only for the purpose of benefiting Nebraska citizens, he said.

“Nebraska citizens should not be forced to subsidize those not lawfully present in the United States, nor should they be forced to incent the continued unlawful presence of individuals, regardless of age, in our state or nation,” Corsi said.

The committee took no immediate action on LB181.

### **Private school scholarships sought for foster youth, siblings**

The Health and Human Services Committee heard testimony Feb. 12 on a bill that would provide state-funded scholarships for Nebraska foster youth and their siblings to attend private schools.

Under LB481, introduced by Sen. Beau Ballard of Lincoln, the state Department of Health and Human Services would administer the program, which would be funded at \$200,000 annually through the state’s General Fund.

Any youth in the state’s foster care system, as well as their biological siblings, could qualify for a scholarship under the program. Scholarships could be used to pay all or part of the cost to educate a qualified student at a nongovernmental, privately operated elementary or secondary school that complies with certain antidiscrimina-

tion provisions.

A qualified student would remain eligible for a scholarship until they graduate high school or reach age 21, regardless of their foster care status.

Ballard said the bill would be a “prudent investment” in Nebraska’s future and would provide continuity for young people who often experience significant educational setbacks due to changing schools frequently.

“My intent for LB481 is fairly simple, it’s to protect the social and educational development of foster care children and their siblings,” Ballard said. “Many of these children move from family to family, house to house, community to community.”

Foster parent Angela Pillow, who said she currently pays private school tuition for two foster youth in her care, testified in favor of LB481. Herself a foster child in her youth, Pillow said it’s important to minimize disruptions for vulnerable state wards who already have lost so much.

“Unless you’ve been there, I feel like no one really knows what it’s like to be in foster care,” she said.

Also speaking in support was Carla Knipp, guidance counselor at Roncalli Catholic High School in Omaha. Eighty-five percent of Roncalli students receive some form of financial assistance from the school, she said, and the student body is both racially and socioeconomically diverse.

Knipp said being a small school of 300 students allows Roncalli to provide a variety of levels of student support that public schools often lack, and the ability to be in regular conversation with parents.

“We know that LB481 and the scholarships it would provide can make a positive impact on students across the state and students that we serve,” she said.

Daniel Russell of Stand for Schools



Sen. Beau Ballard



testified in opposition to LB481. While the bill is limited to foster youth, he said, voucher programs often start small and expand over time.

Russell also questioned whether DHHS possesses the expertise to administer a scholarship program and what he characterized as the bill's minimal reporting and accountability requirements.

"School voucher programs have not been shown to be effective in increasing academic outcomes for their users," he said. "If we're going to spend money on sending children to private schools, I think it behooves the Legislature to ask the question of whether or not those children are being better academically served."

The committee took no immediate action on the proposal.

## JUDICIARY



### New penalty for assaulting sports officials proposed

A new crime of assaulting a sports official would be created under a measure considered Feb. 12 by the Judiciary Committee.

LB657, introduced by Omaha Sen. Bob Andersen, would establish the Respecting and Ensuring Fairness for Sports Officials Act and create the offense of assault on a sports official. Under the bill as introduced, it would be a Class IV felony to cause bodily harm to a referee, umpire, linesman or other sports official before, during or after an athletic contest they



Sen. Bob Andersen

officiate. A Class IV felony carries a penalty of two years in prison or a \$10,000 fine.

An amendment brought by Andersen to the committee hearing would change the offense from a Class IV to a Class 3IIIA felony, punishable by up to three years in prison plus 9 to 18 months of post-release supervision.

Andersen said offering specific legal protections for sports officials would align Nebraska with 22 other states with similar laws. A 2023 survey of over 1,000 Nebraska sports officials found that 53% had been verbally assaulted by a spectator, he said, and 20% had been verbally threatened by a coach.

Increasing threats of verbal harassment and physical assault against sports officials, both nationally and statewide, are causing some to resign, Andersen said, resulting in a shortage of sports officials.

"If we do not take action now, this shortage will worsen, negatively impacting high school and youth sports programs," he said. "Simply put, without officials, there are no games."

Nate Neuhaus testified in support of the bill on behalf of the Nebraska School Activities Association.

Sports officials play an important role beyond just enforcing the rules, Neuhaus said, often acting as mentors and teaching players the significance of good sportsmanship. However, officials long have been subjected to verbal abuse and threats and increasingly are threatened with physical violence, he said.

"LB657 sends a clear message [that] violence against officials will not be tolerated," Neuhaus said. "By strengthening protections for these individuals, we are taking a monumental step towards ensuring a safer environment."

Michael Ferguson also supported the measure on behalf of the Eastern

Nebraska Officials Association. As an official himself, Ferguson said he had experienced harassment, which at one point made him consider resigning from officiating.

"A law like this to protect officials would help encourage people to stay," Ferguson said. "I would feel a little bit safer stepping out onto the floor or onto the field knowing that if something were to happen, there's a little bit higher-level protection for officials."

Spike Eickholt, representing the Nebraska Criminal Defense Attorneys Association, opposed the proposal. The bill is unnecessary, he said, because assault already is a crime.

Under current law, assaulting an official at a sporting event could be considered third-degree assault, Eickholt said, which is a misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in prison or a \$1,000 fine.

"It's not a slap on the wrist; it's not de minimis," he said. "It's a serious, highest-level misdemeanor crime."

