

Transcript Prepared by Clerk of the Legislature Transcribers Office
Floor Debate February 8, 2024
Rough Draft

KELLY: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the George W. Norris Legislative Chamber for the twenty-fifth day of the One Hundred Eighth Legislature, Second Session. Our chaplain for today is Reverend Doctor Luke Schnake, Christ Lincoln Church, Lincoln, Nebraska, and a guest of Senator Jacobson. Please rise.

REVEREND DOCTOR SCHNAKE: We pray. Oh, God, our heavenly father, grant to us this day your favor. We commend to you the citizens of our state, that to everyone you would extend grace, goodness, truth, and knowledge of you. We pray for those who lead us here in this room, in this building. Grant wisdom. Grant trust. Turn the eyes of all to you. Lord, we know what government can be, should be, and what it is. And we pray that as our senators and others lead us, and lead us well, you would look upon all of our needs. We pray that you would break what needs to be broken. That you would stop what needs to be stopped. That you would renew what needs to be renewed. That you would reveal what needs to be revealed. That you would build up what needs to be built up. We pray that those who lead would lead with hearts of service, and that those things that are natural in all of us would be hindered by you. Things of control, or arrogance, or greed, or any issues that are not in line with you in your heart. Remind us that you are the God of all grace and comfort. Remind us that it is wise to trust you, to love you, to yearn for your ways and your truth in your Holy Word. Grant this all in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

KELLY: I recognize Senator Lowe for the Pledge of Allegiance.

LOWE: Please join me in the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

KELLY: Thank you. I call to order the 25th day of the One Hundred Eighth Legislature, Second Session. Senators, please record your presence. Roll call. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: There's a quorum president. Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you. Are there any corrections for the Journal?

CLERK: I do, Mr. president, on page 471 on line ten, insert Russell comma Jacqueline Tax Equalization and Review Commission Revenue. It's the only correction I have this morning.

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KELLY: Thank you. Are there any messages, reports, or announcements?

CLERK: There are, Mr. President. Notice of committee hearing from the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee, the Revenue Committee. Committee report. Your Committee on-- your Committee on the Executive Board reports LB1104 to General File. Committee report concerning the gubernatorial appointment of Greg Wolford, and James Kindig, and David Cople, Richard Meginnis, Heath Mello, all from the Transportation and Telecommunications Committee. Notice that the Business and Labor Committee will have an Executive Session, room 2102 at 10:00 a.m. Business and Labor Exec Session in room 2102 at 10:00 a.m. Mr. President, also reported registered lobbyists from February 7th, 2024. That will be in the Journal. Additionally, agency reports electronically filed with the Legislature can be found on the Nebraska Legislature's website. That's all I have this morning, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Albrecht would like to recognize the physician of the day, Doctor Dave Hoelting of Pender. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Jacobson would like to announce his wife, Julie, is here today under the north balcony. Please stand and be recognized by the Nebraska Legislature. Mr. Clerk, first item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, first item on the agenda, LB16A introduced by Senator Conrad. This is a bill for an act relating to appropriations; appropriates funds to aid in the carrying out of the provisions of LB16. The bill was read for the first time on February 7th of this year and placed directly on General File.

KELLY: Senator Conrad, you're recognized to speak.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Just a brief introduction. This is an appropriations bill, an A bill to follow my priority bill, LB16. The A bill was sparked by the amendment that Senator Brewer adopted on Select File related to engineers and interior design. It is a very, very small, very modest fiscal note relating to the permission to use cash funds in regards to that voluntary registry component. So with that, I would ask for your favorable support of LB16A so that we can catch it up to LB16. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Conrad. There's no one else in the queue. You're recognized to close. And waive. Members, the question is

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advancing LB16A to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on advancement of the bill.

KELLY: LB16A advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item. Committee report from the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee concerning a gubernatorial appointment of Gail Werner-Robertson to the Nebraska Investment Council.

KELLY: Senator McDonnell, you recognized to open.

McDONNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. For all these next five individuals that we are going to talk about from the-- I got a letter from the Governor and also their statement of financial interest, if anyone would like to see that. Gayle Werner-Robinson-- Robertson, reappointed to the Investment Council. Committee voted 6-0 to recommend confirmation. Has served on the council since 2003. Has serves as chair of the council since 2005. Graduated-- Graduate of Creighton University, both undergrad and law school. Serves at-- on the Creighton University Board of Trustees. Currently president of GWR Wealth Management.

KELLY: Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive. Members, the question is the adoption of the committee report from the Retirement Committee. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Nebraska retirement systems committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment to three individuals to the Public Employees Retirement Board.

KELLY: Senator McDonnell, you're recognized to open.

McDONNELL: Gerald Clausen, reappointed as a member of the public-- of the public to the board, second term. Committee voted 6-0 to recommend confirmation. Graduate of the Nebraska LEAD Program and currently serves on the Agricultural Leadership Council, LEAD Nebraska. Born in Knox County and currently owns agriculture real estate in the county.

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Has served as the city manager of Sheldon and Carroll, Iowa. Serves as a senior advisor to Nebraska City Managers Association.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator McDonnell. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close. And waive. Members, the question is the adoption of the committee report from the Retirement Committee. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee report, Mr. President.

KELLY: Committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item. The Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee would report favorably on the gubernatorial appointment of John Murante, director, Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Systems.

KELLY: Senator McDonnell you recognized to open. Senator McDonnell, you're recognized.

McDONNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. Also, I, I did just make a mistake based on-- I wanted to make sure we were voting on all three, but Captain Luke Splattstoesser, also a, a new appointment to the-- he's a State Patrol member. Committee voted 6-0. With Patrol experience since 2006, captain in the State Patrol, Professional Standard school, has also worked in internal affairs and executive protection. Midwest VP, National Governors Security Association. Also Charles Neumann, new appointment to county employee member slot on the PERB. Committee voted 6-0. Veterinarian and livestock producer, as well, as well as Adams County Commissioner. So I want to make sure those two people were also-- that you were aware of. And now we'll move on to John Murante. John Murante, committee voted 6-0 to recommend confirmation as the NPERS director. Former state treasurer, 2019 to '23. Former legislator 2013 to '19 District 49. Chair of the Government Committee and Executive Board member.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator McDonnell. There's no one else in the queue. You're recognized to close, and waive closing. Members, the question is the adoption of the committee report from the Retirement Committee. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President on adoption of the committee report.

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KELLY: The committee report is adopted. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, some items quickly. Amendment to be printed from Senator DeBoer to LB61, Senator von Gillern to LB1197, Senator McKinney to LB1043. That's all I have this time, Mr. President. Turning to the agenda, Mr. President, Final Reading.

KELLY: Mr. Clerk, we'll move to Final Reading. Members should return to their seats in preparation for Final Reading. Members, please find your seats and check in for Final Reading. All members are present. Mr. Clerk, the first item is LB1.

CLERK: [Read LB1 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB1 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh. Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredricksen, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, MacDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Not-- Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, Slama. The vote is 45 ayes, 0 nays, 4 excused, not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB1 passes. We will now proceed to LB151.

CLERK: [Read LB151 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB151 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen. Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Not voting, 0. Excuse me, voting no, none. Not voting, Senators

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Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, Slama. The voters 45 ayes, 0 nays, 4 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LBE 151 passes. Mr. Clerk. Members. The first vote on LB94 will be to dispense with the at-large reading. All those in favor, vote aye, all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 39 ayes, 4 nays to dispense with the at-large reading, Mr. President.

KELLY: The at-large reading is dispensed with. Mr. Clerk, please read the title of LB94.

CLERK: [Read title of LB94]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB94 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators. Wayne, Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. Vote is 44 ayes; 0 nays, 4 excused-- 1 present not voting, 4 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB94 passes. We will now proceed to LB279.

CLERK: [Read LB279 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB279 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, John Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, Dekay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, None. Not voting, Senators Blood, Machaela Cavanaugh, Hunt, Armendariz,

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Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 42 ayes, 0 nays, 3 present not voting, 4 excused, not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB279 passes. We will proceed to LB461. The first vote is to dispense with the at-large reading. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 5 nays. Mr. president, dispense with the at-large reading.

KELLY: The large reading is dispensed with. Mr. Clerk, please read the title.

CLERK: [Read title of LB461]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB461 pass. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aquilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, Dekay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould and Slama. The vote is 45 ayes 0 nays, 4 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: It will be 461 passes. We will now proceed to LB628. The first vote is to dispense with the at-large reading. All those in favor, vote aye. All those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 5 nays to dispense with the at-large reading, Mr. President.

KELLY: The at-large reading is dispensed with. Mr. Clerk, please read the title.

CLERK: [Read title of LB628]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB628 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

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CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. And the vote is 45 ayes, 0 nays, 4 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB628 passes. We will now proceed to LB78.

