

ELEVENTH DAY - JANUARY 22, 2026**LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL****ONE HUNDRED NINTH LEGISLATURE
SECOND SESSION****ELEVENTH DAY**

Legislative Chamber, Lincoln, Nebraska
Thursday, January 22, 2026

PRAYER

The prayer was offered by Senator Lippincott.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was offered by Senator Strommen.

ROLL CALL

Pursuant to adjournment, the Legislature met at 9:00 a.m., Speaker Arch presiding.

The roll was called and all members were present except Senators DeBoer and Dover who were excused; and Senators Hunt and Jacobson who were excused until they arrive.

CORRECTIONS FOR THE JOURNAL

The Journal for the tenth day was approved.

REFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Legislative Council Executive Board submits the following report:

LB/LR	Committee
LB1124	Revenue
LB1125	Executive Board
LB1126	Transportation and Telecommunications
LB1127	Natural Resources
LB1128	General Affairs
LB1129	Urban Affairs
LB1130	Urban Affairs
LB1131	Revenue
LB1132	Health and Human Services

LB1133	Business and Labor
LB1134	Urban Affairs
LB1135	Urban Affairs
LB1136	Judiciary
LB1137	Banking, Commerce and Insurance
LB1138	Banking, Commerce and Insurance
LB1139	Judiciary
LB1140	Appropriations
LB1141	Natural Resources
LB1142	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
LB1143	Appropriations
LB1144	Health and Human Services
LB1145	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
LB1146	Education
LB1147	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
LB1148	Judiciary
LB1149	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
LB1150	Revenue
LB1151	General Affairs
LB1152	Banking, Commerce and Insurance
LB1153	Judiciary
LB1154	Revenue
LB1155	Executive Board
LB1156	Revenue
LB1157	Banking, Commerce and Insurance
LB1158	Transportation and Telecommunications
LB1159	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs
LB1160	Judiciary
LB1161	Judiciary
LB1162	Transportation and Telecommunications
LB1163	Urban Affairs
LB1164	Education
LB1165	Revenue

(Signed) Ben Hansen, Chairperson
Executive Board

AMENDMENT(S) - Print in Journal

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1166:

FA826

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1167:

FA827

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1168:

FA828

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1169:

FA829

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1170:

FA830

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1171:

FA831

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1172:

FA832

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1173:

FA833

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1174:

FA834

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1175:

FA835

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1176:

FA836

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1177:

FA837

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1178:

FA838

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1179:

FA839

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1180:

FA840

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1181: FA841](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1182: FA842](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1183: FA843](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1184: FA844](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1185: FA845](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1186: FA846](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1187: FA847](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1188: FA848](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1189: FA849](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1190: FA850](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1191: FA851](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to [LB1192: FA852](#)

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1193:

FA853

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1194:

FA854

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1195:

FA855

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1196:

FA856

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1197:

FA857

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1198:

FA858

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1199:

FA859

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1200:

FA860

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1201:

FA861

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1202:

FA862

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1203:

FA863

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1204:

FA864

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1205:

FA865

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1206:

FA866

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1207:

FA867

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1208:

FA868

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1209:

FA869

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1210:

FA870

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1211:

FA871

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1212:

FA872

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1213:

FA873

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1214:

FA874

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1215:

FA875

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1216:

FA876

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1217:

FA877

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1218:

FA878

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1219:

FA879

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1220:

FA880

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1221:

FA881

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1222:

FA882

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1223:

FA883

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1224:

FA884

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1225:

FA885

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1226:

FA886

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1227:

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Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1228:

FA888

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1229:

FA889

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1230:

FA890

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1231:

FA891

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1232:

FA892

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1233:

FA893

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1234:

FA894

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1235:

FA895

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1236:

FA896

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1237:

FA897

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1238:

FA898

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1239:

FA899

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1240:

FA900

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1241:

FA901

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1242:

FA902

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1243:

FA903

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1244:

FA904

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1245:

FA905

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1246:

FA906

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1247:

FA907

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1248:

FA908

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1249:

FA909

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1250:

FA910

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1251:

FA911

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1252:

FA912

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1253:

FA913

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1254:

FA914

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1255:

FA915

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1256:

FA916

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1257:

FA917

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1258:

FA918

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1259:

FA919

Strike the enacting clause.

Senator Kauth filed the following amendment to LB1260:

FA920

Strike the enacting clause.

GENERAL FILE

LEGISLATIVE BILL 400. Committee AM702, found on page 1238, First Session, 2025, and considered on pages 426 and 429, was renewed.

Senator Clouse renewed AM1696, found on page 380 and considered on pages 427 and 429, to the committee amendment.

Senator M. Cavanaugh offered the following motion:

MO362

Reconsider the vote on MO360.

