

ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 310

Introduced by Jacobson, 42.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to propose an interim study to examine the organizational structure of the Nebraska Tourism Commission and the feasibility of consolidating its duties and powers within the Department of Economic Development to ensure the most robust promotion of interstate and intrastate commerce.

In 2012, the Legislature created the Nebraska Tourism Commission as a separate agency. Because tourism serves as a critical driver of commercial activity and is one of Nebraska's largest industries, it is essential to evaluate whether the current structure maximizes the state's commercial potential and competitive standing.

The study shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) A review of the administrative costs of the commission to ensure that public funds are being used efficiently to stimulate private sector commerce;

(2) An assessment of whether reintegrating tourism duties into the Department of Economic Development would create a more unified approach to statewide commerce, business recruitment, and brand identity;

(3) An analysis of how the current independent commission model affects the commercial viability and economic development of small businesses and rural attractions compared to a consolidated department model;

(4) A review of the impact on hospitality-related commerce and whether a departmental structure provides better access to the financing and development tools managed by the Department of Economic Development;

(5) An examination of how other states utilize their departments of commerce or economic development to oversee tourism to create a more cohesive economic engine; and

(6) Recommendations for any necessary legislative changes to statutes to better facilitate commercial growth and economic development through the transition of these duties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.