CLERK: [Read LB78 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB78 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, Deboer, Dekay, Dorn, Dover. Dungan, Erdman. Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen. Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt. Ibach. Jacobson, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders. Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Kauth, Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 44 ayes, 0 nays, 1 present not voting, 4 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB78 passes. We will now proceed to LB140. Members, the first vote is to dispense with the at-large reading. All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 36 ayes, 7 nays to dispense with the at-large reading, Mr. President.

KELLY: The at-large reading is dispensed with. Mr. Clerk please read the title.

CLERK: [Read title of LB140]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB140 pass? All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

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CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Armendariz, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 45 ayes, 0 nays, 4 excused not voting. Mr. President.

KELLY: LB140 passes. We will now proceed to LB140A.

CLERK: [Read LB140A on Final Reading]

KELLY: All procedures of law relative to procedure-- All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB140A pass? All those in favor vote aye. All those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobsen, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Brewer, Raybould, Slama. The vote is 46 ayes, 0 nays, 3 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB140A passes. We will now proceed to LB146.

CLERK: [Reads LB146 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB146 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, John Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, DeBoer, Dekay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no none. Not voting, Senators Machaela Cavanaugh, Hunt, Brewer, Raybould,

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and Slama. The vote it's 44 ayes, 0 nays, 2 present not voting, 3 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB146 passes. We will now proceed to LB247.

CLERK: [Read LB247 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with. The question is shall LB247 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredricksen, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 46 ayes, 0 nays, 3 excused not voting. Mr. President.

KELLY: LB247 passes. The next vote is on LB252. The first vote is to dispense with the at-large reading. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 40 ayes, 4 nays to dispense with the at-large rating, Mr. President.

KELLY: The at-large rating is dispensed with. Mr. Clerk, please read the title.

CLERK: [Read title of LB252]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB252 pass? All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, Deboer, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Hollcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Walz, Wayne, Brewer, Raybould,

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and Slama. Senator Wayne voting yes. Senator Walz voting yes. The vote is 46 ayes, 0 nays, 3 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB252 passes. The next bill is LB299e.

CLERK: [Read LB299 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB299 pass with the emergency clause? All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeKay, Dorn, Dover, Dungan, Erdman, Fredricksen, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators DeBoer, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 45 ayes, 0 nays, 1 present not voting, 3 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB299 passes with the emergency clause. The next bill is LB308.

CLERK: [Read LB308 on Final Reading]

KELLY: All provisions of law having been complied with, the question is shall LB308 pass? All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

KELLY: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, John Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeBoer, DeKay, Dorn, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators Machaela Cavanaugh, Dover, Hunt, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote is 43 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, 3 present not voting, 3 excused not voting.

KELLY: LB308 passes. The next bill is LB664

CLERK: [Read LB664 on Final Reading]

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KELLY: All provisions of law relative to procedure having been complied with, the question is shall LB664 pass? All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Voting aye, Senators Aguilar, Albrecht, Arch, Armendariz, Ballard, Blood, Bosn, Bostar, Bostelman, Brandt, Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh, Clements, Conrad, Day, DeKay, Dorn, Dungan, Erdman, Fredrickson, Halloran, Hansen, Hardin, Holdcroft, Hughes, Hunt, Ibach, Jacobson, Kauth, Linehan, Lippincott, Lowe, McDonnell, McKinney, Meyer, Moser, Murman, Riepe, Sanders, Vargas, von Gillern, Walz, Wayne, Wishart. Voting no, none. Not voting, Senators DeBoer, Dover, Brewer, Raybould, and Slama. The vote-- Excuse me, Mr. Present, Senator DeBoer voting yes. The vote is 45 ayes, 0 nays, 1 present not voting, 3 excused not voting, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB664 passes, while the Legislature is in session and capable of transacting business, I propose to sign and do hereby sign LB1, LB151, LB94, LB279, LB461, LB628, LB78, LB140, LB140A, LB146, LB247, LB252, LB299 with the emergency clause, LB308, and LB664. Mr. Clerk for items.

CLERK: Thank you, Mr. President. Your Committee on Nebraska Retirement Systems, Chaired by Senator McDonnell, reports LB624 to General File with committee amendments. Communication from Senator Sanders that she has designated LR277CA as her personal priority for the session. Additionally, an announcement, the Business and Labor Committee will have an Executive Session in room 2102 now. Business and Labor Exec Session in room 2102 now.

KELLY: Speaker Arch, you're recognized for an announcement.

ARCH: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, just, just for your awareness that around 11:50 today, we will take up a motion by Senator Wayne to suspend the rules to allow for the cancellation of a public hearing for next Wednesday. Since the cancellation of the hearing is within seven days notice window, the hearing cancellation will require a successful motion to suspend the seven days notice rule. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Speaker Arch. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item on the agenda. LB257, introduced by Senator Lowe. It's a bill for an act relating to cemeteries. Defines a term, changes provisions relating to abandonment and revision of

cemetery lots, reversion of cemetery lots; authorizes investment of funds from the sale of cemetery lots as prescribed; harmonizes provisions and repeals the original section. Bill was read for the first time on January 10th of last year and referred to the General Affairs Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with no committee amendments. Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Lowe, you're recognized to open.

LOWE: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. I had an opening. I'm not going to use that one, but good morning, colleagues. Today I'm introducing LB2-- LB257, a bill to change provisions relating to cemeteries and the abandonment of cemetery lots, and to create a better process for cities to use and reclaim lots that remain unused. This bill started as an interim, interim, interim study in 2022, after my office was contacted by the League of Municipalities. Several cities have cemeteries with large sections in which no one has been buried. Many of these lots were sold prior to 1900, and if no one is buried there, the ownership passes down through generations. These cemetery plots often end up belonging to people-- the people and the descendants who no long-- no longer live in Nebraska, and no longer have knowledge of their ancestor's purchase of them many, many decades ago. This may come as no surprise to you, but our statutes currently have several different confusing sections on how to deal with this scenario based on the size of city, who runs or owns a cemetery, the process that must be followed to declare the lot abandoned, to then be able to reclaim it for future use. LB257 is intended to create solutions to these problems. LB257 rewrites section 12-701 of the cemetery statutes to provide cities, counties, and villages with a process that can undertake to reinvest ownership of the lots purchased by an individual back to the city if no one has been buried in the lot for at least 30 years. This bill provides for proper legal notices proceedings that will allow owner-- the owner of the lot to-- the opportunity to file a valid claim showing they have not abandoned the lot. Further, language allows the governing body of the city to bring an action in district court to restore the cemetery lot ownership to the city if no valid claim is filed by the owner of record within the provided time period, if not fewer than 30 days. The new language in section 12-702, allows the city, county, or village to become the revisionary owner of the lot after the process in 12-701 is followed, to then sell the lot and convey title to a new purchaser of the lot, still only for the purposes of interment. The city, county, or village is then permitted to invest funds acquired from the sale of cemetery lots, so long as the investor or city acts as a fiduciary and complies with the prudent

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investor rules as set forth in sections 30-3883 to 3889 in our statutes. LB257 was heard in committee on March 6th, 2023. The bill had three proponents and no opponents, and was voted out of committee on a 7-0 vote, with one senator absent. Please vote yes on LB257. Thank you very much.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Lowe. Senator Clements, you're recognized to speak.

CLEMENTS: Thank you, Mr.-- Thank you, Mr. President. I am interested in this bill. I, I see that the rights to a plot in a cemetery can be transferred if no interment has been made, no one has been buried in that lot for at least 30 years. Now I have-- that could happen to me. When I turned 50 years old in year 2000, for a 50th birthday present, my father gave me a cemetery lot. Which is a little bit of a joke, but it's a lot next, next to where he's buried now, and my grandparents. And so that's already been 24 years ago that I, that there has been no interment in that lot since I acquired it. And so if I just live, if I live six more years, it'll be over 30 years since there has been no burial in that lot. And if I live to age 102, as my father did, then it will be 52 years before I use that lot, or somebody helps me use it. And so would Senator Lowe yield to a question?

LOWE: Senator Lowe, would you yield to some questions?

LOWE: Yes.

CLEMENTS: Well, if it's been more than 30 years sin-- since my lot was acquired by me, how will I make sure that I don't lose my right to the deed to that cemetery lot?

LOWE: Well, first, I hope the city is maintaining that plot of yours, because the grass will probably be pretty tall by the time you're the age that your father was when he passed. And your father was a great man. The city has to make contact with the rightful owner to see if-- and, and try to find the rightful owner, before they take possession of it.

CLEMENTS: All right. And I see that in the next section that the village is supposed to send me a notice, and then I could file with the village clerk a statement explaining how my rights in the lot were acquired. So I would give them a copy of my deed? Would that work?

LOWE: Yes.

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CLEMENTS: Very good. Well, I'm--

LOWE: Then you're good for another 30 years.

