

Legislature - First Session - 2019

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB148

Chairperson: Senator Tom Brewer

Committee: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Date of Hearing: February 06, 2019

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 148 is a combination of two past bills, LB 127 and LB 479, that we had introduced during the 105th Legislative Session. Both of those bills advanced to General File from the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. The purpose of the legislation is to promote greater transparency of governing bodies by amending the Nebraska Budget Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 13-501 to 13-513) and the Nebraska Open Meetings Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414).

First, the bill adds to the definition of a governing body for purposes of the Nebraska Budget Act. Joint entities created pursuant to the Interlocal Cooperation Act that receive tax funds generated under section 2-3226.05 are added to this definition. This makes the provisions of the Nebraska Budget Act applicable to natural resource districts with integrated management plans involved in an interlocal agreement.

Second, the bill provides that public entities required to hold a public hearing on a proposed budget statement must hold that hearing separately from any regularly scheduled meeting. The hearing shall not be limited by a set length of time.

LB 148 establishes the following additional requirements for a public hearing on a proposed budget statement:

- A detailed presentation of the proposed budget statement must be given
- At least three copies of the proposed budget statement must be made available to the public
- Any member of the public wishing to speak on the proposed budget statement must be given a reasonable amount of time to address the governing body

The bill also adjusts notice requirements for meetings of public bodies. For meetings of governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska:

- Notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction. If available, notice shall also be published on such newspaper's website.
- In addition to the required notice, notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by the public body or advisory committee.

All other public bodies besides governing bodies of political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska may designate the method of providing notice of meetings. All public bodies must record in their minutes the methods and dates of the notice provided.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Mike Groene