The committee took no immediate action on LB657.

## NATURAL RESOURCES



### Electric infrastructure security measure amended, advanced

A bill aimed at safeguarding electric facilities near sensitive military installations advanced to final reading Feb. 13 after senators modified provisions intended to ensure equipment made by a foreign adversary cannot be installed during maintenance or upgrades.

Under a bill passed last session, electric suppliers must provide written notice to the Nebraska Power Review

Board before beginning construction on or acquiring certain electric generation facilities or transmission lines located within a 10-mile radius of a military installation.

The notice certifies that the infrastructure contains no materials, electronics or other components manufactured by a foreign adversary as determined by federal regulations.

LB43, sponsored by Niobrara Sen. Barry DeKay, would ensure that the requirement applies only to “electronic-related” equipment and components in electric infrastructure located near Offutt Air Force Base and ballistic missile silos in western Nebraska.

Under the bill as introduced, the notice requirement also would have applied if a supplier expands, alters, reconstructs, upgrades, repairs, engages in maintenance on or installs new or replacement equipment or components in the applicable infrastructure.

On select file, DeKay offered an amendment to strike that language, saying the Omaha Public Power District expressed concern that it would have expanded the Power Review Board’s authority.

LB43 as introduced would have allowed an electric supplier, in consultation with its vendors, to submit a one-time written notice to the board certifying that the supplier is continually operating in compliance with the bill’s requirements.

The amendment instead would require electric suppliers to submit the one-time notice. A similar requirement would apply to owners of privately developed renewable energy generation facilities.

“This language makes sure the elec-

tric suppliers near sensitive military installations use vendors that comply with this act whether it be for the initial construction or maintenance project[s],” DeKay said.

After voting 39-0 to adopt the amendment, lawmakers advanced LB43 to final reading by voice vote.

### **Bill would merge natural resources, environmental agencies**

The Natural Resources Committee heard testimony Feb. 13 on a bill that would merge two state agencies tasked with safeguarding, regulating and monitoring Nebraska’s water resources.

LB317, introduced by Plymouth Sen. Tom Brandt at the request of Gov. Jim Pillen, would merge the state Department of Natural Resources into the state Department of Environment and Energy, which would be renamed the Department of Water, Energy and Environment.

The director of the Department of Environment and Energy would become director of the new agency. The Department of Natural Resources director would become the Chief Water Officer and retain authority for administration of the former department’s duties.

The Department of Natural Resources regulates the storage and use of Nebraska’s surface water and authorizes groundwater transfers by industrial and municipal users. It also works with the state’s Natural Resources Districts to manage groundwater use in certain river basins.

The Department of Environment and Energy administers the rules,

regulations and standards intended to protect and improve the state’s water, air and land quality. Among the many programs it oversees are two delegated by the federal EPA that ensure safe drinking water and protect Nebraska’s surface water and groundwater resources.

Brandt said the merger, which would take effect July 1, would integrate the regulatory work of the Department of Environment and Energy with the planning expertise of the Department of Natural Resources. Although the proposal would incur approximately \$100,000 in rebranding costs, he said, the expense would be offset by eliminating redundant administrative functions.

“By consolidating resources, we can address long-term challenges such as nitrogen management and soil health more effectively, benefiting both our ag producers and the sustainability of our natural ecosystems,” Brandt said.

Pillen testified in support of the measure. He said managing the quality and quantity of Nebraska’s water is critical not only for the agriculture industry but for a coming “extraordinary boom” in new industries, including hydrogen and biofuel production, that require large amounts of water.

In addition to the proposed merger, Pillen said, he also will create a task force to examine potential changes to the state’s water policies.

“To move forward, we need to double down on our efforts to protect and enhance this valuable resource,” he said.

Jesse Bradley, interim director of both agencies, also testified in support. He said the merger would improve coordination among state and local water managers and speed planning and permitting.

Testifying in opposition to LB317 was Jasper Fanning on behalf of the



Sen. Barry DeKay



Sen. Tom Brandt

Nebraska Association of Resources Districts. Although the merger would not eliminate Department of Natural Resources personnel, he said, it could distract them from NRD and state priorities, particularly the Perkins County Canal Project and the South Platte River Compact.

“We have a very collaborative, problem solving agency at DNR that works ... to benefit the people of Nebraska,” Fanning said. “I would argue that [NDEE] ... focuses more on federal mandates.”

He said NRDs and other stakeholders would like to have further discussions with the governor about a merger’s details and objectives before moving forward.

LeRoy Sievers of the Nebraska State Irrigation Association also testified in opposition, saying the merger would not result in the expected savings because both agencies’ personnel are “fully engaged.”

Additionally, Sievers said, the new Chief Water Officer would not carry as much weight as the current DNR director in any future negotiations or litigation over the state’s water rights.

“Having an agency devoted to water truly makes a difference,” he said.

Also in opposition was Bruce Rieker of the Nebraska Farm Bureau. He said the organization wants to help advance the governor’s goal of modernizing Nebraska’s water management practices, but it decided to oppose the merger “until we have enough information to make an informed decision.”

“One of our board members just flat out asked me ‘why,’ and I didn’t have the answer,” Rieker said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

## REVENUE

### Cryptocurrency mining tax considered

The Revenue Committee heard testimony Feb. 12 on a bill intended to manage the impact of cryptocurrency mining operations on Nebraska’s electrical grid.