CLEMENTS: Very good. Well, I do-- when I saw this, I thought it, it was a situation that could occur in my case and other cases. The cemetery at Elmwood is a cemetery association, but, it has been-- they have been talking about transferring the property to the village of Elmwood. There are some advantages for contributions, tax deductions, I believe, when it's owned by a village rather than an association. So I appreciate that, that they should be able to find me if they need to, if that should occur. So I am-- I'm in support, and will be voting green on LB257. Thank you, Senator Lowe. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Clements and Senator Lowe. Senator Dorn, you're recognized to speak.

DORN: Yes. Would Senator Lowe yield to a question?

KELLY: Senator Lowe, would you yield to some questions?

LOWE: Yes, I will.

DORN: And I didn't read through all the bill, I just read the statement of intent. But what happens if they're not able to get ahold of that person that owns a lot or whatever? Is there provision then that they cannot move forward? Or is that only for willing, I call it, plot holders. Yeah.

LOWE: Yes, there is the, they have to go through the process of filing with district court. So that should take care of it.

DORN: That should take care of it. So thank you much. I just-- that was more curiosity than anything, so that we just didn't, I call it, you find out 15 years later that somebody comes to bury somebody and they thought they had a plot, and now the city or whoever acquired that and sold it to somebody else, and buried somebody else there, so that we didn't run into that situation down the road. So thank you much.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Dorn and Senator Lowe. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Lowe, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB257 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

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CLERK: 32 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB257 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item. LB144 introduced by Senator Brandt. It's a bill for an act relating to the State Electrical Act. Changes and eliminates certain classes of licenses under the State Electrical Act; changes provisions relating to eligibility for licensure, continuing education, and training; changes fees and eliminates obsolete provisions; harmonizes provisions; repeals the original sections; and outright repeals Section 81-2110. The bill was read for the first time on January 6th of last year and referred to the General Affairs Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments. There are additional amendments, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Brandt, you recognized to open.

BRANDT: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues, and good morning, Nebraskans. Today I'm asking for your green vote on LB144. LB144 is a clean up of the State Electrical Act, and a significant overhaul of the act that has not occurred since 1993. LB144 was voted out of the General Affairs Committee on March 6th, 2023, with seven votes in favor and one committee member absent, and has no fiscal impact. Most of the bill consists of removing obsolete licenses, such as the Class B master electrician and the installer license. LB144 eliminates outdated optional requirements for an electrical contractor license, and only requires an apprentice to submit evidence of completed continuing education courses for renewal. Also, it clarifies the timeline for completing the 12 hours of continuing education. For any license renewal, it must be completed by January 1st of each odd numbered year. LB144 also eliminates the need for inspection of telegraph systems, and clarifies the underground conduit may be installed on the load side of the meter under the direct supervision of a Class A master electrician. Reference to state provided training sites for testing is also eliminated, as licensure testing is now completed online and at nationally recognized testing centers. Finally, LB144 includes an increased late fee for contractors that do not file a permit before commencing work on a project as they are required to do by state statute. Please vote green on the advancement of LB144.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brandt. Seeing no one else in the-- The clerk indicated there are committee amendments and that-- Senator Lowe. You're recognized to open.

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LOWE: Thank you very much, Lieutenant Governor. Good morning, colleagues. AM229 is a simple amendment brought to the committee by Senator Brandt. It only removes the term solar installation from the definition of special electrician from the new language proposed in the bill. This language is not currently in statute and the amendment is simply removing it from the bill. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Lowe. I see no one else in the queue. You're recognized to close on the amendment, and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of AM778. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 29 ayes, 0 ayes on adoption of the community amendment, Mr. President.

KELLY: AM778 is adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President. Senator Brandt, I have AM229 with a note you wish to withdraw.

KELLY: Without objection, it is withdrawn. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Brandt, you're recognize to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB144 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 29 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: It will be 144 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, next bill, LB716, LB716, introduced by Senator John Cavanaugh. It's a bill for an act relating to the State Electrical Act. Changes provisions relating to license and registration fees and state inspection fees; and repeals original sections. The bills was read for the first time on January 18th of last year and referred to the General Affairs Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File. There are committee amendments, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to open.

J. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Colleagues, good morning. LB716 is a bill that I introduced at the request of the State Electrical Division. It allows the State Electrical Board to set reasonable fees for examination, issuance, and renewal of licenses, as

well as inspections. Currently, these fees are set in statute and require legislative approval to change. The fees set by the Electrical Board are meant to cover costs, and the board shall take care to avoid unnecessary surpluses. The bill requires an annual report to the Attorney General and the Legislative Fiscal Office, stating the amount of the fees set by the board. The bill will-- with the committee amendment, which requires that the fees must be set by unanimous vote of the board, has the support of both the State Electrical Division and the Nebraska State Council of Electrical Workers, which represents thousands of electrical workers in the state, and advanced without opposition from the General Affairs, Committee, and is a simple fix to allow the State Electrical Division to respond more efficiently to meet its budget needs. I'd ask for your green vote on LB716 and the committee amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: As stated, there is a committee amendment. Senator Lowe, you're recognized to open.

LOWE: Thank you, Lieutenant Governor. Good morning, Colleagues. I don't even know if I need to read this because Senator Cavanaugh did such a good job. But AM271, was brought to us by Senator Cavanaugh at the hearing for the bill. This amendment requires that there be a unanimous vote of the Electrical Board before any fees will be increased. The fees that the bill is talking about are fees for examinations, issuance, and renewal of licenses and registrations for the electricians themselves. This also applies to fees for inspections under the act, so they can continue to do what is required to do under the act. And there is language in the bill that the fees must be set to avoid unnecessary surpluses of money. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Lowe. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close on the amendment, and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of AM271. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 27 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on adoption of the committee amendment.

KELLY: AM271 is adopted. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator John Cavanaugh, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB716 to E&R Initial. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 30 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

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KELLY: LB716 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item, LB304 introduced by Senator Linehan. It's a bill for an act relating to political subdivisions; provides for disclosure of certain membership dues and lobbying fees paid as prescribed. The bill was read for the first time on January 11th of this-- of last year, and referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File. There are no committee amendments, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Linehan, you're recognized to open.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. Political subdivisions currently are not required to disclose lobbyists or lobbying groups that they have-- they have working for them, or they're paying. LB304 would promote transparency and accountability in local government. The mechanism of LB304 is very simple. Public subdivisions will be required to disclose annual membership dues that they pay to lobbyists or lobbying organizations. If there have been individual fees paid to a lobbyist, lobbyist, or lobbying group, these must also be disclosed. These disclosures would have to be made on poli-- on the political subdivision's website. If the subdivision has no website, then these disclosures must be made available upon request by a member of the public. So I am sending around a list of education lobbying groups. I would-- I'm sorry, I got this this morning and I didn't pay enough attention. I would ignore page four because I think page four, these are private. I'm not trying to have-- private people can do what they want with their private money, but when public money is almost-- it's all public, which means it's taxes, then I think the people have a right to know how much is going to lobbying fees and lobbying groups. So I'd appreciate your green vote on LB304. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, you're recognized to speak.

M. CAVANAUGH: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I love a transparency bill. They're kind of my favorite. They're my jam. So thank you, Senator Linehan for bringing this. I did want to just note for those of you who are not on the Health and Human Services Committee that yesterday we had the public confirmation hearing for the director, the CEO of DHHS, and talking about transparency, CEO

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Corsi did not disclose that he was working for Epiphany, the company that the Governor entered into a no bid emergency, that's air quotes emergency, contract for \$10 million this summer. Mr. Corsi was employed by them up until three days prior to taking the position he had been appointed in August. He was working for them in August. He left there on September 7th, and began at DHHS on September 11th, and never disclosed it. Not on his bio, on the website, not on his personal LinkedIn bio, not on his accountability and disclosure papers that he filed. So while we're talking about transparency and accountability, I just wanted that stated for the record this morning. Thank you. And thank you, Senator Linehan, for LB304.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Cavanaugh. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Linehan, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB304 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB304 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item, LB569 introduced by Senator Bostelman. It's a bill for an act relating to county government. Prohibits financial interests by certain county officers and their immediate family members relating to electric generation facilities as prescribed; provides an exemption; and declares an emergency. The bill was read for the first time on January 17th of last year, and referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File. There are committee amendments, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to open.

BOSTELMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. There is a white copy amendment to LB569. So I would like to waive my opening and move on to the committee amendment, AM971, please.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Senator Sanders, you're recognized to open on the committee amendment.

SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President. I speak on behalf of committee Chair, Senator Tom Brewer. The Government Committee and the Veterans Affairs Committee heard LB569 last year, on February 15th. The

committee voted 6-0, 2 absent, to advance the bill to General File with AM971. AM971 strikes the original sections of the bill. Instead of outright prohibiting a person with certain commercial interests from holding local elected office, the amendment provides that such interests must be disclosed via written notice and at a public hearing. With the committee amendment, this bill would help make sure that local officials are more transparent about personal conflicts of interest. I would ask you your green vote on AM971 as well as LB569. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Seeing no one else in the-- Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to speak.

BOSTELMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. Thank you, Senator Sanders. AM971 is white copy amendment and addresses the main concerns raised during the committee hearing by NACO and concerned property owners of Sioux County. Specifically, there were concerns raised that the original language, language in the bill was too broad. AM971 would require that when the construction of any new electric generation facility is being considered within a county, prior to the site selection or approval by the county, the county board shall hold a public meeting announcing the proposed project. Further, if any member of the county board, county planning committee or their immediate family is involved in the site selection, or directly or indirectly holds financial interest in the facility or in ownership or lease of property where the site is to be located, the county official must disclose their financial interest in the project and indicate whether they plan to vote on the proposed project. If the county official indicates they plan to vote on the project, the board within 90 days shall conduct a public meeting regarding the official's intention to vote on the project. The member-- the amendment does not affect current contracts in place. I brought this bill after some instances across the state in which elected county officials have voted on approved electric generation contracts that happen to be in their-- be on their land or land of one of their immediate family members. In 2021, a Saunders County supervisor was recalled as a family member was main party on a contract involving a large energy project, and in Cherry County, of the three commissioners, two of them had family members who are directly involved in new electric generation contracts and owned property where these facilities are scheduled to be erected. Both of these commissioners voted to approve the project, projects. As elected officials, we have a duty to be impartial and to not enrich ourselves or our family by using the capacity of our offices. In 2022, the Legislature passed legislation which prevented employees of the

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Department of Natural Resources from having financial interest in the Perkins Canal project. Similarly, we should require county officials to disclose any potential conflicts of interest before voting on a proposed electric generation facility. LB569, was voted out of committee, as Senator Sanders said, 6-0-2 with 2 members absent. I would-- I want to thank NACO and the concerned citizens of Sioux County for their assistance and willingness to work on the amendment of LB569, and I ask for your green vote on-- green vote on AM971 and the underlying bill. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Bostelman. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Sanders, you're recognized to close on the amendment, and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of AM971. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendment, Mr. President.

KELLY: AM971 is adopted. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Bostelman, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB569 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB569 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, items for the record.

CLERK: Mr. President, thank you. Bills read this morning on final reading were presented to the Governor at 10:15 a.m.. Additionally, your Committee on Enrollment Review reports LB287, LB829, as well as LB152, LB285, LB731, LB771, LB147, LB218, LB218A to Select File, some having E&R amendments. Additionally, your Committee on Enrollment Review reports LB51 and, and-- as correctly re-engrossed and placed on Final Reading Second, as well as LB600A as correctly engrossed and placed on Final Reading. LR300, new LR from Senator Dorn. That'll be laid over. Notice of committee hearing from the General Affairs Committee, as well as the Judiciary Committee. That's all I have at this time, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Please proceed to the next item agenda.

CLERK: Next item on the agenda, Mr. President, LB624, introduced by Senator McDonnell. It's a bill for an act relating to the Nebraska Visitors Development Act. Provides for the administration of the Nebraska Tourism Commission as prescribed; provides duties for the

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Director of Economic Development; eliminates obsolete provisions; changes commission duties; harmonize, harmonizes provisions; and repeals the original sections. The bill was read for the first time on January 17th of last year, and referred to the Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee. That committee placed a bill on General File with committee amendments. There is an additional amendment, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator McDonnell, you're recognized to open.

McDONNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, good morning, colleagues. When LB624 was created, its original intent was to return the Tourism Commission back to the Department of Economic Development in order to ensure that Nebraska's messaging and promotional efforts are better aligned, though I must admit that the original intent was not for everyone. That's somewhat of a joke, because this is what motivated me. I really did have a problem when they came out and said Nebraska was not for everyone. I believe Nebraska is for everyone. I believe there's something here for everyone and that's what we should try to recruit east, west, north, south in the state of-- in the United States to come here. However, after meeting with some of the passionate advocates of the Nebraska tourism industry, we believe we have come up with a compromise that fits the main intent, which is to better align all messaging, messaging throughout the state's promotional efforts. And that is what-- that is what we have with AM688 reflects. AM688, which replaces the original bill, simply adds the Director of Economic Development and the representative from the State Chamber to the Tourism Commission. This ensures that the three main organizations responsible for promoting the state of Nebraska are better aligned on messaging and future campaigns. But this also will help create stronger advocates for Nebraska's third largest industry with DED and the State Chamber. The tourism and hospitality industry accounts for over \$3.5 billion in annual tourism sales in our state, and it employs over 40,000 individuals. With greater involvement of the Department of Economic Development and the State Chamber, I believe that there may be more consensus going forward on investing in the industry, and perhaps even an increase in available resources to promote our state. This bill helps unify and amplify the great work already being done by various agencies, nonprofits, and our communities across the state. It also provides us a chance to showcase our great assets in tourism and economic development that we can use to promote our state. I believe this legislation will also-- will als-- allow us to do just that, and I urge you to support it. There is, there is no fiscal note on this. And as I said, with the main--

the main motivation when I first started hearing Nebraska wasn't for everyone, and trying to talk to the Department of Economic Development and also the Tourism, that there wasn't the communication that I thought should be there. Now, I do want to report that I believe over the last year since this bill's been introduced, the communication has improved, and people are trying to work together. Well, this, with putting the Department of Economic Development director and someone from the chamber working with tourism, I think this will definitely help our state. And there is no fiscal impact to our state except hopefully in a positive way from increasing tourism and more businesses moving here. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you. Senator McDonnell. As stated, there is a committee amendment. Senator Sanders, you're recognized to open.

SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President. On behalf of committee Chair Senator Tom Brewer, the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard LB624 last year on March 9th. The Nebraska Hospitality Association and the Nebraska Travel Association both testified in support of this bill. The committee voted 6-0 to advance the bill to General File with AM688. AM688 strikes the original sections of the bill. Instead of eliminating the Tourism Commission as an independent agency, the amendment proposes change to the composition of the commission membership. New members would include a representative from the Department of Economic Development and someone from the State Chamber of Commerce. I would ask you to vote green on AM688, as well as LB624. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Returning to the queue, Senator Erdman, you're recognized to speak.

ERDMAN: Thank you, thank you, Mr. President, I appreciate it. So Senator McDonnell had outlined what he was trying to do. Several years back when Tourism showed up and they said that the new tagline was going to be, honestly, Nebraska is not for everybody. I think part of that is true because our taxes are so high, and that's why we haven't grown much, is because we have exorbitant taxes. But I don't think that's what that tagline was to mean. My concern is burdening or giving the opportunity to DED to join this tourism coalition, whether they have the time or the expertise to do that. I was wondering if Senator McDonnell would yield to a question.

KELLY: Senator McDonnell, will you yield to a question?

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McDONNELL: Yes.

ERDMAN: Senator McDonnell, have you spoken with the people from DED about being part of this coalition?

McDONNELL: Yes. Department of Economic Development Director K. C. Belitz, we've had this discussion, and he's in favor of it. He also had informed me that they have-- their communication has improved, and he thinks this would help.

ERDMAN: So, so how many people are on that-- will be on this total coalition? How many people will be on that advisory board?

McDONNELL: Currently in statute, it breaks it down to the 11 people. Plus, then, there'd be one-- the Director of DED and someone from the, the chamber.

ERDMAN: Will they be a voting member, the DED person?

McDONNELL: So currently, the way it's set up is that the Governor makes the appointments. We, as the legislative branch, would have to confirm those appointments, and then they would join the current makeup of the Department of Tourism.

ERDMAN: So currently, the tourism board is not ap-- not approved by the Legislature.

McDONNELL: No, it, it currently is. We're adding two members to it based on the Department of Economic Development and then someone from the chamber of commerce. The currently-- the break-- the breakdown for the Tourism is there's District 1, Douglas county, District 2, Lancaster County, District 3 goes through all the counties up to 11, and it's currently in the, the statute.

ERDMAN: So these two--

McDONNELL: And they serve four year term.

ERDMAN: Excuse me. Will those two new people that, that are going to be included, will they have to be approved by the Governor as well?

McDONNELL: The, the Director of Economic Development and the person, one person from the Tourism Board, would join the current makeup of-- and they would also be four year terms, the current makeup of what we have. So that would be up to who the Governor actually becomes the

Department of Economic Director of DED, and whoever the Nebraska Tourism-- or excuse me, the Nebraska would, would put on there as the chamber--

ERDMAN: All right. OK. Very good. So what do you-- what do you think the, the end result of this will be? How, how will this be better than what we currently have?

McDONNELL: The, the communication, right now, based on going back to Nebraska was not for everyone, when I started looking into that, and, and prior to the Tourism Board going off as a separate agency, it used to be part of DED. So I assumed there was discussions on that, and I found out there was not. That, that was decided based on the idea of the Tourism, without the input of the Nebraska Chamber, without the input of the Department of Economic Development. That's what first motivated--

ERDMAN: OK.

