



LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURE AND ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 22, 2026
Roughrider Room, State Capitol
Bismarck, North Dakota

Senator Jerry Klein, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Members present: Senators Jerry Klein, Josh Boschee, Sean Cleary, Kyle Davison, Kathy Hogan, Kristin Roers;* Representatives Mike Berg,* Glenn Bosch, Zachary Ista, Mike Lefor,* Anna S. Novak,* Robin Weisz

Members absent: Senator David Hogue; Representatives Gretchen Dobervich, Brandy L. Pyle

Others present: Michael Howe, Secretary of State
John Bjornson, Legislative Council, Bismarck
See [Appendix A](#) for additional persons present.

**Attended remotely*

It was moved by Representative Weisz, seconded by Representative Bosch, and carried on a voice vote that the minutes of the January 8, 2026, meeting be approved as distributed.

LEGISLATOR SECURITY

Ms. Emily Thompson, Legal Division Director, Legislative Council, presented a bill draft [[27.0084.02000](#)] relating to the confidentiality of candidate address information. She noted:

- The bill draft amends a provision of the open records chapter to designate a candidate's residential address information as a confidential record.
- A candidate is defined as an individual holding public office or an individual who is running for public office.
- Notwithstanding the confidential record designation, the candidate's address information is an open record when it appears on an initiative, referendum, or recall petition or a nominating petition of another candidate.
- An election official may access a candidate's address information when carrying out the official's election duties.
- Certain records must be requested by the individual to be deemed confidential and any such request received by a political subdivision official must be forwarded to the county auditor.

In response to questions from committee members, Mr. Michael Howe, Secretary of State, noted he is appearing in a neutral capacity in regard to the bill draft and he has engaged in discussion with the Legislative Council staff on the draft. He noted:

- Some transparency may be lost because if a candidate is not residing in the district in which the candidate is running for office, that information would be visible to the Secretary of State under the bill draft but would not be visible to the public.

- An addition to the draft language to include the words "or upon completion of the candidate's term" after "annually" on line 27 of page 2 would clarify a request for certain records to remain confidential must either be renewed annually or at the completion of a candidate's term.
- A check box could be included on the affidavit of candidacy filed by the candidate indicating the candidate's request to make records confidential.

Ms. Thompson presented a memorandum entitled [Legislator Security Best Practices](#). She noted the memorandum provides a list of practices legislators can employ to enhance their personal security.

A committee member noted the list could be expanded to include a recommendation for individuals to follow guidance issued by Capitol Security during a security event.

Ms. Thompson distributed a *State Capitol Security Overview* ([Appendix B](#)) and state-by-state capitol security summary document ([Appendix C](#)) provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures. She noted the documents provide information from survey respondents from numerous states on topics such as firearm regulations in capitol buildings, security screenings employed at capitol entrances, the use of security cameras, the jurisdiction of sergeants-at-arms, and the law enforcement or security agency serving each capitol.

TERM LIMITS STUDY

Ms. Thompson distributed information ([Appendix D](#)) provided by the National Conference of State Legislatures in response to questions previously posed by committee members. She noted the information includes:

- Data from states that impose term limits related to session length and frequency, bill introduction volume, and permanent and session-only staff counts.
- Nationwide legislator turnover statistics.
- State-by-state legislative operating and capital costs.
- The number of nonpartisan staff in other states who are dedicated to providing oversight of executive branch agencies.
- Details on bill draft request limits in Colorado and Nevada.

Ms. Jolene Garty and Ms. Erin Oban, Garty Consulting, LLC, and Mr. Dean Mitchell, Principal, DFM Research, provided a presentation ([Appendix E](#)) and final report ([Appendix F](#)) on the committee's study of the impact of term limits. They noted:

- The study involved the use of surveys and discussions with legislators, the public, and other stakeholder groups and indicated a need for additional training and onboarding for new legislators, the potential restructuring of interim committees, and a move to annual sessions or sessions held in even-numbered years.
- 600 survey responses were received from North Dakota residents which indicated:
 - Voters sought to limit career politicians through the imposition of term limits and believe term limits bring new ideas to the legislature, create opportunities for regular citizens to run, and improve accountability and responsiveness.
 - The public supports a move to holding annual legislative sessions to make the legislature more responsive and help new legislators gain institutional knowledge and experience more quickly.
- Interviews were conducted with legislative leaders and 86 survey responses were received from legislators which indicated legislators:
 - Were in support of annual sessions.
 - Were not interested in limiting the number of bills that may be introduced.
 - Believed training, onboarding, and staff support will need to increase to address the impacts of term limits.

- Discussions with stakeholder groups indicated:
 - Appreciation for the accessibility of legislators and transparency of the legislative process.
 - Dissatisfaction with the volume of legislation introduced and time constraints during the legislative session.
- Recommendations resulting from the study include:
 - Moving to annual sessions or holding sessions in even-numbered years to increase the time between when new legislators are elected and the start of the legislative session.
 - Building in a dedicated period for legislators to hold office hours during the legislative session.
 - Expanding the organizational session, providing ongoing training, formalizing a mentorship program for new legislators, and improving succession planning for legislative leaders.
 - Modifying interim committees to align with standing committees, establishing a consistent interim schedule for meetings, and allowing bill introductions and hearings during the interim.
 - Professionalizing the Secretary of the Senate and Chief Clerk of the House to full-time, year-round positions and expanding the roles and responsibilities of those positions.
 - Employing full-time, year-round administrative assistants for Majority and Minority Leaders and employing dedicated, nonpartisan training and development staff.

Committee members noted the importance of continued training beyond the organizational session and the potential for training sessions to be incorporated during the first few months of the legislative session.