LB526, introduced by North Platte Sen. Mike Jacobson at the request of Gov. Jim Pillen, would impose an excise tax of 2.5 cents per kilowatt-hour on the energy used by facilities to conduct cryptocurrency mining operations in excess of 1,000 kilowatt-hours per year.

Jacobson brought an amendment to the hearing that he said would impose a lower 1-cent per kilowatt-hour rate, among other changes.

LB526 also would allow public power districts to impose terms and conditions on and require direct payment or a letter of credit from cryptocurrency mining operations for the cost of “significant” infrastructure upgrades needed to serve them.

Jacobson said cryptocurrency mining facilities place “considerable” stress on the state’s electrical grid, requiring utilities to build expensive new substations, transmission lines and other infrastructure.

The facilities provide “minimal” economic benefit to the state relative to their power consumption, he added, particularly when compared to other industries that use large amounts of electricity, such as agriculture and manufacturing.

“At the end of the day,” Jacobson



Sen. Mike Jacobson

said, “this is about curbing the growth of miners in the state and putting our electricity to better use.”

The state Department of Revenue estimates that the bill as introduced would increase state general fund revenue by \$9 million in fiscal year 2025-26, \$13.9 million in FY2026-27 and \$14.4 million in FY2027-28.

Kenny Zoeller, director of the Governor’s Policy Research Office, testified in support. He said some businesses seeking to locate or expand in Nebraska cannot do so in the near term because demand for electricity is greater than the state’s generation and transmission capacity.

At the same time, Zoeller said, “large numbers” of cryptocurrency mining operations and data centers – which also benefit from state tax incentives – have located in Nebraska due to the state’s low-cost electricity without adding many permanent jobs.

“The goal of LB526 is to ensure that loads that have come onto our system are not taking advantage of our responsibly run system for little to no gain to the state,” he said.

Testifying in opposition to the bill was Matthew Carson of AAIM Data Centers, which operates a cryptocurrency mining facility in Aurora. He said AAIM employs four full-time workers and plans to hire more this year. The company has invested more than \$3 million in its Nebraska operations, Carson said, and it helped pay for upgrades to local electric infrastructure.

He said the proposed excise tax would force AAIM to leave Nebraska.

“All I have asked for is to be treated the same as any other business in the state,” Carson said. “[LB526] would see the state of Nebraska discriminate [against] my business simply because of how it operates.”

Jim Crawford of MARA, which owns a bitcoin mining operation in

Kearney, also testified in opposition, saying the company likely would not invest further in Nebraska if the measure passes.

He said cryptocurrency mining companies often have interruptible service agreements that allow utilities to curtail the facilities' energy use at times of peak demand.

"By helping balance the grid," Crawford said, "miners provide a valuable service that should be encouraged, not penalized."

Also in opposition was Shelley Sahling-Zart of Lincoln Electric System. As introduced, she said, the bill could require LES to collect the excise tax even though it cannot identify which customers are mining cryptocurrency.

Sahling-Zart said public power utilities plan years in advance to ensure that they build enough electric generation to meet customers' needs. Although adding capacity for new projects with large energy demands might be challenging, she said, it is manageable.

"We are not running out of power in the state of Nebraska," Sahling-Zart said. "And from an economic development standpoint, it's a really bad message to send."

Ron Tillery testified in opposition to LB526 on behalf of the Nebraska Economic Developers Association and the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He said businesses that employ a small number of high-wage workers are "just as valuable as those companies that employ dozens or hundreds" and that technology companies are the future of Nebraska's economy.

"Data centers and even crypto mining are being integrated into other economic sectors," Tillery said, "and if we discourage growth in any of those sectors, then we're going to affect the growth of other businesses as well."

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

## TRANSPORTATION & TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### Proposal to deregulate landline telephone service considered

Certain telecommunications companies could seek relief from landline telephone service regulations under a bill heard Feb. 11 by the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee.

Under LB4, sponsored by Lincoln Sen. Carolyn Bosn, companies that offer local exchange telecommunications services could petition the Nebraska Public Service Commission to deregulate one of the carrier's exchanges.



Sen. Carolyn Bosn

If the commission determines that the exchange should be deregulated, a carrier would not be required to fulfill the obligations of a carrier of last resort, which must provide voice communication service upon request to all residential and single-line business customers within a defined area.

Additionally, a deregulated carrier would not be required to file an earnings report with the commission or comply with restrictions on rates or certain standards or reporting requirements related to quality of service.

Bosn said Nebraska's landline service regulations do not reflect the current telecommunications market, particularly in urban areas with multiple service providers. LB4 would allow an incumbent carrier of last resort to exit the landline market if other providers are present, she said, freeing up resources currently used to maintain copper telephone lines.

In exchange for deregulation, Bosn said, carriers no longer would receive support from the Nebraska Universal Service Fund, which provides funding to telecommunications companies to maintain and upgrade their networks.

"This ensures that market-driven forces primarily determine service quality and availability," she said.

After a petition is filed, the commission would have 90 days to determine whether an exchange should be deregulated. LB4 would require the commission to deregulate an exchange if:

- the population in the area included in the exchange is at least 100,000; or
- the population is less than 100,000 and – in addition to the electing local exchange carrier – there are at least two other carriers providing landline service in all of the exchange.

The commission also could determine that an exchange should be deregulated if at least two other carriers are providing landline service in at least 75% of the square miles in the exchange.