Senator M. Cavanaugh asked unanimous consent to withdraw MO362, to reconsider.

No objections. So ordered.

Senator Hallstrom offered MO361, found on page 445, to recommit to the Business and Labor Committee.

Senator Hallstrom asked unanimous consent to withdraw MO361, to recommit to the Business and Labor Committee.

No objections. So ordered.

Pending.

PRESIDENT KELLY PRESIDING**MOTION - Escort Chief Justice**

Senator Raybould moved that a committee of five be appointed to escort the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court to the Legislative Chamber for the purpose of delivering the State of the Judiciary Address.

The motion prevailed.

The Chair appointed Senators Bosn, Dungan, Hughes, Sanders, and Spivey to serve on said committee.

STATE OF THE JUDICIARY ADDRESS

Mr. President, Mr. Speaker, and Members of the Legislature:

Thank you for inviting me to report on the current State of the Nebraska Judicial Branch, to share some of our successes, and to recognize points of emphasis for this new year. It is an honor to address this legislative body.

I am joined by my fellow members of the Nebraska Supreme Court. May I introduce, in order of seniority as to service on the Court:

Justice William Cassel of O'Neill
Justice Stephanie Stacy of Lincoln
Justice Jonathan Papik of Omaha
Justice John Freudenberg of Rushville
Justice Jason Bergevin of Columbus, and
our newest member of the Supreme Court,
Justice Derek Vaughn of Omaha.

I begin by thanking you, the members of our Legislature, for your support of the Judicial Branch and the work that we do. Last year's budget process placed enormous pressure on this body. You looked closely at the State's expenditures, weighed the impact of the work being accomplished, and saw the importance of funding the Judicial Branch. For that, I am truly appreciative.

This session will again give you the opportunity to address budgetary concerns. Please know that the Judicial Branch is working to assist you in that endeavor.

Before discussing the budget, I would like to highlight some of our notable achievements over the last year. Many of these achievements were made possible by previous budget appropriations.

Much of our mission focuses on the delivery of justice to the citizens of Nebraska and comes in many different forms. Our work involves operating

courts; supervising adults and juveniles on probation, post-release supervision, and problem-solving courts; and serving our most vulnerable individuals by providing public guardianships. These efforts increase public safety and make Nebraska a great place to live and raise a family, all while saving taxpayer dollars.

The work of the Judicial Branch is challenging and regularly involves issues which plague our society. Support from both the Executive and Legislative Branches is necessary to ensure that we continue to achieve our shared goals.

Court Operations

The Judiciary operates both a district court and a county court in all 93 counties in Nebraska, and we operate separate juvenile courts in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy counties. The Workers' Compensation Court also falls under the authority of the Judicial Branch. In addition, our State has two levels of appellate courts.

When combining the trial and appellate courts, we have nearly 150 judges serving the people of Nebraska. These judges are selected through a merit process made up of a local component, comprised of lawyer and non-lawyer citizens, who vet the applicants. The final selection is then made by the Governor.

It is important to remember that judicial applicants are Nebraska lawyers from the communities in which they serve. Oftentimes, they have chosen to forego lucrative legal practices to join the judiciary and become public servants.

In the recent past, we have seen a decline in judicial applications, which leads to lengthier times filling these essential positions. This is an issue of great concern which we must address together.

Upon accepting a position on the bench, our judges work diligently to ensure justice is accessible to all. Nebraska judges are constitutionally and statutorily tasked with holding law offenders accountable, civilly resolving disputes, and protecting the best interests of our citizens, including our children. Our judges often perform these core functions under the burden of heavy caseloads and amid emotionally charged environments.

Doing this work comes with grave responsibilities and frequently intense criticism. Yet our judges remain steadfast and committed to the rule of law and the protection of our democracy. Their security and well-being remain a constant priority for the Judicial Branch. Despite these challenges, our judges and court staff continue to do their work with dignity and respect.

The Judicial Branch employs more than 1,600 dedicated individuals who average more than 8 years of service to the Branch. Their collective

experience directly impacts the service we deliver, the innovations we create, and our inherent adaptability as the third branch of government. It influences our deep institutional knowledge, understanding not just *what* works but *why* it works, allowing us to turn challenges into successes.

Our courts continue to expand the use of technology and innovation to increase access to justice. Consistent with our constitutional mandates, we work together to increase uniformity in court processes and use of court forms so that accessing a court is similar in all parts of our State.

I am truly proud of our judges and Judicial Branch employees, and I thank them for their great work.

Adult Probation

Probation is another function provided by the Judicial Branch. More than 80% of all probationers satisfactorily complete their terms of probation, leading to Nebraska's exceptional recidivism rate of 19%. The average annual cost to supervise an adult on probation is \$3,500, while the average annual cost to incarcerate an adult is \$50,000.