McDONNELL: --this bill to be introduced. But I do believe through communication and them working together-- I mean, I've already been-- it's been proven to a point by--

KELLY: One minute.

McDONNELL: --the information--

ERDMAN: OK.

McDONNELL: --information I've received, so far that the communication has improved, but this would solidify it, that they'd all be in the, the meeting together. And hopefully try to put things in place--

ERDMAN: OK.

McDONNELL: --that, that helps move our state forward.

ERDMAN: Very good. I think one of the things, and you maybe have been able to understand this from my comments, one of the tourism things we have is Game and Parks and the animals here that people come here to hunt and whatever they do. And because Game and Parks doesn't manage the wildlife in a way that it's conducive for out-of-state people to come, that's a tourism drag. And so maybe somebody from Game and Parks should be involved in this conversation. I understand how significant that is to our industry of tourism. Thank you for your time.

KELLY: Thank you. Senators Erdman and McDonnell. Senator Jacobson, you're recognized to speak.

JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of LB-- or AM688. I would be opposed of L-- to LB624 if the amendments are not passed. I think it's the right answer here to be able to expand the membership so that we can get communication with DED and State Chamber on the tourism board. But the way it's that board is organized today, rural Nebraska has a voice in what's going on in tourism, and they can stay really more laser focused on what needs to happen in order to develop tourism in their part of the state. If this were all consolidated under DED, DED has a lot of things that they have to deal with. This may not be the same passion focus that you're going to get through the organization itself. So I think this is the right compromise. So I'm going to support AM688, AM688. I would be opposed to LB624 without the adoption of that amendment. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Jacobson. Senator Clements, you're recog-- Excuse me, Senator Wayne, you're recognized to speak.

WAYNE: Thank you, Mr. President. I am going to drop a couple amendments on this bill. I'm trying to-- I'm working out the language right now. A couple things is, I'm not sure the exact number of people on the commission. It looks like it's 12. I think even number commissions are a problem, so it should-- it shouldn't happen. Secondly, there's a section in there, page 2, line 7 that says no appointed member may serve more than two consecutive terms. I just fundamentally disagree with some of the-- any kind of term limits like that. But it's particularly if you have somebody-- I think we need to have the knowledge on there for a little bit to make sure people don't repeat some mistakes of the past. So I don't, I don't think just having a blanket two successful terms-- successive terms is a good thing. And lastly, there's no diversity of thought. And anytime that we're starting to put these commissions together, we need to be intentional. And it's not just geographic differences, because that's what the commission's based on. But there also needs to be a wide range of difference. I don't think if this commission would have been as diverse as I think it could have been, Nebraska, honestly, not for everyone would not have made it to-- made it through. Somebody at the table would have thought that was a bad idea. So, I'm opposed to both the amendment and the-- and the bill right now. I think having anything to do with DED right now is going to be hard, and it's not going to be successful. I think they're overwhelmed right now, and I'm-- not a knock on them, I just think they got a, a influx of over

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\$1 billion going through their operations. And I don't know if we need a commission to do this. It's something that I would think department heads should do, and I think they should just work with our our chambers to do that. So I don't-- I don't know. So I have a lot of questions and a lot of thoughts, but I am going to start with at least one amendment to remove the the term limits on the commission. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Wayne. Senator Clements, you are recognized to speak.

CLEMENTS: Thank you, Mr. President. I probably would have voted to move this under DED, but I wasn't sure about that. But I have see that adding a couple of more people on the commission, I do support that. I think that was a good compromise. And so I, I will be supporting AM2402. Would Senator McDonnell yield to a question?

KELLY: Senator McDonnell, would you yield to a question?

McDONNELL: Yes.

CLEMENTS: Senator McDonnell, I was looking at the fiscal note, and it said it was updated in 2024, and it shows that it's moving the budget from Tourism over to DED. And would you explain why that shows that?

McDONNELL: Yes, that was prior to the compromise. The original intent of the bill was to move Tourism back into DED like it was prior to 2017. In the compromise, it was more of a we can get these-- get people to communicate. That's when we came up with the idea of putting the director of DED, and someone from Nebraska, the Chamber on the Tourism Board, and that way it would improve their communications. So there is no fiscal impact based on the fiscal note that you possibly are looking at. That was before the compromise with the Government Affairs Committee.

CLEMENTS: And one more question. Is there any change to the amount of their appropriation? Is the appropriation staying the same for Tourism?

McDONNELL: Yes.

CLEMENTS: All right. No change. So, very good then. That's what I suspected. It just had not been updated that the budget for the Tourism Commission will remain under their agency and not be shifted

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to DED So I do support AM2402, and the bill as amended. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you. Senators Clements and McDonnell. Senator Wayne, you're recognized to speak.

WAYNE: Mr. Clerk, I'm going to pull that motion after this that I want to get to. I can filibuster this on Select File. So I'll, I'll, I'll do my filibustering on Select. Thank you.

KELLY: Continuing in the queue. Senator Erdman, you are recognized to speak.

ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I would ask Senator McDonnell to yield to a question?

KELLY: Sen--Senator McDonnell, would you yield to a question?

McDONNELL: Yes.

ERDMAN: Senator McDonnell, I seen and read in your comments, heard and read in your comments, that you were interested in eliminating Tourism, the Board of Tourism. What was your thinking of what would happen if you did that? What would happen then?

McDONNELL: It was not eliminating Tourism. Prior to 2017, Tourism was part of Department of Economic Development. It was returning Tourism to the Department of Economic Development.

ERDMAN: OK.

McDONNELL: Based on-- I was that upset, and I thought there's no communication going on--

ERDMAN: OK.

McDONNELL: --if we're going to go ahead and promote Nebraska's not for everyone. During those discussions, the compromise was with the Government Affairs Committee, and Tourism, Department of Economic Development, others, the State Chamber, was that if we could just work closer together, that's why we came up with the idea of adding the DED director and one person from the State Chamber to the the tourism board.

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ERDMAN: So obviously, we must have felt that the way it was set up with DED wasn't getting the job done. So we made the change back then. Is that-- is-- was that somewhat true?

McDONNELL: I, I don't know all of the history, but I would assume that was-- that was part of it when they decided to split from DED. But I do not know all the history.

ERDMAN: So was that it-- was that their budget then part of DED? The whole--

McDONNELL: So--

ERDMAN: Thing was-- the whole thing was--

McDONNELL: So we, we know that there's two different budgets going on here. But this does not impact any of the-- this does not impact the DED's budget or Tourism's budget.

ERDMAN: OK. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senators Erdman and McDonnell. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Sanders, you're recognized to close on the amendment. Senator Sanders, you're rec-- and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of AM2402. All those in favor vote aye. All those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of the committee amendment, Mr. President.

KELLY: The amendment is adopted. Mr. Clerk for an agenda item.

CLERK: Mr. President. Senator McDonnell, I have a AM688 with a note you wish to withdraw.

KELLY: Without objection it is withdrawn. Seeing no one else in the queue. Senator McDonnell, you recognized to close on the bill.

McDONNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. Just real quick. Again, this is trying to improve the communication by adding the director of Department of Economic Development and one person from the State Chamber to the tourism board. No fiscal impact. Thank you, Mr. President.

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KELLY: Thank you, Senator McDonnell. Members, the question is the advancement of LB624 to E&R Initial. All those in favor, vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 36 ayes, 0 nays on advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB624 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, Next item.

CLERK: Mr. President, next item. LB139, introduced by Senator Brandt. It's a bill for an act relating to Small Claims Court. Changes the jurisdictional amount; provides an operative date; repeals the original section; declares an emergency. The bill was read for the first time on January 6th of last year and referred to the Judiciary Committee. That committee placed the bill on General File with committee amendments. Mr. President, there's an additional amendment as well.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Brandt, you're recognized to open.

BRANDT: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues, and good morning, Nebraska. Today I'm asking for your green vote on LB139, which would increase the jurisdictional amount for small claims courts. Small claims court allows for disputes to be resolved quickly and inexpensively. It grants citizens across the court system access to the court system for the type of cases that otherwise would likely not be worth the expense and effort of seeking out and hiring legal counsel. For these types of cases, even finding an attorney willing to take them would likely be challenging. This is especially true in Nebraska, where the current jurisdictional amount for small claims court is \$3,900. Nebraska currently ranks 47th among states for small claims jurisdictional amounts. As a result, small claims cases have dwindled from 4,977 in 2012 to 2,314 in 2022. There were 62,066 civil cases filed in 2022, showing that small claims filings represent a very small portion of the total cases filed. Even if we doubled the amount of small claims cases next year, it would be fewer small claims court cases than just a decade ago. We reached out to several organizations, most of which believe this is a good idea. There have been conversations with the Nebraska State Court Administrator about the impact on county judges. Originally, we wanted to increase it to \$10,000, but they expressed a concern that raising the jurisdictional amount immediately to \$10,000 could possibly strain the courts. While I don't think that would be the case, we decided to lower the increase to \$6,000 for fiscal year '24-'25, and increasing it to \$7,500 for

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every year thereafter. This will be done in my floor amendment to the committee amendment. In the committee amendment, it also gets rid of the escalator clause. If you just look at the data, it is obvious that our small claims court jurisdictional amount is too low. This impedes the ability of individuals and businesses to access efficient and cost effective resolutions for small disputes. LB139 is a bill that can address this issue. LB139 was advanced out of the Judiciary Committee with seven yes votes and one absent. With that, I ask for your green vote to advance. LB139.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brandt. Senator Hunt would like to announce some guests in the north balcony. 50 4th graders from Westbrook Elementary in Omaha. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. Senator Fredrickson would like to announce some guests in the north balcony. 50 4th graders from Oakdale Elementary in Omaha. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. As state-- As stated there are amendments. Senator Wayne, you recognized to open on the committee amendment.