Trent Fellers of Windstream testified in support of the bill. As the carrier of last resort in Lincoln, Fellers said, Windstream is required to maintain its outdated copper-based network there even though two other companies provide similar service.

"Eliminating laws that require companies to uphold outdated and unnecessary technologies will boost investment in future broadband networks that consumers and our economy demand," he said.

Also in support was Peter Gose of Lumen Technologies, Omaha's carrier of last resort. He said only 5% of Nebraskans still receive telephone service via copper telephone lines.

"It's just a service customers don't



want anymore,” Gose said, “and forcing the company to maintain that archaic copper network when customers desire more advanced services is a burden and drain on company resources.”

Testifying in opposition to the bill was PSC chairperson Tim Schram. Although LB4 would allow the commission to continue to hear customer complaints against deregulated carriers, he said, the PSC could not require those carriers to refund a customer or restore service.

Schram said LB4 also would supersede a current process under which the PSC can transfer carrier of last resort obligations between companies if it determines that consumers will not be harmed.

“Transitioning [carrier of last resort] responsibilities should be done in a manner to ensure every consumer has access to reliable service and that carriers are accountable to the public they serve,” he said.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

## URBAN AFFAIRS

### Street improvement district changes considered

The Urban Affairs Committee heard testimony Feb. 11 on a bill that would eliminate a disparity in how Nebraska cities pay for street improvements.

Currently, first class cities, which have a population of 5,001 to 100,000, may create improvement districts for the purpose of paving, repaving or making certain other improvements to streets and alleys.

Kearney Sen. Stan Clouse, sponsor of LB90, said those cities currently are required to levy a special assessment on adjacent property to fund improvements in the district. Under his proposal, a city could levy a special assessment or fund the improvements

at public cost.

LB90 would require the mayor and city council to create an improvement district by ordinance. Additionally, it would expand current law by allowing first class cities also to construct streets and alleys – as well as sidewalks, public ways and other public spaces – in the districts.

First class cities still would be required to provide notice when they create an improvement district, Clouse said, and affected property owners would retain the right to object.

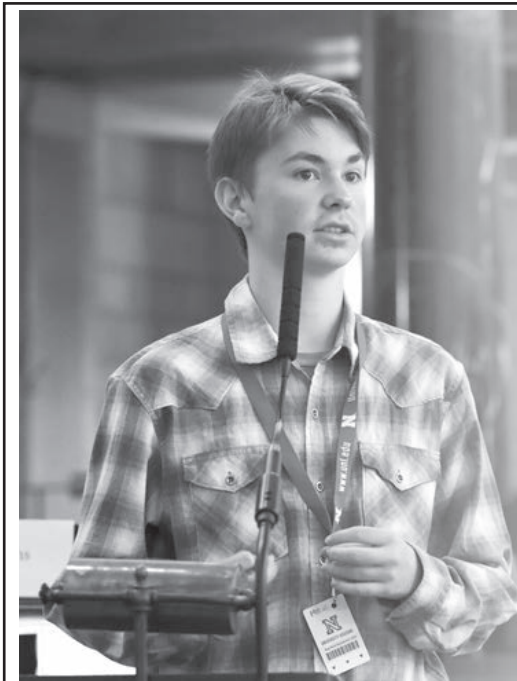
Mike Rogers, an Omaha bond attorney, testified in support of the bill. He said second class cities and villages – which have populations of 801 to 5,000 and 100 to 800, respectively – that create improvement districts may use general funds to pay for improvements rather than levy a special assessment.

LB90 would eliminate the current disparity and grant the same flexibility to larger cities, Rogers said.

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



Sen. Stan Clouse



## Unicameral Youth Legislature Registration Now Open

Learn what it's like to serve as a Nebraska state senator during the 2025 Unicameral Youth Legislature, June 8-13. In this legislative simulation, high school students from around the state have the opportunity to take on the role of lawmakers.

Student senators sponsor bills, conduct committee hearings, debate legislation and discover the unique process of the nation's only unicameral by learning directly from current state senators and staff.

The program is conducted by the Clerk of the Nebraska Legislature, through the Unicameral Information Office, in coordination with Big Red Summer Camps.

For information on registration and scholarships, visit the Unicameral Youth Legislature page: [NebraskaLegislature.gov/uyl](http://NebraskaLegislature.gov/uyl). Note that all scholarships are awarded prior to registration. ■

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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

## **Tuesday, Feb. 18**

### **Agriculture**

#### **Room 1023 - 1:30 p.m.**

- LB246 (DeKay) Prohibit cultivated-protein food products under the Nebraska Pure Food Act and provide a deceptive trade practice
- LB658 (Andersen) Provide labeling and advertising requirements for manufactured-protein food products

### **Appropriations**

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

*NOTE: Budget Bills scheduled at this time for official record purposes.*

*Testimony on the overall budget is appropriate; however, testimony on specific issues and/or agencies should be presented at the date scheduled for the relevant agency.*

- LB260 (Speaker Arch) Provide, change, and eliminate provisions relating to appropriations
- LB261 (Speaker Arch) Appropriate funds for the expenses of Nebraska State Government for the biennium ending June 30, 2027, and appropriate Federal Funds allocated to the State of Nebraska pursuant to the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021
- LB262 (Speaker Arch) Appropriate funds for salaries of members of the Legislature
- LB263 (Speaker Arch) Appropriate funds for salaries of constitutional officers
- LB264 (Speaker Arch) Provide, change, and eliminate transfers from the Cash Reserve Fund and various other funds and change, terminate, and eliminate various statutory programs