Adult probation completes more than 11,000 presentence and post-release supervision investigations annually. Nearly 14,000 adults are supervised by probation on any given day. Our probation officers utilize evidence-based practices to facilitate positive behavioral change and improve public safety. We also rely on supportive interventions from community providers to increase accountability and assist with changing criminal behavior.

One of these services is transitional living. In 2025, over 1,400 individuals accessed this service for safe, sober, and supportive housing while they reintegrated into their community and navigated treatment and employment opportunities. Without transitional living, these individuals would likely be facing insecure housing and an increased risk of reoffending.

Additionally, adult probationers have access to Nebraska's seventeen reporting centers throughout the State. These centers offer court-ordered programming which focuses on cognitive behavioral restructuring, relapse prevention, crime victim empathy, and employment services. Last year, in any given month, over 4,500 adults participated in a reporting center class.

In 2025, probation launched a grant-funded project in Douglas, Hall, and Buffalo counties, piloting a specialized model of supervising emerging adult individuals, ages 18 to 25. Currently, no population is more overrepresented in our justice system than this age group. Nationally, only two out of five emerging adults at high risk to reoffend complete their term of probation successfully.

Nebraska's pilot project utilizes specialized probation officers to support young adults with education, employment, mentorship, and community

engagement. After the first year of the emerging adult pilot, outcomes are looking promising. More than 60% of these probationers have not been in violation status or arrested on new charges.

Other states are paying attention to what Nebraska is doing. Both the South Dakota and Massachusetts state probation systems are modeling their emerging adult probation practices on our work. With continued success of the pilot, it is our intent to expand this approach statewide.

Post-Release Supervision

On a daily average, 1,300 individuals are monitored under our post-release supervision program. These are people in our communities who were initially deemed not suitable for probation and were sentenced by the court to serve time in jail or prison.

After release from incarceration, individuals on post-release supervision must comply with several court-ordered conditions. Among those conditions are maintaining employment, participating in behavioral health services, and refraining from criminal activity -- all while being intensely supervised by a probation officer.

Less than 10% of those under post-release supervision have been resentenced to the Department of Correctional Services because of a probation revocation. This program continues to prevent future crime and keeps individuals from returning to prison.

Problem-Solving Courts

Problem-solving courts continue to be an effective alternative to incarceration. To date, Nebraska has 35 specialty courts, including adult drug courts in every judicial district, four veteran's treatment courts, three re-entry courts, two DUI courts, one young adult court, and a mental health court. We also have two family treatment courts and a juvenile drug court. The average cost to supervise a problem-solving court participant is approximately \$5,000 per year. A portion of this cost is paid by program participants.

Currently, 42 of our trial judges preside over these labor-intensive courts, the majority of which are judges from the district court. However, more and more county court judges and separate juvenile court judges are taking on this added responsibility. The judges' role in our problem-solving courts is often referred to as the "secret sauce," and is vital to the success of these programs. The recidivism rate for those who successfully graduate from these courts is 24%.

In 2025, our problem-solving courts served nearly 2,000 individuals. However, more eligible participants can and should be served. To do so, we will need your commitment to provide additional financial resources.

For example, Lancaster County Adult Drug Court has reached its maximum capacity of 90 participants. To increase that number, it would cost approximately \$300,000 annually for additional staff members and necessary treatment for the new participants.

Currently, our budget will not allow for the needed increase, and suitable problem-solving court candidates are being turned away. Many of those turned away will languish in county jails or end up in our State's already overcrowded prisons.

Juvenile Probation

The Judicial Branch continues to prioritize the work of juvenile probation as well. Last year, juvenile probation served nearly 2,400 youth on a daily basis. Our recidivism rate remains at an all-time low of 17%.

In 2025, LB 530 was adopted by this Legislature to reconsider the process involving juveniles being detained and supervised on probation. The main takeaway was that judicial oversight remains a key component to effective juvenile rehabilitation. As we are all well aware, juvenile courts are intended to rehabilitate juveniles as opposed to merely punishing them.

The passage of LB 530 lowered the age a juvenile could be securely detained and enhanced the method of detention by including judges in the decision-making process. This legislation also required juvenile probation to increase reporting and communication with judges, prosecutors, law enforcement, and other stakeholders.

The legislation went into effect in September. We executed comprehensive implementation with minimal concerns.

Additionally, members of the Judicial, Executive, and Legislative Branches participated in a national convening on juvenile justice issues held in Omaha in February of 2025. From the convening, the Nebraska team focused on two priorities, which include a high-risk youth specialized supervision model and community prevention and early intervention.

The first priority involves earlier identification of high-risk youth. This is accomplished through investigation and assessment, as well as implementation of a targeted team approach which focuses services on addressing risk and needs of our youth.

The second priority involves building community connections between schools, DHHS, and juvenile probation in order to share resources and increase access to rehabilitative services.

