

**JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE - SPECIAL SESSION****Sixty-ninth Legislative Assembly**

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**Bismarck, January 21, 2026**

The House convened at 8:30 a.m., with Speaker Weisz presiding.

The prayer was offered by Pastor Bruce Irwin, Gospel Home Church, Bismarck/Mandan.

**COMMUNICATION FROM SECRETARY OF STATE MICHAEL HOWE**

I hereby certify that I have attached a true and correct copy of Executive Order 2025-09, executed by Governor Kelly Armstrong on December 29, 2025, in which he convenes the North Dakota Legislative Assembly into special session on Wednesday, January 21, 2026.

I hereby certify the attached is a true and correct listing of State Representatives who were issued Certificates of Election by the State Canvassing Board prior to the beginning of their terms of office and who continue to serve in the respective legislative district to which they were elected.

I hereby certify the attached is a true and correct listing that contains the name of a State Representative to whom I issued a Certificate of Appointment in accordance with Section 16.1-13-10 of the North Dakota Century Code to fill a vacancy in their respective district.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Dakota at the Capitol in the City of Bismarck on this date.

**69th Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota  
Members of the House of Representatives  
January 21, 2026**

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>DISTRICT NUMBER</b>
Patrick Hatlestad	1
David Richter	1
Bert Anderson	2
Donald Longmuir	2
Jeff Hoverson	3
Lori VanWinkle	3
Lisa Finley-DeVille	4A
Clayton Fegley	4B
Jay Fisher	5
Scott Louser	5
Dick Anderson	6
Dan Vollmer	6
Jason Dockter	7
Matthew Heilman	7
SuAnn Olson	8
Mike Berg	8
Colette Brown	9
Jayme Davis	9
Steve Swiontek	10

<b>MEMBER</b>	<b>DISTRICT NUMBER</b>
Jared Hendrix	10
Liz Conmy	11
Gretchen Dobervich	11
Mitch Ostlie	12
Bernie Satrom	12
Jim Jonas	13
Austen Schauer	13
Jon Nelson	14
Robin Weisz	14
Kathy Frelich	15
Donna Henderson	15
Ben Koppelman	16
Andrew Marschall	16
Landon Bahl	17
Mark Sanford	17
Steve Vetter	18
Nels Christianson	18
Karen Anderson	19
David Monson	19
Mike Beltz	20
Jared Hagert	20
Laurie Beth Hager	21
Mary Schneider	21
Brandy Pyle	22
Jonathan Warrey	22
Nico Rios	23
Dennis Nehring	23
Dwight Kiefert	24
Daniel Johnston	24
Kathy Skroch	25
Alisa Mitskog	25
Kelby Timmons	26
Roger Maki	26
Timothy Brown Jr	27
Greg Stemen	27
Mike Brandenburg	28
Jim Grueneich	28
Craig Headland	29
Don Vigesaa	29
Glenn Bosch	30
Mike Nathe	30
Dawson Holle	31

MEMBER	DISTRICT NUMBER
Karen Rohr	31
Pat Heinert	32
Lisa Meier	32
Anna Novak	33
Bill Tveit	33
Todd Porter	34
Nathan Toman	34
Karen Karls	35
Bob Martinson	35
Dori Hauck	36
Ty Dressler	36
Mike Lefor	37
Vicky Steiner	37
Dan Ruby	38
Christina Wolff	38
Keith Kempenich	39
Mike Schatz	39
Macy Bolinske	40
Matthew Ruby	40
Jorin Johnson	41
Karen Grindberg	41
Dustin McNally	42
Doug Osowski	42
Zachary Ista	43
Eric Murphy	43
Karla Hanson	44
Austin Foss	44
Carrie McLeod	45
Scott Wagner	45
Jim Kasper	46
Desiree Morton	46
Lawrence Klemin	47
Michael Motschenbacher	47

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 2025-09**

**WHEREAS**, under Article V, Section 7 of the North Dakota Constitution, the Governor is authorized to convene special sessions of the Legislative Assembly.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, pursuant to authority under Article V of the North Dakota Constitution, Governor Kelly Armstrong hereby convenes a special session of the North Dakota Legislative Assembly on Wednesday, January 21, 2026, in the legislative chambers at the State Capitol in Bismarck, North Dakota.

1. This special session is convened under the following authority:
  - a. The Governor is vested with the executive power under the North Dakota Constitution Article V, Section 1;

- b. The Governor is vested with the specific authority to convene a special session of the Legislative Assembly under Article V, Section 7 of the North Dakota Constitution.
2. The special session of the Legislative Assembly is convened to act on funding related to the Rural Health Transformation Program.
3. This action is necessary to ensure North Dakota can swiftly accept and appropriate the federal funding to implement this vital program and to avoid interruption to state government operations and services to citizens, the Legislative Assembly should complete this item by Friday, January 23, 2026.

Executed at Bismarck, North Dakota, this 29<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2025.

#### OATH OF OFFICE

**SPEAKER WEISZ ADMINISTERED** the Oath of Office to Rep. McNally from District 42, Rep. Skroch from District 25, and Rep. Timmons from District 26.

#### ROLL CALL

The roll was called and all members were present except Representatives Bolinske, T. Brown, and Schneider.

A quorum was declared by the Speaker.