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

#### **Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.**

- LB474 (Banking, Commerce & Insurance) Change and eliminate provisions relating to installment sales and installment loans, rename the Nebraska Installment Sales Act, and transfer provisions of and eliminate the Nebraska Installment Loan Act
- LB473 (Banking, Commerce & Insurance) Change provisions of the Nebraska Money Transmitters Act
- LB201 (Kauth) Provide for a fee under

- Nebraska Money Transmitters Act
- LB591 (Ballard) Change provisions relating to when licenses are required and provide powers to certain licensees relating to affiliates under the Nebraska Installment Loan Act

### **Education**

#### **Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.**

- LB417 (Bostar) Provide for administration of the Nebraska Promise Program by the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska, adopt the College Promise Act, and change provisions relating to the Quality Education Accountability Act
- LB517 (Juarez) Provide requirements for the state school security director regarding protective door assemblies and other school entry systems
- LB631 (Hansen) State intent relating to funding for the School Emergency Response Mapping Fund
- LB685 (Lonowski) Require schools to install a secure master key box as prescribed, provide powers and duties to the state school security director, change provisions relating to a grant program for security-related infrastructure projects and the School Safety and Security Fund, and provide for a transfer from the Cash Reserve Fund
- LB429 (Murman) Provide requirements and restrictions for school boards relating to professional employees' organizations

### **Executive Board**

#### **Room 2102 - 12:00 p.m.**

- LB298 (Arch) Provide for the Division of Legislative Oversight, the Director of Legislative Oversight, and the Legislative Oversight Committee and change provisions relating to the Public Counsel, the office of Inspector General of Nebraska Child Welfare, and the office of Inspector General of the Nebraska Correctional System
- LB579 (M. Cavanaugh) Prohibit charging a fee for public records requests by members of the Legislature

### **Transportation & Telecommunications**

#### **Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.**

- Appointments:* Brandon Jones, Jeffrey D. Grady, Trevor Roth, James Saville, Aaron Krebs - Underground Excavation Safety Committee
- LB667 (Storer) Change provisions of the Motor Vehicle Industry Regulation Act
- LB561 (Brandt) Change maximum weight limits for vehicles carrying raw milk

### **Urban Affairs**

#### **Room 2102 - 2:15 p.m.**

- LB447 (J. Cavanaugh) Provide certain requirements for redevelopment contracts under the Community Development Law
- LB520 (Juarez) Provide requirements for bed and breakfast establishments regarding food, beverages, and fire safety
- LB531 (Kauth) Provide an exception to the requirement that buildings constructed with state funds comply with the 2018 International Energy Conservation Code
- LB611 (Urban Affairs) Adopt updates to building and energy codes

## **Wednesday, Feb. 19**

### **Appropriations**

#### **Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.**

- Agency 40: Motor Vehicle Licensing Board
- Agency 63: Board of Public Accountancy
- Agency 41: State Real Estate Commission
- Agency 53: Real Property Appraiser Board
- Agency 58: Board of Engineers and Architects
- Agency 59: Board of Geologists
- Agency 66: Abstracters Board of Examiners
- Agency 73: State Board of Landscape Architects

### **Government, Military & Veterans Affairs**

#### **Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.**

- LB644 (Bostar) Adopt the Foreign Adversary and Terrorist Agent Registration Act and the Crush Transnational Repression in Nebraska Act, provide requirements under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act for conduct relating to certain foreign entities, change provisions of the Foreign Adversary

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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

Contracting Prohibition Act, and regulate storage and remote access of genetic sequencing data  
 LB193 (Andersen) Change provisions relating to the Committee on Pacific Conflict  
 LB660 (Andersen) Adopt the Secure Drone Purchasing Act

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

LB376 (Health & Human Services) Change and eliminate programs and services administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and eliminate various reporting requirements  
 LB516 (Quick) Eliminate provisions relating to counties maintaining office space for the Department of Health and Human Services  
 LB332 (Hardin) Require medicaid coverage for psychology services provided by certain practitioners  
 LB382 (Meyer) Provide for use of the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund to reimburse designated area agencies on aging and state intent regarding appropriations  
 LB281 (Quick) Change provisions relating to the Board of Nursing and eliminate the Board of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses

## Judiciary

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB219 (Dungan) Remove a requirement for a minimum term of post-release supervision for Class III and IIIA felonies  
 LB585 (Spivey) Change provisions relating to distribution of aid under the Community-based Juvenile Services Aid Program  
 LB327 (Holdcroft) Require the state to pay expenses for probation services  
 LB488 (Hallstrom) Require a peace officer to assume custody of a probationer or temporary custody of a juvenile upon request by a probation officer  
 LB404 (Hallstrom) Authorize the court to extend the term of probation on joint application of the probation officer and the probationer

## Natural Resources

### Room 1023 - 1:30 p.m.

LB480 (DeKay) Change provisions relating to the Water Recreation Enhancement Act  
*Appointment:* Bradley Dunbar - Natural Resources Commission  
 LB548 (Lippincott) Provide for political subdivisions that own or operate natural gas systems to contract with industrial consumers of natural gas  
 LB471 (McKeon) Prohibit certain restrictions by state agencies, state entities, counties, cities, and villages relating to the energy source of motor vehicles and prohibit certain actions of the Department of Environment and Energy related to vehicle emission standards

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB50 (DeKay) Change provisions relating to the distribution of the nameplate capacity tax  
 LB503 (Bosn) Authorize the designation of American energy friendly counties and change provisions relating to privately developed renewable energy generation facilities and the nameplate capacity tax  
 LB637 (Ballard) Adopt the Destination Nebraska Act and provide for certain taxing authority  
 LB710 (Bostar) Increase the earned income tax credit

## Thursday, Feb. 20

## Appropriations

### Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.