Our work is ongoing, but together we are improving our odds of success. Finally, through the implementation of our statewide initiative to enhance the juvenile justice system, we continue to prioritize research. Our research

focuses on expanding resources in rural areas of the State, validating our intake detention instrument, and reviewing service rate structures.

Office of Public Guardian

The Office of Public Guardian acts as a guardian of last resort for vulnerable individuals when no one else is available. From the time of its inception in 2015, the Office of Public Guardian has served over 1,100 Nebraskans. That office maintains a full caseload of nearly 400 individuals.

Though judges and court staff oversee thousands of guardianship and conservatorship cases across the State, bad actors still prey on those in need of assistance. The Office of Public Guardian continues to focus on serving clients' needs as well as educating guardians as to best practice standards.

Access To Justice Commission

Our Access to Justice Commission identifies barriers to equal access to the courts and recommends effective solutions.

Last year, I spoke about the Self-Help Center Pilot Project located in the Douglas County Law Library. As you may be aware, nearly half of Nebraska's court users are self-represented litigants, or SRLs. One of the core strategic principles of the Commission is that all individuals have access to understandable legal information and resources so that they can navigate the court system efficiently and effectively.

I am pleased to report that with the assistance of a grant from the State Justice Institute, and in partnership with Douglas County judges and court staff, the Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation has made significant progress in developing case packets for the most common case types for self-represented litigants. These packets include step-by-step instructions, plain-language court forms, and information about how to present evidence and testimony in court.

We are also developing training for our court staff to assist SRLs without providing legal advice. And we are supplying additional technology and equipment for placement in various libraries across the State so that SRLs have expanded access to the resources available on our website.

The Access to Justice Commission is also developing a survey to enable court users to provide real-time feedback about their court experiences. The results of this survey will help guide and fine-tune the initiatives of the Commission.

Language Access

Our Language Access Program plays a critical role in ensuring that constitutional provisions of access to justice are available for all court users.

In 2025, interpretation services in Nebraska were provided in 71 different languages at over 22,000 interpreting events.

However, the cost of providing these services continues to increase significantly, partly due to the need to bring in out-of-state interpreters. As a result, we are working to increase local interpreter services by implementing a training program known as the Interpreter Certification Pathway.

JUSTICE 2.0

As I also mentioned last year, we have begun the work necessary to replace our outdated JUSTICE case management system. Over the last year, a strategic analysis of our current JUSTICE system has taken place. A Request for Information was publicized, and presentations from vendors have occurred.

We are not doing this in a vacuum. We have included judges, court staff, and members of the bar in this process. By this summer, we intend to submit a Request for Proposals to solidify JUSTICE 2.0.

It is anticipated that the new system will streamline court processes, incorporate electronic exhibit use and retention, facilitate an electronic jury management system, simplify accurate data collection and dissemination, refine the process of collecting court fees and fines, and improve communication with court users.

This endeavor is decades in the making, as JUSTICE was first implemented in 1994. By creating and growing the JUSTICE program in-house over the last 30 years, we have saved millions of taxpayer dollars. But the needs of the State now require a significant expenditure of 10's of millions of dollars to complete the modernized system.

We have already put into motion several different funding options, including increased rates to search for court case information, legislation to create additional court filing fees earmarked for this project, and applying for grant funding.

After completing our due diligence and exhausting other funding sources, we will work with you in FY 2027 on legislative appropriations to finalize the project.

Budgetary Considerations

Lastly, revisiting the 2025-2027 biennium budget has become a reality. In prior years, the Judicial Branch sought funding for our regular expenditures as well as for legislatively approved staff pay increases and implementation of four additional problem-solving courts. Although those efforts were supported by previous Legislatures, we were asked to use existing carryover funds and no additional funds were appropriated.

In 2025, we again asked for additional funds, but those funds were likewise not appropriated. We also faced proposed cuts to our general fund budget that would have negatively impacted the services we provide.

Through your steadfast support, a majority of the Judiciary's requested funding was approved. Our work has continued to provide proven results. Knowing that tax revenues were on the decline and additional funding would be limited, we took to further scrutinizing our expenditures. We found efficiencies which will allow us to absorb the exhaustion of our cash funds and reduce our need for a mid-biennium deficit appropriation.

However, the vital services of the Judicial Branch will continue to require funding. Any growth in the number of people we serve will increase that need.

We have worked extensively with the Governor's budget office. We trust that the proposed legislation to increase filing fees and reduce general fund appropriations is a reasonable method to ensure services are not sacrificed and public safety is not compromised.

Conclusion

In closing, I again extend my sincere thanks to you, the members of the Legislature, for your support of the Judicial Branch. Over the years, when the three branches of state government communicate well and appreciate the good work of each other, we are all successful. This year provides us with another opportunity to find innovative ways to serve our beloved State.