WAYNE: Thank you, Mr. President. Let's everybody read this committee amendment together. This committee amendment changes the amount from \$3,500 to \$6,000. This was after long conversations with both the courts and defense counsel-- I mean, not defense counsel, the bar association. And then it also changes the amount to go up to \$7,500 at the beginning of 2024. Obviously, we're already in 2024. So Senator Brandt has a floor amendment that will also correct those dates to, to make the dates correct with the committee amendment that we did last year. So I'd ask for a green vote on the committee amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Wayne. Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Brandt move to amend with FA212.

KELLY: Senator Brandt, you're recognized to open on FA212.

BRANDT: And I will just read the floor amendment. Strike on line 19 "2023," insert "2024;" Strike "2024", insert "2025;" and on line 21, strike "2024" and insert the year "2025." That is the floor amendment. I would encourage everybody to vote green on that.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brandt. Returning to the queue. Senator Erdman, you're recognized to speak.

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ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I listened to Senator Brandt's explanation of why he dropped it from \$10,000 to now \$6,000, but I was wondering if he'd yield to a question?

KELLY: Senator Brandt, would you yield to some questions?

BRANDT: Yes, I would.

ERDMAN: Senator Brandt, you had a couple of people in opposition in the hearing. Was there opposition because the amount was too drastic of an increase, or what was their opposition?

BRANDT: I do not have the committee report in front of me to see who was opposed. Do you have that in front of you, Senator Erdman?

ERDMAN: It was, I think, the, the, the lawyers association--

BRANDT: OK.

ERDMAN: --and, the other one, I don't have it in front of my computer.

BRANDT: We, we have neutralized that. The bar association did not want to see \$10,000, and working with them, this is the agreement that we came to, which was a committee amendment. We will-- we will go from \$3,900 this year. On July 1st, it will go to \$6,000--

ERDMAN: OK.

BRANDT: --for one year. And then on July 1st of 2025, it will move to \$7,500 and, and stay static at \$7,500. We took out the escalator clause.

ERDMAN: All right. Very good. Thank you for answering those questions.

KELLY: Thank you, Senators Erdman and Brandt. Senator Wayne, you're recognized to speak.

WAYNE: Just to be clear on the reason, Senator Erdman, that their opponents was, the court believed, it was a judiciary association, they believed that the \$10,000 would increase too many cases. Therefore, they would have to increase the number of judgeships. They, they went back and pulled all the data for the number and the amount at the case level. And the reason we came up with the, the \$6,500 and \$7,500 is those were still low enough not to increase to make many of the counties have to increase the judges. And that was also the

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concern from the bar association. The bar association represents plaintiffs, defendants, everybody, it's sort of bringing everybody together. They had to make sure that it wouldn't hurt the court either. And that's what the amendment did, and that's what, what we sat down and worked out. So there is no more true opposition. They still may not like it completely, because it may just increase a little bit. But the overall opposition was they were afraid they would have to add too many judges. And with their decreased amount, they would not have to. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Wayne. Senator Clements, you're recognized to speak.

CLEMENTS: I'll ask you a question. Thank you, Mr. President. Would Senator Wayne yield to a question?

KELLY: Senator Wayne, would you yield to a question?

WAYNE: Yes. This is our ebony and ivory we do every year.

CLEMENTS: Thank you, Senator Wayne. I was distracted when the presentation was made. And I noticed in the write-up to this, there-- it was talking about adding three more judges and, and clerks. Are the amendments going to reduce, reduce that?

WAYNE: Yep. Yes. That was the amendment amount. By lowering the amount, it reduces the overall number of judges. We don't believe there will be any increase to the number of judges.

CLEMENTS: That's good to hear. I was not in favor of this if we were going to adding-- if we were adding more judges because of this. I do like raising the small claims court amount for people with a small claim. They don't have to hire a more expensive attorney, they can get things done quicker. And so I believe this-- I guess I'll have to trust you that that's correct, that is-- Would you explain what the cut-off would be now with these amendments of the dollar amount for a small claims action?

WAYNE: Don't-- you don't have to trust me. I'm leaving this year, so you'll have to trust Brandt. He'll be here next year with you. But the amounts would be \$6,000 through this year. And then beginning of next year with the floor amendment, it would go to \$7,500.

CLEMENTS: And that's-- it's currently \$3,500. Is that correct?

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WAYNE: That is correct.

CLEMENTS: And it's been that way how long?

WAYNE: I don't know, but I like the swaying back and forth, so let's just keep going with it.

CLEMENTS: I don't know either, but, I have been aware that \$3,500-- it went from \$2,500 to \$3,500, but it's been at least ten years, I would I would guess, although I'm not an attorney, but I think, that's probably about right. So with inflation, I believe that amount is reasonable in current dollars. So I will support the amendments. And thank you, Mister President. And thank you, Mr.-- Senator Wayne.

KELLY: Thank you, Senators Clements and Wayne. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Brandt, you're recognized to close on your floor amendment, and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of FA212. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays on the adoption of the floor amendment.

KELLY: FA212 is adopted. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Wayne, you're recognized to close on AM1518, and waives. Members, the question is the adoption of AM1518. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed, vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 31 ayes, 0 nays on the adoption of the committee amendment.

KELLY: AM1518 is adopted. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Brandt, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB139 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 33 ayes, 0 nays on the motion to advance the bill.

KELLY: LB139 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, LB854 offered by Senator Jacobson. It's a bill for an act relating to certified public accounts; to change the examination eligibility, certification and permitting requirements related to certified public accounts; to harmonize

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provisions; and repeal the original sections. The bill was read on January 3rd of this year. It was referred to the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee. That committee places the bill on General File with committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr.--

ASSISTANT CLERK: Without committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Jacobson, you're recognized to open.

JACOBSON: Thank you, Mr. President. I first might just take a moment of personal privilege. I did want to announce that it's the birthday today of my favorite female lobbyist who once shared my last name. So I want to say happy birthday to Mary. And with that, I'm going to move on to the-- my opening on LB854. LB854, which, which will provide aspiring certified public accountants greater flexibility on their journey to CPA. The bill will allow individuals to take the CPA exam upon completing 120 semester hours, or 180 quarter hours of qualifying college credit, along with a bachelor's degree. Under current state statute, individuals are only permitted to take the exam within 120 days of completing 150 hours of college. The rationale behind LB854 is clear and compelling. Today, approximately 40 other states already allow individuals to take the CPA exam with 120 hours of education and/or a bachelor's degree. By allowing candidates to sit for the CPA exam earlier in Nebraska, it is my intention to curb the trends of students seeking exam opportunities outside of the state across various professions, or state-- or our state faces a concerning outmigration of young, skilled workers entering the workforce. LB854 represents one incentive for our emerging workforce in the accounting sector to stay and thrive in Nebraska. LB854 doesn't have a fiscal note, there was no opposition testimony, and it was advanced to General File by the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee on an 8-0 vote. Thank you, Mr. President. I'd encourage everyone to advance LB854 to Select File. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Jacobson. Senator Clements, you're recognized to speak.

CLEMENTS: Thank you, Mr. President. I rise in support of this bill. I have a grandson who is pursuing a CPA designation and been following him as he's been in the business college at University of Nebraska. And he, he has graduated, so I don't think this-- he's in this range

that it would affect him now, but it could have earlier. And he's in the process of the CPA exams. And they are difficult, as this would still require them to pass the same exams and be just as qualified as long as they pass those. And he had no trouble being hired very quickly by a firm. I think we have-- if we had people going out of state to study for the exam, they were likely going to stay out of state at another firm. So in, in order to keep the young people in Nebraska, I support this bill wholeheartedly. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Clements. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Jacobson you're recognized to close, and waive. The-- Members, the question is the advancement to E&R Initial of LB854. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays, on the motion to advance the bill.