Agency 7: Governor  
 Agency 8: Lieutenant Governor  
 Agency 9: Secretary of State  
 Agency 10: Auditor of Public Accounts  
 Agency 11: Attorney General  
 Agency 87: Accountability and Disclosure Commission

## Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

### Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB659 (Andersen) Change provisions relating to vote counting devices under the Election Act  
 LB604 (Storm) Change provisions

regarding initiative and referendum petitions  
 LR23CA (Sanders) Constitutional amendment to change the deadline to file initiative and referendum petitions  
 LB521 (Sanders) Change and eliminate provisions relating to the Election Act

## Health & Human Services

### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB554 (Riepe) Create the Nebraska Health Professions Commission  
 LB676 (Hansen) Change and eliminate provisions relating to certified nurse midwives and provide for applicability of the Nebraska Hospital-Medical Liability Act  
 LB436 (Health & Human Services) Change provisions of the Nebraska Regulation of Health Professions Act  
 LB569 (Health & Human Services) Change duties of the Board of Emergency Medical Services  
 LB570 (J. Cavanaugh) Provide for scholarships for nursing students

## Judiciary

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB17 (J. Cavanaugh) Prohibit certain fees by residential landlords and require notices and disclosures of consumer reports  
 LB469 (M. Cavanaugh) Require the State Court Administrator to develop a form to be included by landlords in residential eviction notices concerning resources for tenants  
 LB506 (Hunt) Adopt the Landlord and Tenant Radon Awareness Act  
 LB587 (Spivey) Change provisions relating to tenants' remedies under the Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act  
 LB267 (Rountree) Provide for removal from a rental agreement of a cote-nant or occupant who has committed domestic violence, require landlords to change locks, and provide landlords with related powers and duties

## Natural Resources

### Room 1023 - 1:30 p.m.

*Appointment:* Chuck Hutchison - Power Review Board  
*Appointment:* Matt Smallcomb - Natu-

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ral Resources Commission  
LB562 (Brandt) Change provisions relating to permits and stamps issued by the Game and Parks Commission  
LB409 (J. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to the membership of the Nebraska Power Review Board

## Revenue

### Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB399 (Wordekemper) Change provisions relating to property tax rates and qualifications for certain distributions under the Mutual Finance Assistance Act  
LB575 (Hallstrom) Change provisions relating to the Property Tax Request Act and property tax levy limits  
LB613 (Andersen) Change provisions relating to the disclosure of tax information to municipalities  
LB628 (Dover) Adopt the Recreational Trail Easement Property Tax Exemption Act and change provisions relating to the filing of statements of recorded easements and property tax exemptions

## Friday, Feb. 21

### Appropriations

#### Room 1003 - 1:30 PM

Agency 18: Dept. of Agriculture  
Agency 39: Brand Committee  
Agency 56: Wheat Board  
Agency 60: Ethanol Board  
Agency 61: Dairy Industry Development Board  
Agency 86: Dry Bean Commission  
Agency 88: Corn Development, Utilization and Marketing Board  
Agency 89: Hemp Commission  
Agency 92: Grain Sorghum Board  
Agency 95: Dry Pea & Lentil Commission  
LB654 (Murman) Appropriate funds to the Department of Agriculture  
Agency 52: State Fair Board

### Government, Military & Veterans Affairs

#### Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB233 (Conrad) Require coverage for in vitro fertilization for state employees under the Nebraska State Insurance Program  
LB224 (Guereca) Require paid mater-

nity leave for state employees  
LR29 (Holdcroft) Provide that the new prison facility be named as the Arbor Correctional Center

### Health & Human Services

#### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB655 (Murman) Provide for medical conscience-based objections  
LB515 (Quick) Provide requirements for certain prescription refills  
LB555 (Riepe) Provide for assistant funeral directors under the Funeral Directing and Embalming Practice Act  
LB697 (Strommen) Change requirements relating to compounding and delegated dispensing permits under the Pharmacy Practice Act

### Judiciary

#### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

*Appointments:* David Nelson, Shawn Eatherton - Crime Victim's Reparations Committee  
LB412 (Hallstrom) Change provisions relating to interventions in paternity proceedings  
LB340 (Hallstrom) Adopt the Asbestos Trust Claims Transparency Act and the Asbestos Claims Priorities and Over-Naming Reform Act  
LB388 (DeBoer) Change provisions relating to judicial nominating commissions  
LB513 (Bosn) Change judges' salaries

### Nebraska Retirement Systems

#### Room 1525 - 12:00 p.m.

LB76 (Bostar) Change provisions of the Nebraska State Patrol Retirement Act  
LB433 (Sorrentino) Exempt deputy directors and agency attorneys from the State Personnel System and change membership provisions under the State Employees Retirement Act  
LB420 (Nebraska Retirement Systems) Change provisions relating to the Public Employees Retirement Board

