



LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE AND ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Thursday, January 8, 2026
Roughrider Room, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Senator Jerry Klein, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Members present: Senators Jerry Klein, Josh Boschee*, Kathy Hogan, David Hogue, Kristin Roers; Representatives Jared C. Hagert, Zachary Ista*, Mike Lefor, Anna S. Novak, Brandy L. Pyle, Robin Weisz

Members absent: Senators Sean Cleary, Kyle Davison; Representatives Glenn Bosch, Gretchen Dobervich

Others present: Jolene Garty, Garty Consulting, LLC; Mary Soucie, State Library
John Bjornson and Liz Fordahl, Legislative Council, Bismarck
See [Appendix A](#) for additional persons present.

**Attended remotely*

It was moved by Representative Hagert, seconded by Representative Novak, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the September 23, 2025, meeting be approved as distributed.

TERM LIMITS STUDY

Ms. Jolene Garty and Ms. Erin Oban, Garty Consulting, LLC, presented an interim report ([Appendix B](#)) on the committee's study of the impact of term limits. Ms. Garty noted:

- The study employed a mixed method approach of gathering both qualitative and quantitative data to identify and mitigate the impacts of term limits and will include the collection of survey data from legislators, the public, and small focus groups.
- Similar studies have found term limits may lead to shorter-term focus and more attention being given to short-term wins, rather than to solving complex policy issues.
- Additional impacts of term limits include increased turnover and loss of institutional knowledge and expertise.
- Many term-limited states saw an increase in the number of bills introduced and an increase in duplicative legislation.

In response to a question from a committee member, Ms. Garty noted term limits were either overturned by the state Supreme Court or by the legislature in six states that previously imposed term limits.

Ms. Emily Ronco, Policy Specialist, Center for Legislative Strengthening, National Conference of State Legislatures, presented information ([Appendix C](#)) regarding the impact of term limits and the approaches taken by states with term limits to navigate those impacts. She noted:

- Turnover is not unique to term-limited states. Increased turnover is becoming a national trend with fewer long-serving legislators in nearly every state, especially in leadership roles.

- Interviews with staff in term-limited states indicated:
 - A loss of legislators who previously championed certain policies by taking an indepth look at an issue and working toward passing a similar piece of legislation over several years, refining it based on each session's feedback.
 - Increased reliance on legislative staff to serve as the repository for institutional knowledge, both in policy subject matter areas and in procedural and parliamentary procedures.
 - A need for more robust training and orientation for term-limited legislators, which has lead to an increase in staff.
- Impacts on legislators have included expedited leadership tracks, which have resulted in some states creating apprentice programs to allow new members to shadow and learn from current leaders, while other states have taken the approach of predesignating future presiding officers up to 2 years in advance to give the member time to prepare.
- Another trend, which may be exacerbated by term limits but is not exclusive to term-limited states, is an increase in partisanship and less adherence to rules of decorum.

Committee members expressed interest in receiving additional information, including:

- A summary of which term-limited legislatures are full time versus part time, and the number of permanent and temporary staff serving each legislature.
- Information on legislator turnover statistics nationwide.
- Information on legislative operating budgets in other states.
- Data on the number of nonpartisan staff in other states who are dedicated to providing oversight of executive branch agencies.
- Further details on the bill draft limits in Nevada and Colorado.

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT POLICY

Ms. Liz Fordahl, Counsel, Legislative Council, presented proposed changes to the [North Dakota Legislative Assembly Policy Against Workplace Harassment](#), [Workplace Harassment Complaint Intake Checklist](#), [Workplace Harassment Complaint Investigation Checklist](#), and [Workplace Harassment Complaint Form](#). She noted the proposed changes:

- Amend the definition of workplace harassment.
- Extend the amount of time to complete the complaint intake checklist from 24 to 48 hours after the complaint is received.
- Allow leadership to determine the appropriate method for resolving a complaint that is referred for informal resolution.
- Extend the deadline for the review panel to hold its first meeting from 72 hours after the complaint is received to 7 days after the final member of the review panel is appointed, or to a time agreed upon by the contact person and the complainant.
- Encourage leadership to document informal complaints and forward that documentation to the Legislative Council staff for maintenance in a secure, permanent file.
- Clarify a record related to a complaint that is withdrawn or settled through informal resolution is an exempt record.

Committee members noted the revisions help balance the rights of all individuals involved in the process.

