

# NACO Legislative Report



April 4, 2025

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## Full Days of Debate Begin

The first week of full-day floor debate began with a reminder from Speaker John Arch that much remains to be accomplished in this [90-day](#) legislative session. Arch noted that as of March 31, the 53rd day of the session, approximately 250 hours remained for debate, including 18 [evenings](#) when debate will extend until 8 p.m. or later.

He cautioned that the chance of debating all priority bills this year is slim, so essential bills dealing with government services and the loss of federal funds will be scheduled first. Revenue-generating priority bills are expected to appear on the agenda later next week. The Revenue Committee has voted to advance several bills but needs to complete internal committee work before they can be officially reported out and debated.

The Appropriations Committee continues to work on the state's [budget](#) and a projected \$289 million revenue shortfall. The budget must be presented to the full Legislature on or before the 70th day of the session, which is April 29.

When the legislature reconvenes on Tuesday, Select File bills are on the [agenda](#), including [LB78](#), a bill to increase documentary stamp taxes by seven cents on each \$1,000 of property value to help fund housing for sex trafficking survivors and domestic violence victims. The county share of the tax would not change.

No later than 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, debate will shift to [LB3](#), a bill to change Nebraska to a winner-take-all allocation of electoral college votes. Because the Speaker deems this to be an emotionally-charged or controversial issue and most senators have already decided how they will vote on the bill, a cloture vote will be taken after four hours of debate, rather than eight hours. If necessary, the Legislature will remain in session after 5 p.m. so that the cloture vote can be taken on Tuesday.

## Minimum Wage, Cryptocurrency Bills Advanced

Senators spent much of Tuesday in a filibuster of a bill to change the minimum wage provisions that were passed by voters in 2022. As [amended](#) and advanced from the first round of debate, [LB258](#) would limit increases in the youth minimum wage and annually increase the training wage for new employees younger than 20.

A bill that would have imposed an excise tax on cryptocurrency electricity usage was amended during first-round debate to provide mechanisms to manage growth in the industry. [LB526](#), as [amended](#) and advanced, would allow public power districts to recover costs of infrastructure upgrades from cryptocurrency operators so that local ratepayers are not subsidizing these businesses. It would prohibit uninterruptable rate schedules to give power districts flexibility to meet demands for electricity during peak irrigation periods. In addition, cryptocurrency mines

would be required to disclose their power usage and report it on their websites. A proposed excise tax on electricity was eliminated from the bill.

Some of the other bills advanced from the first round of debate would establish a suicide mortality team for the Department of Veterans' Affairs ([LB414](#)) and change reciprocity provisions for marriage and family therapists ([LB257](#)).

[LB323](#), as amended and advanced, would require publication of bid solicitations by the Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT) on a Department website in addition to the legal newspaper designated by the county. If there is a defect in the newspaper publication, the website publication would be sufficient. In addition, the bill would eliminate a requirement for the construction of NDOT buildings valued at more than \$100,000 to be approved by the Legislature. Instead, building projects would be subject to the same approval requirements as other state agency building projects.

[LB646](#) as [amended](#) would set brand inspection fees, exempt affiliated transfers of cattle from brand inspection requirements, and implement a flat fee for registered feedlots.

[LB246](#) would ban the sale or distribution of cultivated-protein food products, sometimes called lab-grown meat, in the state. Senator Barry DeKay introduced the bill on behalf of Governor Pillen and it was selected as a priority by the Agriculture Committee.

## Bills Sent to General File

[LB36](#), as introduced, would require counties and cities to consider the public water supply when making proposed zoning or permit determinations within wellhead protection areas. A Natural Resources Committee amendment would replace the original bill with provisions from [LB309](#), [LB459](#), [LB562](#), [LB590](#), [LB480](#) and [LB344](#). It would establish the Safe Battery Collection and Recycling Act to enact requirements for the collection, recycling and end-of-life management of certain batteries. Language from LB459 would create a home weatherization clearinghouse to serve as the primary contact point for persons applying for grants and loans provided by the Department of Environment and Energy, state or local governments, nonprofits, or the federal government. Other provisions address maximum Game and Parks Commission fees and would allow the state to operate a mitigation bank for construction projects in areas where an endangered species habitat may exist. LB36 was prioritized by the Natural Resources Committee.

[LB322](#), Senator Stan Clouse's priority bill, would add pharmacists and public safety officers to the list of personnel included under assault laws. A Judiciary Committee [amendment](#) would clarify these terms and the penalties for each degree of offense.

## Damaged Property Bill Passed by Legislature

The Legislature passed two dozen bills on Thursday including the following:

[LB501](#) would allow owners of real property that has been damaged prior to July 1 to seek an adjustment to their valuation. County assessors would be required to inspect the property and file a report with the county board of equalization for the adjustment. Existing law allows for a reduction on property destroyed by calamity, which is defined as a fire, earthquake, flood, tornado or other natural event. The bill carries an emergency clause.

[LB266](#) would prohibit local governments, including counties, from enacting ordinances that have the effect of imposing rent controls on private property. This limitation would not apply to ordinances adopted for purposes of increasing the supply of affordable housing through land-use or inclusionary housing requirements or if a private property owner voluntarily agrees to limit rent increases.

[LB294](#) would increase the maximum amount of grants that can be made from County Visitors Improvement Funds. Existing law limits grants to the amount of funds generated from a one percent sales tax. LB294 would allow grants to be the greater of one percent or \$5,000. The bill carries an emergency clause.

[LB478](#) was introduced on behalf of the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission to update liquor laws. It would allow counties and cities to give notice of license hearings by publication in a newspaper of statewide circulation, in lieu of publishing in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or city.

[LB7](#) would make technical revisions to two bills adopted last year to regulate land ownership by foreign adversaries. It clarifies that Native American tribes are not foreign governments and updates federal references.

[LB105](#) would clarify the boundary lines for voting precincts in public power district elections.

[LB144](#) would extend veterans hiring preferences to spouses of veterans who were killed in the line of duty or died due to their military service. In addition to preference in the initial hiring, a veterans preference would also apply to reassignments and transfers to a new position.

[LB195](#) would remove naloxone and other brand names from statutes granting immunity in the administration of opioid overdoses reversal medications.

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