Your continued support of the men and women of the Judicial Branch will not only maintain but help improve our system of justice. As always, I look forward to working with you.

Thank you.

The committee escorted the Chief Justice from the Chamber.

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE HEARING(S)

Banking, Commerce and Insurance

Room 1507 1:30 PM

Monday, February 2, 2026

LB875

LB835

LB950

LB1044

Room 1507 1:30 PM

Tuesday, February 3, 2026
LB1062
LB1063
LB967
LB1138
LB1137

(Signed) Mike Jacobson, Chairperson

AMENDMENT(S) - Print in Journal

Senator Hughes filed the following amendment to LB110:

AM1756

(Amendments to Standing Committee amendments, AM63)

- 1 1. On page 1, line 25, after the first occurrence of "patient"
- 2 insert "pursuant to subsection (3) of this section".

GENERAL FILE

LEGISLATIVE BILL 400. Committee AM702, found on page 1238, First Session, 2025, and considered on pages 426 and 429, and in this day's Journal, was renewed.

Senator Clouse renewed AM1696, found on page 380 and considered on pages 427 and 429 and in this day's Journal, to the committee amendment.

Senator Dungan moved the previous question. The question is, "Shall the debate now close?"

Senator Dungan moved for a call of the house. The motion prevailed with 26 ayes, 0 nays, and 23 not voting.

Senator Hallstrom requested a roll call vote on the motion to cease debate.

Voting in the affirmative, 28:

Andersen	Cavanaugh, J.	Hansen	McKinney	Sorrentino
Arch	Cavanaugh, M.	Holdcroft	Meyer, F.	Spivey
Ballard	Conrad	Hughes	Prokop	von Gillern
Bosn	Dungan	Hunt	Quick	Wordekemper
Bostar	Fredrickson	Juarez	Rountree	
Brandt	Guereca	Kauth	Sanders	

Voting in the negative, 19:

Armendariz	Dorn	Jacobson	Moser	Storer
Clements	Hallstrom	Lippincott	Murman	Storm
Clouse	Hardin	Lonowski	Raybould	Strommen
DeKay	Ibach	Meyer, G.	Riepe	

Excused and not voting, 2:

DeBoer Dover

The motion to cease debate prevailed with 28 ayes, 19 nays, and 2 excused and not voting.

Senator Hallstrom requested a roll call vote on the Clouse amendment.

Voting in the affirmative, 25:

Andersen	Clouse	Hansen	Kauth	Sanders
Arch	Conrad	Holdcroft	McKinney	Sorrentino
Bosn	Dungan	Hughes	Prokop	Spivey
Bostar	Fredrickson	Hunt	Quick	von Gillern
Cavanaugh, J.	Guereca	Juarez	Rountree	Wordekemper

Voting in the negative, 20:

Armendariz	Dorn	Jacobson	Meyer, G.	Riepe
Brandt	Hallstrom	Lippincott	Moser	Storer
Clements	Hardin	Lonowski	Murman	Storm
DeKay	Ibach	Meyer, F.	Raybould	Strommen

Present and not voting, 2:

Ballard Cavanaugh, M.

Excused and not voting, 2:

DeBoer Dover

The Clouse amendment was adopted with 25 ayes, 20 nays, 2 present and not voting, and 2 excused and not voting.

The Chair declared the call raised.

Senator Wordekemper withdrew [FA258](#), found on page 1647, First Session, 2025, to the committee amendment.

Senator Hallstrom offered [AM1750](#), found on page 443, to the committee amendment.

Pending.

ANNOUNCEMENT(S)

Priority designation(s) received:

Lippincott - LB548

AMENDMENT(S) - Print in Journal

Senator Ibach filed the following amendment to LB807:

AM1757

1 1. Strike the original sections and insert the following new
2 sections:
3 Section 1. Section 2-945.01, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska,
4 is amended to read:
5 2-945.01 Sections 2-945.01 to 2-9662-970 shall be known and may be
6 cited as the Noxious Weed Control Act.
7 Sec. 2. Section 2-958.02, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is
8 amended to read:
9 2-958.02 (1) From funds available in the Noxious Weed and Invasive
10 Plant Species Assistance Fund, the director may administer a grant
11 program to assist local control authorities and other weed management
12 entities in the cost of implementing and maintaining noxious weed control
13 programs and in addressing special weed control problems as provided in
14 this section.
15 (2) The director shall receive applications by local control
16 authorities and weed management entities for assistance under this
17 subsection and, in consultation with the advisory committee created under
18 section 2-965.01, award grants for any of the following eligible
19 purposes:
20 (a) To conduct applied research to solve locally significant weed
21 management problems;
22 (b) To demonstrate innovative control methods or land management
23 practices which have the potential to reduce landowner costs to control
24 noxious weeds or improve the effectiveness of noxious weed control;
25 (c) To encourage the formation of weed management entities;
26 (d) To respond to introductions or infestations of invasive plants
27 that threaten or potentially threaten the productivity of cropland and
1 rangeland over a wide area;
2 (e) To respond to introductions and infestations of invasive plant
3 species that threaten or potentially threaten the productivity and
4 biodiversity of wildlife and fishery habitats on public and private
5 lands;
6 (f) To respond to special weed control problems involving weeds not
7 included in the list of noxious weeds promulgated by rule and regulation
8 of the director if the director has approved a petition to bring such
9 weeds under the county control program;
10 (g) To conduct monitoring or surveillance activities to detect, map,
11 or determine the distribution of invasive plant species and to determine
12 susceptible locations for the introduction or spread of invasive plant
13 species; and
14 (h) To conduct educational activities.
15 (3) The director shall select and prioritize applications for
16 assistance under subsection (2) of this section based on the following
17 considerations:
18 (a) The seriousness of the noxious weed or invasive plant problem or
19 potential problem addressed by the project;
20 (b) The ability of the project to provide timely intervention to

21 save current and future costs of control and eradication;
22 (c) The likelihood that the project will prevent or resolve the
23 problem or increase knowledge about resolving similar problems in the
24 future;
25 (d) The extent to which the project will leverage federal funds and
26 other nonstate funds;
27 (e) The extent to which the applicant has made progress in
28 addressing noxious weed or invasive plant problems;
29 (f) The extent to which the project will provide a comprehensive
30 approach to the control or eradication of noxious weeds or invasive plant
31 species as identified and listed by the Nebraska Invasive Species
1 Council;
2 (g) The extent to which the project will reduce or prevent the total
3 population or area of infestation of a noxious weed or invasive plant
4 species as identified and listed by the Nebraska Invasive Species
5 Council;
6 (h) The extent to which the project uses the principles of
7 integrated vegetation management and sound science; and
8 (i) Such other factors that the director determines to be relevant.
9 (4) The director shall receive applications for grants under this
10 subsection and shall award grants to recipients and programs eligible
11 under this subsection. Priority shall be given to grant applicants whose
12 proposed programs are consistent with vegetation management goals and
13 priorities and plans and policies of the Riparian Vegetation Management
14 Task Force established under section 2-970. Beginning in fiscal year
15 2022-23, it is the intent of the Legislature to appropriate three million
16 dollars annually for the management of vegetation within the banks or
17 flood plain of a natural stream. Such funds shall only be used to pay for
18 activities and equipment as part of vegetation management programs that
19 have as their primary objective improving conveyance of streamflow in
20 natural streams. Grants from funds appropriated as provided in this
21 subsection shall be disbursed only to weed management entities, local
22 weed control authorities, and natural resources districts whose territory
23 includes river basins, with priority given to river basins that are the
24 subject of an interstate compact or decree. The Game and Parks Commission
25 shall assist grant recipients in implementing grant projects under this
26 subsection, and interlocal agreements under the Interlocal Cooperation
27 Act or the Joint Public Agency Act shall be utilized whenever possible in
28 carrying out the grant projects.
29 (4)(5) Nothing in this section shall be construed to relieve control
30 authorities of their duties and responsibilities under the Noxious Weed
31 Control Act or the duty of a person to control the spread of noxious
1 weeds on lands owned and controlled by him or her.
2 (5)(6) The Department of Agriculture may adopt and promulgate
3 necessary rules and regulations to carry out this section.
4 (6)(7) The director may annually apply for conservation funding from
5 the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States
6 Department of Agriculture.
7 Sec. 3. Section 61-218, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2025, is
8 amended to read:
9 61-218 (1) The Water Resources Cash Fund is created. The fund shall
10 be administered by the Department of Water, Energy, and Environment. Any
11 money in the fund available for investment shall be invested by the state
12 investment officer pursuant to the Nebraska Capital Expansion Act and the
13 Nebraska State Funds Investment Act.
14 (2) The State Treasurer shall credit to the fund such money as is
15 (a) transferred to the fund by the Legislature, (b) paid to the state as
16 fees, deposits, payments, and repayments relating to the fund, both
17 principal and interest, (c) donated as gifts, bequests, or other
18 contributions to such fund from public or private entities, (d) made