KELLY: LB854 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, LB847 offered by Senator Brewer. It's a bill for an act relating to the Interstate Civil Defense and Disaster Compact. Amends Sections 81-829.47, 52 and 56. Change provisions related emergency response agreements with other states; withdraw from the Interstate Civil Defense and Disaster Compact; harmonize provisions; repeal original sections, and outright repeal section 1-109, Appendix, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska. Bill was introduced on January 3rd of this year. It was referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File with no committee amendments.

KELLY: Senator Sanders, you're recognized to open on behalf of Senator Brewer.

SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I stand here on behalf of Senator Tom Brewer, introducing LB847 to the body. This bill changes an interstate compact Nebraska is part of. Since the early 1970s, Nebraska has been part of an interstate agreement called the Interstate Civil Defense and Disaster Compact, or ICDDC. That compact set the rules for how we coordinate with other states in disaster response. However, in 1990, there were some deficiencies identified in the ICDDC. A new compact, called the Emergency Management Assistance Compact was created in 1996. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and United States territories have now joined EMAC. This bill simply recognizes that the ICDDC is absolute [SIC],

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and that the EMAC is now the interstate agreement that Nebraska relies on. I would appreciate your green vote on LB847. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Seeing no one else in the queue, you are recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB847 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 34 days, 0 nays on the motion to advance the bill.

KELLY: LB847 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item on the agenda.

ASSISTANT CLERK: LB848, offered by Senator Brewer. It's a bill for an act relating to the Nebraska National Guard; to amend section 55-134 and 136, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; change the maximum age for the Adjutant General; and repeal the original sections. Bill was introduced on Jan-- on January 3rd of this year. Referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File. There are no committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Sanders, you recognized to open.

SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, good morning, colleagues, I stand here on behalf of Senator Tom Brewer to introduce LB848, which is a pretty simple bill. It changes the maximum age of the Nebraska Adjutant General from 64 years old to 66. Right now, Nebraska law provides the qualifications for the National Guard members. For enlisted personnel, the minimum age to serve is 18 and the maximum age is 60. For warrant officers, those ages are 18 and 62. And for commissioned officers, the minimum is 18 and the maximum is 64. This bill would change the maximum age for the Adjutant General, Commanding Officer of the Nebraska National Guard, from 64 to 66. This would align Nebraska with federal law and allow us to retain an experienced general officer a little bit longer when the time comes. Thank you for your attention. I'd appreciate a green vote on LB848t. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB848 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on the motion to advance the bill.

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KELLY: Lbw. 848 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Next bill, LB936, offered by Senator Bostar. It's a bill for an act relating to county government; to eliminate provisions relating to the regulation of certain recreation, entertainment, and amusements; and to outright repeal section 23-808 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817 and 818. Bill was introduced on January 4th of this year, referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File. There are no committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Bostar you're recognized to open.

BOSTAR: Thank you, Mr. President, and good morning, colleagues. LB936 seeks to repeal outdated and often burdensome amusement licensing requirements in current statute. Nebraska statute states any roadhouse, dance hall, carnival, show, amusement park, or other place of public amusement outside city limits requires a license from a county board. A roadhouse is defined as a place where any two of the following takes place eating, drinking, and/or dancing. LB936 also repeals a separate but overall similar license for pool halls and bowling alleys. In fiscal year 2022-23, Lancaster County issued only six amusement licenses. The fee to issue these licenses is set by statute at \$10, and the applicant must also pay for two weeks of notices in the newspaper before a county board can vote to approve them. For pool halls and bowling alleys, the fee is \$10 per table or lane for the first three, then \$5 each after that. The current state statute on amusement licenses is largely outdated law from the 1930s that predates modern liquor licensing and other regulations. For example, the current definition of roadhouse seems to apply to any restaurant serving alcohol, which are already regulated by the standard liquor licensing process. Similarly, carnival rides and amusement park rides are now regulated by the state Fire Marshal under the Nebraska Amusement Ride Act, which was adopted in 1987. Now, repealing the licenses could possibly leave some events unregulated if they do not serve alcohol, do not have rides, and do not use any of the public right of way, essentially sober gatherings on private property. It is unclear why these gatherings should be regulated. The current process is duplicative and confusing, with a number of applicants unsure of whether or not they even need an amusement license. For example, a strict reading of the definition of roadhouse under 23-818 suggests that nearly every restaurant, wedding venue, or other event space outside of city limits is required to have an amusement license, which does not seem to be current practice. Additionally, the broad term of place of public amusement is

undefined. Many amusement licenses are processed alongside a Special Designated License, or SDL liquor license, meaning the applicant has to apply for two licenses for the same event. The amusement license also requires a longer legal notice-- a longer legal notice period than liquor licenses, two weeks versus one week, which adds to the confusion. LB936 advanced out of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee with 0 no votes and no opposition testimony. I urge your green vote to advance LB936 to Select File. I'd be happy to answer any questions from the body if there are any.

KELLY: Thank you Senator Bostar. Seeing no one else in the queue, You're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB36 to E&R initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 35 ayes, 0 nays on the advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB936 advances to E&R initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Next bill, Mr. President, LB940, offered by Senator Dorn. It's a bill for an act relating to county government; to provide the authority for counties to plan, initiate, fund, maintain, administer, and evaluate facilities, programs, and services for survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault as prescribed; provide for counties to enter into agreements as prescribed; harmonize provisions; and repeal the original sections. Bill was introduced on January 4th, 2024, referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File. There are no committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Dorn, you are recognized to open.

DORN: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor. LB940 addresses an issue raised by a state audit by the state auditor during a routine audit of Gage County. The auditor re-- reviewed payments made to a nonprofit organization which provides services to survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence. The auditor raised the issue that state statute does not specifically state these types of payments can be made. I met with Mike Foley, our State Auditor, and his staff. We discussed the issue, and the Auditor offered to have his legal counsel help draft language to address the audit issue, which is now LB940. I want to thank our State Auditor, Mike Foley, and his staff for their willingness to address this issue and work on language in this bill.

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Their cooperation is very much appreciated. Simply put, the bill permits, it does not require, it permits a county to enter into an agreement with these type of nonprofit organization. It simply gives the county the statutory authority to make these payments if they choose. Again, LB940 is permissive. What came about with that audit was that specifically this type of an organization wasn't listed in statute, so they raised a, I call any question, a flag, whatever you want to call it, and that they were not one of the groups that could be funded through some funds from the county. The bill is really that simple. I would ask that this body give favorable consideration to LB940. It did advance unanimously out of the Government Committee. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Dorn. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close, and waive closing. Members, the question is the advancement of LB940 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 33 ayes, 0 nays of the motion to advance the bill.

KELLY: LB940 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, LB1102, offered by Senator Conrad. It's a bill for an act relating to missing persons; to declare October 17th as Nebraska Missing Persons Day. Bill was introduced on January 9th of this year. It was referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File, no committee amendments.

KELLY: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Conrad, you're recognized to open.

CONRAD: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning, colleagues. I urge your favorable consideration and support of LB1102, which would create a-- which would declare and create October 17th of each year, as Nebraska Missing Persons Day. Friends, I will tell you just briefly what I told my friends and colleagues on the Government Committee when we had a very emotional committee hearing on this measure just very recently. This was not an issue that was ever really on my radar screen as potential legislation for inclusion in my personal legislative agenda. But my office was contacted by a host of families who had missing loved ones and who were trying to turn that trauma into something positive from a perspective of raising awareness, providing inspiration and hope for those families to keep going, and

had looked at the experiences of our sister states that had taken a similar direction. Missing people have been afforded an opportunity for awareness and education through successive executive orders by various Governors. But they do feel that having a designation in state law would provide more formality and more clarity in terms of continuing to keep their missing loved ones not only in their minds, but within the broader public. So this effort was really spearheaded by a very high profile case from right here in Lincoln. On October 17th, 2000, Gina Bose went missing from Lincoln and hasn't been seen or heard from since. Her family started a foundation to help raise awareness and has done incredible advocacy and outreach with other families similarly situated to try and help identify and bring missing loved ones home, and in many instances, have actually been very successful in those efforts. And we heard about those inspiring stories at the Government Committee level. Additionally, I think that this measure is important. It touches upon our shared commitment to addressing ongoing issues in regards to murdered and missing indigenous women. I know Senator Raybould had a measure that she successfully moved forward for inclusion in the Attorney General's Office to provide additional staffing related to the very high incidences of those cases in Nebraska. And then finally, I would be remiss if I didn't thank the family of, of a recent missing person that's very high profile right here in our community in Lincoln, Tyler Goodrich, who also found a way to work through an incredible amount of heartache and shared their story with the Government Committee as well in support of this measure. There were no opponents. There is no fiscal note. I want to, again, lend my gratitude to the families who are seeking to turn pain and trauma into something positive for, for others who are similarly situated. I'm happy to answer any questions and urge your favorable consideration. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Conrad. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB1102 to E&R Initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: 36 ayes, 0 nays on the motion to advance the bill.

