

LEGISLATIVE BILL 653

Approved by the Governor May 13, 2009

Introduced by Harms, 48; Mello, 5; Wightman, 36; Nantkes, 46; Nordquist, 7; Sullivan, 41; Dubas, 34; Pirsch, 4.

FOR AN ACT relating to the Legislature; to create the Legislature's Planning Committee; to state findings; to provide powers and duties; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

(1) State government has significant challenges to face. An ever-changing global economy, an aging population, outmigration of educated young people, and constantly expanding needs for services, among other issues, require that the Legislature consider the long-term trends and factors affecting the welfare of Nebraskans and the long-term implications of the decisions made by the members of the Legislature;

(2) It is necessary for the Legislature to identify emerging trends, assets, and challenges of the state;

(3) It is vital for Nebraska to have continuity in policy;

(4) It is necessary to establish a process of long-term state planning within the Legislature; and

(5) It is the duty of the Legislature to assess the long-range needs of Nebraska and to adopt legislation which meets those needs.

Sec. 2. The Legislature's Planning Committee is hereby established as a special legislative committee to exercise the authority and perform the duties provided for in this section. The committee shall be comprised of the Speaker of the Legislature, the chairperson of the Executive Board of the Legislative Council, the chairperson of the Appropriations Committee of the Legislature, and six other members of the Legislature to be chosen by the Executive Board of the Legislative Council. The executive board shall ensure that the Legislature's Planning Committee includes adequate geographic representation. The chairperson and vice-chairperson of the committee shall be elected by majority vote of the committee. The committee shall be subject to all rules prescribed by the Legislature. The initial members of the committee shall be appointed as soon as possible after the effective date of this act, and thereafter the committee shall be appointed at the beginning of each regular legislative session and shall meet as needed. The committee shall have staff support from the various legislative divisions and staff.

Sec. 3. The Legislature's Planning Committee shall:

(1) Collect and analyze data about Nebraska, including, but not limited to, demographics, workforce, education, wages, wealth, tax structure, revenue, natural resources, assets, challenges, trends, and growth and efficiency of government;

(2) Identify long-term issues significant to the state;

(3) Set goals and benchmarks;

(4) Issue a yearly report of its findings; and

(5) Propose legislation.

Sec. 4. In order to fulfill its duties, the Legislature's Planning Committee may:

(1) Hold public hearings;

(2) Obtain data and information from state agencies, the University of Nebraska, and private entities that contract with the state;

(3) Contract for assistance, including consultants, with the approval of the Executive Board of the Legislative Council; and

(4) Exercise any other authority or powers as granted from time to time by the executive board.

Sec. 5. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.