



TRIBAL AND STATE RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 1, 2024

Walking Eagle Ballroom, Spirit Lake Casino and Resort, 7889 Highway 57
St. Michael, North Dakota

Representative Zachary Ista, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Members present: Representatives Zachary Ista, Lisa Finley-DeVille, Dennis Johnson; Senators Tim Mathern, Dale Patten, Shawn Vedaa

Member absent: Representative Jim Grueneich

Others present: Representative Jayme Davis, Rolette

Mark R. Hagerott, North Dakota University System; Hollie Mackey, North Dakota State University; Steve Gilpin, Bureau of Criminal Investigation; Heather Traynor, North Dakota Supreme Court; Kevin Dauphinais, Marie Martin, and Anthony Delorme, Spirit Lake Tribe; Joe Vetsch, Spirit Lake Tribal Court

See [Appendix A](#) for additional persons present.

It was moved by Senator Mathern, seconded by Senator Patten, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the January 9, 2024, meeting be approved as distributed.

Dr. Mark R. Hagerott, Chancellor, North Dakota University System, provided information ([Appendix B](#)) regarding the strategic efforts of the State Board of Higher Education. He noted:

- The board is focused on addressing student vitality, workforce, and the introduction of intelligent machines.
- By 2031, 71 percent of North Dakota jobs will require postsecondary training.

In response to questions from committee members relating to the integration of artificial intelligence into higher education, Dr. Hagerott noted the Dakota Humanities Academy will assist with incorporating civic values into the rapidly changing environment.

Dr. Hollie Mackey, Chief Strategy Officer, North Dakota Advanced Agriculture Technology Engine, presented an overview ([Appendix C](#)) of Food systems Adapted for Resiliency and Maximized Security and the future of agriculture technologies. She noted:

- Food systems Adapted for Resiliency and Maximized Security is a cooperative agreement funded through the National Science Foundation in partnership with the North Dakota Tribal College System, North Dakota State University, the Greater Fargo Moorhead Economic Development Corporation, Grand Farm, and the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber Foundation.
- The goal of the National Science Foundation is to catalyze and accelerate ecosystems across the United States to advance critical technologies, address societal and economic challenges, promote economic growth, and cultivate regional talent.

Mr. Steve Gilpin, Supervisory Special Agent, Bureau of Criminal Investigation, presented an overview ([Appendix D](#)) of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI). He noted:

- BCI is an assistance agency specializing in crime scene, fire, and narcotics investigations.
- BCI has 64 special agents stationed around North Dakota, four of whom have a Special Law Enforcement Commission designation and are stationed in Devils Lake, Rugby, and Rolla.

Representative Jayme Davis, Rolette, and Representative Finley-DeVille presented information ([Appendix E](#)) regarding racism during high school sporting events.

Representative Davis noted discriminatory behavior may lead to physical safety concerns, generational trauma, and may have a negative impact on a student's psychology, relationships, self-identity, and academic and professional success.

Representative Davis and Representative Finley-DeVille noted several recommendations to address ongoing racism in high school sports.

Mr. Brian Bubach, Associate Director, North Dakota High School Activities Association, provided testimony regarding the association's updated procedures to address racism in high school sports.

In response to questions from committee members, Mr. Bubach noted federal statutes prohibit a school administrator from publicly disseminating student disciplinary records.

Ms. Heather Traynor, Court Improvement Program Coordinator, Supreme Court, provided an overview ([Appendix F](#)) of the Court Improvement Program, Indian child welfare courts, and a review of their impact on Indian families. She noted:

- The Court Improvement Program provides resources to the state courts for evaluation and enhancement of court processes in response to the needs of children in the child welfare system.
- In 2023, 28 percent of foster care cases and 31 percent of cases involving the termination of parental rights in this state were impacted by the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Data indicated more positive outcomes were reached in Indian child welfare court cases as compared to state courts cases, including earlier placement preferences, increased tribal presence and parental involvement, and earlier reunification with the caregiver.

Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street, Spirit Lake Tribe, provided testimony regarding the Spirit Lake Reservation and introduced key stakeholders from the Spirit Lake Tribe.

Mr. Kevin Dauphinais, Director, Tribal Health Administration, Spirit Lake Tribe, requested support from the committee for changes to Medicaid's Institution for Mental Diseases Exclusion.

Mr. Ryan Brown, Director, Economic Development Administration Planning Department, provided testimony regarding economic development planning and grant management efforts for the Spirit Lake Tribe.

Mr. Josh Tweeton, Director, Spirit Lake Tribal Environmental Protection Administration, provided testimony regarding the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant and tribal programs aiming to reduce greenhouse gases. He noted his cooperation with the North Dakota Game and Fish Department to protect against invasive aquatic species by implementing clean, drain, and dry stations on the Spirit Lake Reservation.

Mr. Joe Vetsch, Chief Judge, Spirit Lake Tribal Court, provided testimony regarding proposed changes to extradition laws related to tribal court warrants.

Mr. Jeff Olson, District Superintendent, Fort Totten Public School District, provided testimony regarding preventing racism in high school sports.

Ms. Dixie Omen, Chief Executive Officer, Spirit Lake Health Center, provided an overview of the Spirit Lake Health Center and the necessity for expansion.

Ms. Marie Martin, ICWA Coordinator, Spirit Lake Tribe, provided testimony regarding her work in family services and foster care recruiting in Spirit Lake.

Mr. Darren Walking Eagle, Tribal Council, Spirit Lake Tribe, provided testimony regarding the academic needs of the students on the Spirit Lake Reservation.

Mr. Anthony Delorme, Spirit Lake Tribe, provided testimony regarding the road conditions and safety concerns on the Spirit Lake Reservation.

No further business appearing, Chairman Ista adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m.

Austin Gunderson
Counsel

ATTACH:6