### Revenue

#### Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

LB328 (Holdcroft) Change provisions relating to the disbursement of the documentary stamp tax  
LB622 (Dover) Provide for the State-

wide Housing Assistance Program and change provisions relating to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, recipients of assistance, and selection of recipients under the Nebraska Affordable Housing Act and the rate and disbursement of the documentary stamp tax

LB269 (Rountree) Change provisions relating to the state database of sales and use tax rates for local jurisdictions  
LB583 (Spivey) Change provisions relating to the rate and disbursement of the documentary stamp tax, the Child Care Grant Fund, child care grants, the Military Installation Development and Support Fund, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, the Innovation Hub Cash Fund, the Economic Recovery Contingency Fund, and the Health Care Homes for the Medically Underserved Fund

## Monday, Feb. 24

### Appropriations

#### Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

Agency 12: State Treasurer  
LB451 (Prokop) Change provisions relating to the Unclaimed Property Trust Fund and the Capitol Restoration Cash Fund  
LB624 (Dover) Appropriate funds to the State Treasurer for education scholarships

### Banking, Commerce & Insurance

#### Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

LB68 (Raybould) Provide insurance and medicaid coverage for certain contraceptives  
LB64 (Fredrickson) Change eligibility requirements for medicare supplement policies  
LB252 (Bostar) Prohibit disadvantaging insurance and Medicaid coverage for nonopioid drugs  
LB253 (Bostar) Provide for insurance and medicaid coverage of biomarker testing

### Business & Labor

#### Room 2102 - 1:30 p.m.

LB477 (Fredrickson) Change provisions of the Workplace Privacy Act



# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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- LB415 (Ballard) Change provisions of the Nebraska Healthy Families and Workplaces Act
- LB397 (Moser) Eliminate provisions relating to workplace safety committees and a workplace safety program and terminate a fund
- LB573 (Guereca) Adopt the Meat and Poultry Workers and Contractors Protection Act
- LB258 (Raybould) Change provisions relating to the minimum wage under the Wage and Hour Act

## Education

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB426 (Andersen) Authorize an American flag education program and change provisions relating to the distribution of lottery funds used for education
- LB213 (Holdcroft) Require the State Board of Education to adopt academic content standards on human embryology under the science education standards
- LB549 (Lippincott) Allow a school board to employ a chaplain, including in a volunteer capacity, at a school
- LB691 (Murman) Require school districts and private, denominational, and parochial schools to display the Ten Commandments in school buildings
- LB122 (Meyer) Require display of the state and national motto in schools

## Executive Board

### Room 2102 - 12:00 p.m.

- LR7CA (Dorn) Constitutional amendment to change legislative salaries to thirty thousand dollars annually
- LR25CA (Hansen) Constitutional amendment to change the compensation of members of the Legislature and provide for health insurance

## General Affairs

### Room 1023 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB9 (Hughes) Change provisions relating to cigarette taxes and the Tobacco Products Tax Act and provide for regulation of products containing nicotine analogues
- LB125 (Hughes) Provide for regulation of products containing nicotine analogues and include alternative

- nicotine products under the Tobacco Products Tax Act
- LB285 (Lonowski) Prohibit the sale of flavored vape products
- LB688 (Lonowski) Prohibit advertising of electronic nicotine delivery systems

## Transportation & Telecommunications

### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB323 (Moser) Change requirements for certain road and building construction projects for the Department of Transportation
- LB594 (Prokop) Change and eliminate provisions relating to the use of handheld wireless communication devices while operating a motor vehicle
- LB542 (Dover) Change and eliminate payment provisions for road construction costs relating to utility facilities

## Tuesday, Feb. 25

### Agriculture

#### Room 1023 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB540 (Holdcroft) Change provisions of the Nebraska Apiary Act and create the Nebraska Apiary Advisory Board
- LB476 (Guereca) Provide exemptions under the Foreign-owned Real Estate National Security Act
- LB638 (Ibach) Change provisions of the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Act
- LB502 (Meyer) Provide a penalty under the Farm Labor Contractors Act

### Appropriations

#### Room 1524 - 1:30 p.m.

- Agency 50: State College System
- Agency 51: University of Nebraska System
- LB11 (Hughes) Appropriate funds for the Nebraska Statewide Workforce and Education Reporting System Act
- LB307 (Ibach) State intent regarding appropriations for tuition waivers
- LB460 (Juarez) Create the Nebraska Council on Economic Education Cash Fund and provide for a transfer from the State Settlement Cash Fund
- LB678 (Hardin) State intent regarding appropriations to the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges
- LB627 (Dover) Provide for a capital construction project for the University of Nebraska

## Banking, Commerce & Insurance

### Room 1507 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB164 (Spivey) Adopt the Urban Development Incentive Act
- LB47 (McKinney) Change provisions of the Business Innovation Act and the Small Business Assistance Act
- LB536 (Sorrentino) Adopt the Manufacturing Modernization Pilot Investment Act
- LB278 (von Gillern) Change requirements for certain insurance policies and contracts

## Transportation & Telecommunications

### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB106 (Hughes) Change requirements for motor vehicle windows
- LB496 (Murman) Provide requirements under the Nebraska Rules of the Road relating to motorists encountering certain animals being led or driven on highways
- LB120 (Hardin) Provide an exception regarding release of a digital image under the Motor Vehicle Operator's License Act

## Wednesday, Feb. 26

### Appropriations

#### Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.