It was moved by Representative Bosch, seconded by Senator Hogan, and carried on a voice vote that the final report be approved as presented.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL UPDATES

Mr. John Bjornson, Director, Legislative Council, provided an update on the progress of hiring the additional Legislative Council staff authorized during the 2025 legislative session. He noted:

- During the previous interim, legislative leadership requested the Legislative Council to prepare a 5-year plan with respect to expanding the number of Legislative Council staff positions in response to term limits.
- The 5-year plan included the proposed addition of 25 staff during the 2025 legislative session and 25 staff during the 2027 legislative session.
- The 2025 Legislative Assembly approved the 25 staff positions, a large portion of which comprise of the agency's new Policy and Program Evaluation Division.
- To date, a policy and program evaluation director and 7 of the 10 policy analyst positions have been filled. The 10 policy analysts will serve as the permanent staff in the standing committees, much like the fiscal analysts are present in the Appropriations Committees during the legislative session.
- The agency also has filled three of the four program evaluator positions. The program evaluators are in the process of completing a large evaluation of the child care system.
- The additional positions included positions in the legal, fiscal, administrative, and information technology divisions.
- The agency has had success in attracting talented individuals, several of which have relocated from out of state.
- Interviews are ongoing for the last of the 10 vacant positions, which represent a mixture of the newly added positions and positions that are vacant due to recent turnover.
- The anticipated request for additional positions for the 2027 legislative session likely will be a scaled back version of the original 25 positions proposed during the previous interim.

Committee members expressed interest in a dedicated legislative staff position for legislator training and onboarding and also encouraged committee members to review and compile past materials both parties have used to mentor and onboard new members to build a resource repository of materials.

Ms. Thompson provided a demonstration of the Legislative Council's new [resources by main topic area](#) webpage, which provides a collection of Legislative Council documents, including memorandums, quick guides, and visual aids sorted by main topic area. She noted the new resource page was established to provide a tool for legislators and the public to quickly and easily locate information on a variety of topic areas.

LEGISLATIVE ARRANGEMENTS

Ms. Thompson noted the committee is tasked with recommending whether to continue a number of programs during the legislative session, one of which is the Legislative Assembly Internship Program. She noted the 2025 legislative session was the first session the internship program was offered and the Legislative Assembly employed three interns at a stipend of \$3,500 per month.

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

- Fliers were created for the available positions and the program was advertised to all the colleges and universities in the state before the 2025 legislative session.
- The positions advertised included positions for a procedural committee clerk, technical committee clerk, quality assurance clerk, bill and recording clerk, and assistant sergeant-at-arms.
- The committee recently approved an increase to the monthly stipend amount for the legislative legal interns to \$4,000 per month.

It was moved by Representative Lefor, seconded by Senator Cleary, and carried on a roll call vote that the Legislative Assembly Internship Program be continued for the 2027 legislative session at a monthly stipend amount of \$4,000. Senators Klein, Boschee, Cleary, Davison, Hogan, and Roers and Representatives Bosch, Ista, Lefor, Novak, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Ms. Thompson distributed a request ([Appendix G](#)) from Ms. Courtney Koebele, Executive Director, North Dakota Medical Association, for the North Dakota Medical Association to provide physician services to members of the Legislative Assembly during the 2027 legislative session.

It was moved by Representative Bosch, seconded by Senator Davison, and carried on a roll call vote that the North Dakota Medical Association's request to provide physician services to members of the Legislative Assembly during the 2027 legislative session by approved. Senators Klein, Boschee, Cleary, Davison, Hogan, and Roers and Representatives Bosch, Ista, Lefor, Novak, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Ms. Thompson provided information regarding the Tour Guide Program. She noted the Tour Guide Program has operated nearly every session, with the exception of the 2021 legislative session due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It was moved by Senator Hogan, seconded by Senator Davison, and carried on a roll call vote that the legislative Tour Guide Program be continued. Senators Klein, Boschee, Cleary, Davison, Hogan, and Roers and Representatives Bosch, Ista, Lefor, Novak, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Ms. Thompson provided information regarding the Chaplaincy Program. She noted the committee has authorized a Chaplaincy Program for the Legislative Assembly each biennium and historically the local ministerial association has been asked to coordinate scheduling chaplains to provide opening prayers in both houses each day during the floor sessions.

It was moved by Representative Weisz, seconded by Representative Bosch, and carried on a roll call vote that the Chaplaincy Program be continued. Senators Klein, Boschee, Cleary, Davison, Hogan, and Roers and Representatives Bosch, Ista, Lefor, Novak, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Ms. Thompson presented a request ([Appendix H](#)) from the Supreme Court to use the House Chamber from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on September 25, 2026, for the new lawyers bar admission ceremony.

It was moved by Representative Ista, seconded by Representative Bosch, and carried on a roll call vote that the Supreme Court be permitted to use the House Chamber on September 25, 2026, for the new lawyers bar admission ceremony. Senators Klein, Boschee, Cleary, Davison, Hogan, and Roers and Representatives Bosch, Ista, Lefor, Novak, and Weisz voted "aye." No negative votes were cast.

Chairman Klein noted the committee would discuss plans for the organizational session at the next meeting and welcomed suggestions from committee members on any items of interest the committee would like to see included on the organizational session agenda.

Committee members expressed interest in the organizational session agenda including presentations on the budgeting process, revenues and appropriations, legislator security, and staff services provided by the Legislative Council, including the Legislative Council's new resource guides. Committee members also expressed interest in scheduling a full or half day of training for new legislators before the regular organizational session to engage new legislators in a mock committee hearing and a mock House and Senate floor session to provide new members an introduction to daily session practices and parliamentary procedures.

No further business appearing, Chairman Klein adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.

Emily Thompson
Legal Division Director

ATTACH:8