KELLY: LB1102, advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk, next item.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Legislative Bill 938 by Senator Brandt is a bill for an act relating to the County Purchasing Act; to redefine a term; change provisions relating to the county board, purchasing agent, purchasing, competitive bidding, surplus property;

to allow auctions and trades; to eliminate special purposes-- purchases; to harmonize provisions ; to provide an operative date and repeal the original sections. Bill was introduced on January 4th of this year. It was referred to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee, placed on General File with committee amendments.

KELLY: Senator Brandt, you're recognized to open.

BRANDT: Thank you, Mr. President. Good morning again, colleagues. The pages are passing out a support piece for this-- for this bill. I'm asking for your green vote to advance LB938, which makes much needed updates to the County Purchasing Act. This legislation makes changes to the threshold values for competitive bids and formal bids and open market bids, taking into consideration inflation and economic changes. The last time these were updated was 2018. These threshold changes would be, increasing the minimum threshold required for competitive bids from the current \$50,000 to \$70,000, then another increase in 2029 to \$90,000, and finally an increase in 2034 to \$110,000; increasing the minimum threshold required for informal bids from the current \$10,000 to \$50,000 range, to \$15,000 to \$70,000 range, and then increasing it by \$20,000 in 2029 and in 2034; and finally, increasing the maximum bid for open market purchases from \$10,000 to \$15,000, and then by another \$5,000 in both 2029 and 2034. It also makes changes to the selling of surplus property and obsolete mobile equipment. These changes would be increasing surplus property sales amount from \$2,500 to \$3,500, raising it again in 2029 to \$4,500, and finally to \$6,000 in 2034; mobile equipment from increases from \$5,000 to \$7,000, and then increased to \$9,000 in 2029, and finally \$12,000 in 2034. This will allow a county not to cancel a public auction where only 1 or 2 people show up when three are required. This proposal also outlines circumstances under which competitive bidding may be waived, ensuring flexibility in response to emergencies, or when substantial cost savings can be realized to special purchases or auctions. For example-- An example of this would be if a road grader was up for auction on BigIron, which is a website, a county board may pass a resolution stating they can bid up to an agreed amount for the equipment. In conclusion, the proposed changes to the Nebraska County Purchasing Act represent a thoughtful and pragmatic approach to modernizing the county's purchasing procedures. The updated thresholds and flexibility in procurement processes will contribute to increased efficiency, transparency, and responsible financial management within Nebraska counties. The committee amendment comes from discussion with the Press Association about specifically stating rules for county meeting notices. LB938 was voted out of the Government Committee with

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6 yes votes, with 2 absent. With that, I ask for your green vote to advance LB938.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Brandt. Senator Raybould would like to recognize some guests in the north balcony, juniors and seniors at Lincoln High School, Lincoln, Nebraska. Please stand and be recognized by your Nebraska Legislature. As stated, there are committee amendments. Senator Sanders, you're recognized to open.

SANDERS: Thank you, Mr. President. Again, I stand on behalf of committee chair, Senator Tom Brewer. The Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee heard LB938 on January 25th, several county officials testified in support, along with directors of Nebraska Association of County Officials. There was no opposition to the bill. The committee voted 6-0, 2 absent, to advance the bill to General File with AM2214. AM938 [SIC AM2214] adjusts the public notice requirements relating to a special meeting called for purposes of approving participation in an auction. The amended language should provide more specific guidance to our county officials than the original vision of the bill. The original version of the bill. The amend-- the amended language should provide more specific guidance to our county officials than the original version of the bill. I would ask your green vote on AM2214 and on LB938. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Sanders. Senator Moser, you're recognized to speak.

MOSER: Thank you, Mr. Lieutenant Governor, I was wondering if Senator Brandt would respond to a couple of questions?

KELLY: Senator Brandt, would you respond to some questions?

BRANDT: Yes, I would.

MOSER: So the first three things are for purchases, and I-- that's pretty self-evident, I think. But the surplus property sale and the obsolete equipment sale limits, those limits, if it's more than that, the rules are different than if it's less than that amount, is that--

BRANDT: That's how it was explained to me by NACO, which is the organization for all county officials that if it's over-- the first column is a current amount. So if you have an old sprayer or something sitting there and somebody walked in and said, I'll give you a \$2,000 for it, the board can just sell it or the highway superintendent can

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just sell it. If, if it's over that value, over that \$2,500, they would have to get-- try to get three bids for it.

MOSEER: So, and you said something about auctions. What if you're having an auction and selling a whole bunch of obsolete equipment--

BRANDT: Yep, thats--

MOSEER: These requirements don't apply to that?

BRANDT: That, that would be correct. And in my opening-- what the auction actually refers to is a lot of equipment has moved onto online auctions, like Auction Time or BigIron. Your county needs-- is looking at a road grader on there. The board can pre-approve an amount, so that the highway superintendent can bid on that auction without having to get three formal bids.

MOSEER: OK. Thank you. I, I just had those questions. I appreciate that.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Moser and Senator Brandt. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Sanders, you're recognized to close on the amendment, and waive. Members, the question is the adoption of AM2214. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays Mr. President, on adoption of the committee amendment.

KELLY: AM2214 is adopted. Seeing no one else in the queue, Senator Brandt, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the advancement of LB938 to E&R initial. All those in favor vote aye; all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 37 ayes, 0 nays in advancement of the bill, Mr. President.

KELLY: LB938 advances to E&R Initial. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr., President, pursuant to the speaker's announcement previously, Senator Wayne would move to suspend Rule 3, Section 14, to allow for cancellation of the public hearing on LB922, set for February 14th, 2024 within the seven calendar days.

KELLY: Senator Wayne, you're recognized to speak.

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WAYNE: Thank you, Mr. President. This is a error on my part. Senator McKinney introduced the bill on behalf, behalf of his constituents, and he asked me not to schedule it during this week. And everybody's been asking me to schedule stuff before the Speaker priority. And so I put it on the wrong list. And so it needs to be next week. I mean, two weeks from now for the constituent. He introduced it, he ought to to be here to testify, and he actually as-- I guess that he asked me that, and I put it on the wrong list with the list of everybody who wanted to make sure they heard their bills before the priority deadline. So I'd ask for you to vote green on this.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Wayne. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close on your motion, and waive. Members, the question is the suspension of the rules. Takes 30 votes. All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 38 ayes, 0 nays, Mr., President, on suspension of the rules.

KELLY: The motion is adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President, pursuant to the immediately preceding action of the Legislature, notice of cancellation from the Judiciary Committee. Mr. President, Senator Linehan would move to suspend Rule 3, Section 14 to allow less than seven days notice to schedule LB1374 for Wednesday, February 14th, 2024.

KELLY: Senator Linehan, you're recognized to open.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. And thank you colleagues. I'm sorry that we're keeping you here any minute longer than we have to, but, I scheduled one GoodLife District Bill for next Wednesday, and failed to put my bill that does-- is all the same subjects on the same day. So all this will do is we'll put both of those together, which will save all the people that will come in and testify on that bill making two trips a week apart. So I'd appreciate your green vote on 13-- on this motion. Thank you.

KELLY: Thank you, Senator Linehan. Seeing no one else in the queue, you're recognized to close, and waive. Members, the question is the rules suspension. It takes 30 votes. All those in favor vote aye, all those opposed vote nay. Record, Mr. Clark.

CLERK: 34 ayes, 0 nays, Mr. President, on suspension of the rules.

KELLY: The motion is adopted.

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CLERK: Mr. President, pursuant to previous action of the Legislature, notice a committee hearing from the Revenue Committee. Additional items for the record, Mr. President, your Committee on General Affairs, Chaired by Senator Lowe, reports LB685 to General File with committee amendments. New LR, Senator Lowe, LR103. That will be laid over. Amendments to be printed, Senator Erdman to LB1067. Name adds, Senator Bosn to LB832, Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, LB857. DeBoer, LB933, Dungan, LB1047, Hardin, LB1178. Notice that the Revenue Committee will be having an Executive Session with the conclusion, conclusion of today's hearing in room 1524. Revenue Exec Session, 1524. The Health and Human Services will hold an Executive Session in room 1510 following today's hearing. Health and Human Services Exec Session, 1510.

KELLY: I recognized Senator Linehan for a message.

LINEHAN: Thank you, Mr. President. When we posted the hearings for Revenue Committee this afternoon, we posted Senator Clements' LB1067. It was listed as last. We have changed that, and LB1067 will be first on the schedule that's posted outside the door. It's posted down there now, but I just wanted to make this announcement in case people didn't get the word. So LB1067 will be first, first bill we hear today in the Revenue Committee. Thank you, Mr. President.

KELLY: Thank you Senator Linehan. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, a priority motion. Senator Linehan would move to adjourn the body until Monday, February 12th, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.

KELLY: Members, you've heard the motion to adjourn. All those in favor say aye. All those opposed say nay. We are adjourned.