19 available by any department or agency of the United States if so directed
20 by such department or agency, (e) transferred pursuant to section
21 81-15,175, and (f) received by the state for settlement of claims
22 relating to interstate river compacts or decrees.
23 (3)(a) The fund shall be expended by the department in any area that
24 has adopted an integrated management plan as provided in section 46-715.
25 (b) The fund shall be used in any such area:
26 (i) To aid management actions taken to reduce consumptive uses of
27 water;
28 (ii) To enhance streamflows or ground water recharge;
29 (iii) For any other activity deemed necessary by the department in
30 the development and implementation of an integrated management plan;
31 (iv) For purposes of the Resilient Soils and Water Quality Act; or
1 (v) For purposes of projects or proposals described in the grant
2 application as set forth in subdivision (2)(h) of section 81-15,175; or
3 (vi) For purposes of providing grants to weed management entities as
4 provided in section 4 of this act.
5 (c) To the extent funds are not expended pursuant to subdivision (b)
6 of this subsection, the department may conduct a statewide assessment of
7 short-term and long-term water management activities and funding needs to
8 meet statutory requirements in sections 46-713 to 46-718 and 46-739 and
9 any requirements of an interstate compact or decree or formal state
10 contract or agreement.
11 (d) The fund shall not be used to pay for administrative expenses or
12 any salaries for any political subdivision.
13 (4) It is the intent of the Legislature that three million three
14 hundred thousand dollars be transferred each fiscal year from the General
15 Fund to the Water Resources Cash Fund for FY2011-12 through FY2022-23,
16 except that for FY2012-13 it is the intent of the Legislature that four
17 million seven hundred thousand dollars be transferred from the General
18 Fund to the Water Resources Cash Fund. It is the intent of the
19 Legislature that the State Treasurer credit any money received from any
20 Republican River Compact settlement to the Water Resources Cash Fund in
21 the fiscal year in which it is received.
22 (5)(a) Expenditures from the Water Resources Cash Fund may be made
23 to natural resources districts eligible under subsection (3) of this
24 section for activities to either achieve a sustainable balance of
25 consumptive water uses or assure compliance with an interstate compact or
26 decree or a formal state contract or agreement and shall require a match
27 of local funding in an amount equal to or greater than forty percent of
28 the total cost of carrying out the eligible activity. The department
29 shall, no later than August 1 of each year, beginning in 2007, determine
30 the amount of funding that will be made available to natural resources
31 districts from the Water Resources Cash Fund and notify natural resources
1 districts of this determination. The department shall adopt and
2 promulgate rules and regulations governing application for and use of the
3 Water Resources Cash Fund by natural resources districts. Such rules and
4 regulations shall, at a minimum, include the following components:
5 (i) Require an explanation of how the planned activity will achieve
6 a sustainable balance of consumptive water uses or will assure compliance
7 with an interstate compact or decree or a formal state contract or
8 agreement as required by section 46-715 and the controls, rules, and
9 regulations designed to carry out the activity; and
10 (ii) A schedule of implementation of the activity or its components,
11 including the local match as set forth in subdivision (5)(a) of this
12 section.
13 (b) Any natural resources district that fails to implement and
14 enforce its controls, rules, and regulations as required by section
15 46-715 shall not be eligible for funding from the Water Resources Cash
16 Fund until it is determined by the department that compliance with the

17 provisions required by section 46-715 has been established.

18 (6) The Department of Water, Energy, and Environment shall submit
19 electronically an annual report to the Legislature no later than October
20 1 of each year that shall detail the use of the Water Resources Cash Fund
21 in the previous year. The report shall provide:

22 (a) Details regarding the use and cost of activities carried out by
23 the department; and

24 (b) Details regarding the use and cost of activities carried out by
25 each natural resources district that received funds from the Water
26 Resources Cash Fund.

27 (7)(a) Prior to the application deadline for fiscal year 2011-12,
28 the Department of Natural Resources shall apply for a grant of nine
29 million nine hundred thousand dollars from the Nebraska Environmental
30 Trust Fund, to be paid out in three annual installments of three million
31 three hundred thousand dollars. The purposes listed in the grant
1 application shall be consistent with the uses of the Water Resources Cash
2 Fund provided in this section and shall be used to aid management actions
3 taken to reduce consumptive uses of water, to enhance streamflows, to
4 recharge ground water, or to support wildlife habitat in any river basin
5 determined to be fully appropriated pursuant to section 46-714 or
6 designated as overappropriated pursuant to section 46-713.

7 (b) If the application is granted, funds received from such grant
8 shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Water
9 Resources Cash Fund for the purpose of supporting the projects set forth
10 in the grant application. The department shall include in its grant
11 application documentation that the Legislature has authorized a transfer
12 of three million three hundred thousand dollars from the General Fund
13 into the Water Resources Cash Fund for each of fiscal years 2011-12 and
14 2012-13 and has stated its intent to transfer three million three hundred
15 thousand dollars to the Water Resources Cash Fund for fiscal year
16 2013-14.