It was moved by Senator Hogan, seconded by Representative Novak, and carried on a roll call vote that the revisions to the policy against workplace harassment and accompanying

documents be approved as distributed. Senators Klein, Boschee, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - LEGISLATOR SECURITY

Chairman Klein noted the committee has the legal authority to conduct a closed meeting during an executive session pursuant to North Dakota Century Code Sections 44-04-19.2(1) and 44-04-26 for purposes of reviewing the results of a Capitol threat assessment and discussing legislator security.

It was moved by Senator Hogue, seconded by Representative Novak, and carried on a roll call vote that the committee hold an executive session for the purposes of reviewing the results of a Capitol threat assessment and discussing legislator security. Senators Klein, Boschee, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

The committee went into an executive session from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. All committee members in attendance were present for the executive session. During the executive session, the committee reviewed the results of a Capitol threat assessment and received information regarding legislator security.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Chairman Klein reconvened the public portion of the meeting at 2:32 p.m. He reminded the committee members not to discuss any of the issues raised during the executive session.

Committee members noted:

- Legislators would benefit from a formal education process on security procedures and best practices.
- A procedure should be established to allow legislators to share information regarding where they are living during the legislative session in case of an emergency or the need to conduct a welfare check. The shared information could be accessed through a designated contact person.

Chairman Klein requested the Legislative Council staff to prepare a memorandum regarding potential training and best practices for legislator security and to work with the Secretary of State to prepare a bill draft to address the disclosure of legislator address information.

Mr. John Bjornson, Director, Legislative Council, noted members should be encouraged to list P.O. boxes on public facing websites for purposes of receiving correspondence, rather than providing their home address.

LEGISLATIVE PRINTING

Ms. Emily Thompson, Legal Division Director, Legislative Council, presented a bill draft [[27.0045.01000](#)] relating to the number of copies of documents required to be remitted to the state library. She noted the bill draft reduces the number of paper copies of state publications that must be provided to the State Library from eight to two in recognition of increased printing costs and the ease of accessing documents in a digital format.

Ms. Mary Soucie, State Librarian, State Library, discussed the current use of paper copies by the State Library. She noted:

- Of the eight paper copies received by the State Library, four are sent to depository universities, one is sent to the State Archives, one is sent to the Library of Congress, one is circulated, and one is retained in the State Library's permanent files.
- The State Library's preference would be to modify the bill draft to reduce the number of paper copies from eight to three, rather than eight to two, to allow one paper copy to be remitted to the State Archives, one to remain in the State Library's permanent files, and one to be circulated.

It was moved by Senator Roers, seconded by Senator Hogan, and carried on a roll call vote that the bill draft [27.0045.01000] relating to the number of copies of state publications required to be remitted to the State Library, as revised to change "two" to "three" on line 16 of page 1 and line 6 of page 2, be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Boschee, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Ms. Thompson presented a proposed legislative rule amendment [27.9159.01000] which, in conjunction with the changes recommended in bill draft [27.0045.01000] related to the State Library, would reduce the number of journals required to be bound and distributed from 24 to 10. She noted this amendment also was requested in light of increased printing costs and the availability of digital copies of the journal.

It was moved by Senator Hogan, seconded by Senator Roers, and carried on a roll call vote that the proposed amendments to Senate and House Rules 204 [27.9159.01000], relating to the number of journals required to be bound and distributed, be approved as distributed and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Boschee, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Ms. Thompson presented a proposed legislative rule amendment [27.9166.01000] to remove the requirement to print the addresses of legislators and Legislative Assembly staff in the legislative rule book. She noted the rule also requires the printing of 225 copies of the rule books, which has not been modified by the amendments but which the committee may wish to review.

In response to questions from committee members, Ms. Thompson noted because the legislative rule books are printed after the organizational session, any permanent rule changes that occur after the organizational session are reflected only in the digital copy of the legislative rule book, which is available online.

Committee members noted it may not be necessary for the legislative rules to require the printing of a specified number of rule books because many legislators use the online version of the rules and find the online version easier to search. Committee members expressed interest in developing a digital indexing feature to make the rules easier to search and possibly adding a desktop icon for the rules to legislators' computers.

It was moved by Senator Roers, seconded by Representative Novak, and carried on a roll call vote that the proposed amendments to Joint Rule 602 [27.9166.01000] relating to the publication of address information in the legislative rule book, as revised to replace the language requiring the printing of 225 rule books with language requiring hard copies be made available to legislators only upon request, be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Boschee, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

LEGISLATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Ms. Thompson presented a memorandum entitled [Prefiling and Legislative Measures and Days Statistics](#) to aid the committee in its review of legislative deadlines for the 2027 legislative session. She noted the memorandum provides information on the number of bills prefiled by executive branch agencies and the Supreme Court during the last five legislative sessions and data regarding legislative days used, crossover dates, and bills and resolutions drafted, introduced, and passed.