- Agency 19: Dept. of Banking
- Agency 22: Dept. of Insurance
- Agency 37: Workers' Compensation Court
- Agency 77: Commission of Industrial Relations
- Agency 74: Power Review Board

### Health & Human Services

#### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

- LB380 (Fredrickson) Establish requirements for Department of Health and Human Services' contractors providing medical assistance services
- LB381 (Fredrickson) Change requirements relating to program integrity audits under the Medical Assistance Act
- LB610 (Bostar) Change provisions relating to supplemental reimbursement for ground emergency medical transport under the Medical Assistance Act
- LB365 (Quick) Require coverage of

# COMMITTEE HEARINGS

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self-measure blood pressure monitoring services under the Medical Assistance Act  
LB603 (Ballard) Change provisions relating to care management units under the Nebraska Community Aging Services Act

## Judiciary

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB601 (DeBoer) Clarify provisions relating to motions for a new trial in a criminal case  
LB215 (Holdcroft) Adopt the Clean Slate Act and provide for a program for second chance relief to obtain a commutation from the Board of Pardons  
LB226 (Juarez) Provide for setting aside convictions and expunging records for convictions and adjudications for concealed weapon offenses, provide a private cause of action for violations of the Security, Privacy, and Dissemination of Criminal History Information Act, waive sovereign immunity, and provide for retroactivity  
LB704 (McKinney) Change provisions relating to the review and modification of an incarcerated parent's child support order

## Thursday, Feb. 27

### Appropriations

#### Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.

Agency 13: Dept. of Education  
Agency 48: Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education  
Agency 83: Community College Aid  
LB173 (Prokop) Appropriate funds for aid to community colleges and state intent

### Executive Board

#### Room 2102 - 12:00 p.m.

LR27CA (Hunt) Constitutional amendment to change legislative term limits to three consecutive terms  
LR19CA (Dover) Constitutional amendment to change legislative term limits to three consecutive terms

### Health & Human Services

#### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB446 (Guereca) Change provisions relating to release of health data and statistical research information  
LB379 (Andersen) Change the maximum time limit for receipt of cash assistance under the Welfare Reform Act  
LB656 (Andersen) Change work requirements under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
LB486 (Quick) Require the Department of Health and Human Services to implement standards for reimbursement for certain service providers  
LB463 (Ballard) Require school districts to develop a cardiac emergency response plan under the School Safety and Security Reporting Act and provide for grants for such plans from the Medicaid Managed Care Excess Profit Fund

## Judiciary

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

LB493 (Conrad) Adopt the Uniform Public Expression Protection Act and eliminate provisions relating to actions involving public petition and participation  
LB360 (Conrad) Provide restrictions on the regulation of political signs by homeowners associations  
LB416 (Dungan) Change provisions relating to releases, covenants not to sue, or similar agreements on joint and several liability  
LB137 (Dungan) Prohibit certain restrictions on solar energy devices and pollinator gardens and provide a cause of action  
LB422 (Storer) Change provisions of the Nebraska Uniform Real Property Transfer on Death Act

## Friday, Feb. 28

### Appropriations

#### Room 1003 - 1:30 p.m.

Agency 14: Public Service Commission  
Agency 21: State Fire Marshal  
Agency 30: State Electrical Board  
Agency 57: Oil and Gas Conservation Commission  
Agency 81: Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

### Health & Human Services

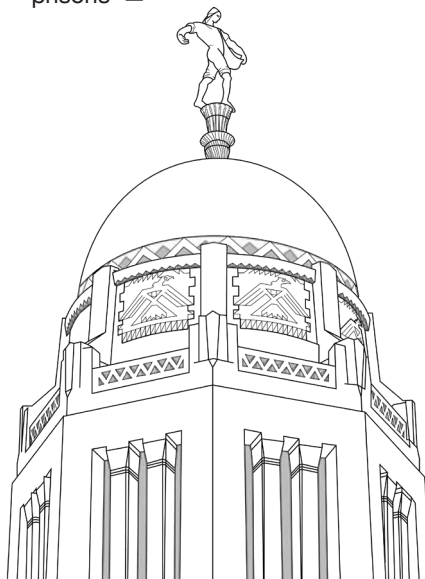
#### Room 1510 - 1:30 p.m.

LB454 (Quick) Change provisions relating to regional behavioral health authorities and the Behavioral Health Services Fund and provide for a pilot project  
LB255 (Quick) Provide for use of the Opioid Treatment Infrastructure Cash Fund for problem solving courts  
LB553 (Riepe) Change provisions of the Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act  
LB701 (Spivey) Provide for reimbursement of doula services by the Department of Health and Human Services

## Judiciary

### Room 1525 - 1:30 p.m.

Appointment: Candice Batton - Crime Victim's Reparations Committee  
LB475 (Riepe) Classify tianeptine as a controlled substance  
LB684 (Bostar) Transfer juvenile probation functions to a new Juvenile Probation Agency in the executive branch  
LB530 (Kauth) Change provisions relating to the Nebraska Rules of the Road, motor vehicle homicide, and motor vehicle homicide of an unborn child  
LB519 (Juarez) Require independent confirmatory testing of potential items of contraband or drugs in prisons ■



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