17 (c) It is the intent of the Legislature that the department apply
18 for an additional three-year grant that would begin in fiscal year
19 2014-15, an additional three-year grant from the Nebraska Environmental
20 Trust Fund that would begin in fiscal year 2017-18, and an additional
21 three-year grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund that would
22 begin in fiscal year 2020-21 if the criteria established in subsection
23 (4) of section 81-15,175 are achieved.

24 (8) The department shall establish a subaccount within the Water
25 Resources Cash Fund for the accounting of all money received as a grant
26 from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund as the result of an
27 application made pursuant to subsection (7) of this section.

28 (9) Any funds transferred from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund
29 to the Water Resources Cash Fund shall be placed within the subaccount
30 created under subsection (8) of this section and expended in accordance
31 with section 81-15,168.

1 (10) The State Treasurer shall transfer one million dollars from the
2 Water Resources Cash Fund to the Nitrogen Reduction Incentive Cash Fund
3 as soon as administratively possible after July 19, 2024, but before June
4 30, 2025, on such dates and in such amounts as directed by the budget
5 administrator of the budget division of the Department of Administrative
6 Services.

7 Sec. 4. (1) For purposes of this section:

8 (a) Eligible purpose means:

9 (i) The removal of riparian vegetation as part of a vegetation
10 management program, if such vegetation management program is being
11 conducted for the primary objective of improving the conveyance of
12 streamflow in natural streams; and

13 (ii) The acquisition of equipment that is used for the removal of
14 riparian vegetation described in subdivision (a)(i) of this subsection;

15 and
16 (b) Qualified applicant means the following entities that provide
17 weed management services in a river basin:
18 (i) Any weed management entity;
19 (ii) Any weed control authority; and
20 (iii) Any natural resources district.
21 (2) A qualified applicant may apply to the Department of Water,
22 Energy, and Environment for a grant under this section. No later than
23 January 1, 2027, the department shall prescribe the form for the
24 application.
25 (3) The department may award a grant to any qualified applicant who
26 applies under this section for an eligible purpose. If the department
27 receives multiple applications under this section, the department shall
28 prioritize awarding grants to the qualified applicants that provide weed
29 management services within an area that is the subject of an interstate
30 compact or decree.
31 (4) The department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to
1 carry out this section.
2 Sec. 5. Original sections 2-945.01 and 2-958.02, Reissue Revised
3 Statutes of Nebraska, and section 61-218, Revised Statutes Supplement,
4 2025, are repealed.
5 Sec. 6. The following sections are outright repealed: Section
6 2-970, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 2-969, Revised
7 Statutes Supplement, 2025.

Senator Storer filed the following amendment to LB400:

FA921

Strike Section 1.1a, lines 2-3, and replace with "Firefighter only includes professional firefighters."

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE HEARING(S)

Revenue
Room 1524 1:30 PM

Thursday, January 29, 2026

LB756

LB882

LB1067

Room 1524 1:30 PM

Friday, January 30, 2026

LB954

LB778

LB883

(Signed) R. Brad von Gillern, Chairperson

Judiciary
Room 1525 1:30 PM

Thursday, January 29, 2026

LB984
LB985
LB788

(Signed) Carolyn Bosn, Chairperson

Natural Resources
Room 1023 1:30 PM

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Scott Cassels - Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Scott Dicke - Nebraska Natural Resources Commission
LB1127

(Signed) Tom Brandt, Chairperson

UNANIMOUS CONSENT - Add Cointroducer(s)

Unanimous consent to add Senator(s) as cointroducer(s). No objections. So ordered.

Senator Spivey name added to LB153.
Senator DeKay name added to LB730.
Senator DeKay name added to LB946.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1049.
Senator DeKay name added to LB1059.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1078.
Senator DeKay name added to LB1081.
Senator DeKay name added to LB1096.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1116.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1184.
Senator DeKay name added to LB1198.
Senator DeKay name added to LB1219.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1222.
Senator Conrad name added to LB1226.
Senator DeKay name added to LR305CA.
Senator DeKay name added to LR317CA.

WITHDRAW - Cointroducer(s)

Senator Prokop name withdrawn from LB1253.

VISITOR(S)

Visitors to the Chamber were Honorable John Gerrard, President of the Nebraska State Bar Association, Honorable Tricia Freeman, Past President of the Nebraska State Bar Association, Ken Hartman, President Elect of the Nebraska State Bar Association, Sam Clinch, Associate Director of the

Nebraska Bar Association, Doris Huffman, Executive Director of the Nebraska Bar Association, Pam Carrier, Retired Lincoln Attorney, Calvin Hewitt, Fort Worth Texas.

The Doctor of the Day was Dr. Dave Hoelting, Pender.

ADJOURNMENT

At 12:01 p.m., on a motion by Senator Jacobson, the Legislature adjourned until 9:00 a.m., Friday, January 23, 2026.

Brandon Metzler
Clerk of the Legislature