In response to questions from committee members, Ms. Thompson noted:

- The legislative rules place the prefiling deadline for agencies at 5:00 p.m. on the day after the organizational session ends and commences the prefiling period for legislators on the 1st day of the organizational session, which creates a bottleneck for Legislative Council staff in processing both legislator and agency prefiled bills.

- A large portion of the bills prefiled by agencies are submitted to the Legislative Council staff during the final week of the agency's prefiling period.
- A slightly earlier prefiling deadline for agencies could improve staff workflow by eliminating the overlapping portion of the legislator and agency prefiling periods.
- An agency that misses the prefiling deadline may advance a bill by requesting a legislator introduce the bill on the agency's behalf.

Mr. Bjornson noted standing committee chairmen commonly take advantage of prefiled agency bills to fill the committee's hearing calendar during the first 2 weeks of the legislative session.

Ms. Thompson distributed testimony ([Appendix D](#)) provided by Ms. Sara Behrens, Staff Attorney, State Court Administrator's office, Supreme Court, which requests an agency prefiling deadline of no earlier than the day before Thanksgiving if the committee seeks to adjust the agency prefiling deadline.

Committee members noted the deadlines relating to legislators introducing certain types of resolutions also may benefit from an adjustment because the deadlines run quite late into the legislative session. Committee members expressed interest in proposing rule changes during the 2026 special legislative session related to the agency prefiling deadline and resolution deadlines and for those changes to apply for the 2027 legislative session.

In response to a question from a committee member, Mr. Bjornson noted the historical reason for a later resolution deadline may have been due to the difference in the use of resolutions in the past. He noted resolutions used to be the primary vehicle for introducing a study, whereas now you see more members wishing to place study language in bills. Additionally, there used to be a Constitutional Revision Committee which generally did not start its work until later in the session.

It was moved by Senator Hogan, seconded by Senator Roers, and carried on a roll call vote that House and Senate Rules 402 be amended effective at the conclusion of the 2026 special legislative session to move the agency prefiling deadline to the day before Thanksgiving in even-numbered years, and that the proposed amendments be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

It was moved by Senator Hogue, seconded by Representative Novak, and carried on a roll call vote that House and Senate Rules 402 be amended to move the deadline for introducing resolutions proposing amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota and study resolutions from the 34th legislative day to the 27th legislative day, House and Senate Rules 509 be amended to move the deadline for reporting bills out of committee in the House of introduction from the 40th legislative day to the 34th legislative day, Joint Rule 203 be amended to move the crossover date for resolutions from the 43rd legislative day to the 37th legislative day to align with the crossover date for bills, and each rule amendment become effective at the conclusion of the 2026 special legislative session, and that the proposed amendments be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Novak, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

SPECIAL SESSION RULES

Ms. Thompson reviewed proposed Senate and Joint Rules amendments [[25.9571.01000](#)] and House and Joint Rules amendments [[25.9570.01000](#)] for the special session of the Legislative Assembly. She noted:

- The proposed rules amendments are substantially similar to the rules used in the previous special session to provide for the convening of specified joint committees and to accommodate expedited special session timelines.
- There is a discrepancy in the appropriation threshold that triggers a bill to be referred or rereferred to the Joint Appropriations Committee in the two sets of amendments due to the House

increasing its threshold to \$100,000 during the 2025 regular legislative session. An adjustment will need to be made to one of the sets of rule amendments to align the threshold amounts.

- The resignation of a member of the House Appropriations Committee impacts the House membership of the Joint Appropriations Committee. The committee may wish to reduce the membership from 23 to 22 members or provide an individual with appointment authority to select an alternative House member to fill the vacancy.

It was moved by Senator Hogue, seconded by Representative Hagert, and carried on a roll call vote that the proposed Senate and Joint Rules amendments [25.9571.01000], as revised to change "fifty thousand" to "one hundred thousand" on line 11 of page 2, and the proposed House and Joint Rules amendments [25.9570.01000], as revised to allow for the House Majority Leader to appoint a member to the Joint Appropriations Committee to fill a vacancy, for the special session of the Legislative Assembly, be approved and recommended to the Legislative Management. Senators Klein, Hogan, Hogue, and Roers and Representatives Hagert, Ista, Lefor, Pyle, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

No further business appearing, Chairman Klein adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Emily Thompson
Legal Division Director

ATTACH:4