#### REPORT OF PROCEDURAL COMMITTEE

**MR. SPEAKER:** Your procedural Rules Committee (Rep. Hagert, Chairman) recommends that the House and Joint Rules of the 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, in effect upon the adjournment of the 2025 regular legislative session, be reconsidered and amended as follows for the extraordinary session of the 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, with the exception of the amendments to House Rules 402 and 509 and Joint Rule 203, as reflected in Sections 7, 10, and 13, which become effective upon the conclusion of the extraordinary session of the 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly:

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 4 of House Rule 318 is amended as follows:

4. The following questions require a two-thirds vote of the members-elect of the House:
  - a. Initiated and referred measures amended or repealed within seven years after enactment or approval, as provided in Section 8, Article III, of the Constitution and House Rule 339.
  - b. Emergency clauses, as provided in Section 13, Article IV, of the Constitution.
  - c. Vetoed measures, reconsideration, as provided in Section 9, Article V, of the Constitution.
  - d. Adoption of propositions of a divided question if the division would require a two-thirds vote of the members-elect, as provided in House Rule 319.
  - e. To recede before a conference in a case where two-thirds governs, as provided in Joint Rule 202.
  - f. ~~Second reading same day as report, as provided in House Rule 337.~~
  - g. Reconsideration after the next legislative day, as provided in House Rule 348.
  - h.g. Reconsideration after a clincher motion, as provided in House Rule 349.
  - i.h. Suspension of requirement that copies of amendments be distributed before acted on, as provided in House Rule 601.
  - j.i. Amendment, reconsideration, or suspension of a joint rule, as provided in Joint Rule 105.

**SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 329 is amended as follows:

**329. Measures referred to the Joint Appropriations Committee.**

1. Every bill providing an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars or more must be referred or rereferred to and acted on by the Appropriations Committee before final action by the House thereon, unless Unless otherwise ordered by a majority vote of the members present.
2. before final action by the House, the following must be referred or rereferred to and acted on by the Joint Appropriations Committee:
  - a. Every bill approved for introduction by a two-thirds vote of the members of the House present and voting which provides an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars or more or resolution with has a fiscal note stating the measure has an effect of two hundred thousand dollars or more on the appropriation for a state agency or department must be rereferred to and acted on by the Appropriations Committee before final action by the House thereon, unless otherwise ordered by a majority vote of the members present; and
  - b. Every bill amended to include an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars or more or amended in a manner that results in a fiscal note stating the measure has an effect of two hundred thousand dollars or more on the appropriation for a state agency or institution.
- 3.2. A bill or resolution required to be referred or rereferred to the Joint Appropriations Committee which received a do not pass recommendation from committee and which then is passed by the House is deemed reconsidered and must be referred to and acted upon by the Joint Appropriations Committee if that measure has not been referred or rereferred to the Joint Appropriations Committee before passage. The Joint Appropriations Committee shall report the measure back to the House for action in accordance with these rules.
4. Except for bills approved for introduction after the deadline for introduction of bills, all House bills required to be rereferred to the Appropriations Committee must be rereferred not later than the twenty third legislative day and all Senate bills required to be rereferred to the Appropriations Committee must be rereferred not later than the fifty fifth legislative day. If an appropriation bill is not reported to the floor and rereferred as required herein, the bill is deemed rereferred and is under the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee at the end of the twenty third or fifty fifth legislative day, as appropriate.

**SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 337 is amended as follows:

**337. Second reading.** No bill requiring the approval of the Governor, no resolution proposing a change in the Constitution of North Dakota, and no resolution ratifying an amendment to the Constitution of the United States may be referred, except in the case of a bill or resolution that is prefiled pursuant to House Rule 401, or amended until it has been read; nor may any such bill or resolution have its second reading and final passage until at least one day after it has been reported to the House by the committee to which it was referred, provided that any such bill or resolution may have its second reading and final passage on the same day it is reported back when so ordered by two-thirds of the members elect of the House its first reading.

**SECTION 4. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 347 is amended as follows:**347. Transmittal of measure to Senate - Notice of intention to reconsider.**

1. After the second reading of a bill or resolution, the Chief Clerk shall retain the bill or resolution until the end of the next legislative day, unless the bill or resolution has previously been disposed of.
2. On the thirty sixth and thirty seventh legislative days and after the fifty seventh legislative day, the Chief Clerk shall transmit the bill or resolution to the Senate immediately upon adjournment of the last session on that day unless action on the bill or resolution is pending as the result of the House passing a motion to reconsider or unless the Majority or Minority Leader has given notice of intention to move the reconsideration of that bill or resolution.

3. After the sixty-sixth legislative day, the Chief Clerk shall transmit the bill or resolution to the Senate immediately after the second reading of the bill or resolution unless the Majority or Minority Leader has given notice of intention to move the reconsideration of that bill or resolution.
4. When a member in explaining the member's vote states to the House that the member's vote is for the purpose of reconsideration, that statement also is notice of such intention.
5. If notice is given by a member other than the Majority or Minority Leader but the motion to reconsider is not made before the end of the next legislative day, the Chief Clerk shall transmit the bill or resolution to the Senate at the end of that next legislative day.

2. If notice of intention to move reconsideration is given by the Majority or Minority Leader, the Chief Clerk shall retain the bill or resolution until adjournment of that day's session.

**SECTION 5. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 1 of House Rule 401 is amended as follows:

1. Any bill or resolution that conforms to statutory requirements and these rules, within the number and time prescribed, may be introduced by any member, standing committee, or the Legislative Management, by filing the bill or resolution with the Chief Clerk, who shall number consecutively each bill or resolution.

**SECTION 6. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 402 is amended as follows:

**402. When introduced.**

1. No member other than the Majority and Minority Leaders may introduce more than five bills as prime sponsor after the third legislative day. No bill or resolution may be introduced after the eighth legislative day, and no resolution, except those resolutions described in subsection 3, may be introduced after the sixteenth legislative day, except only upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee or upon two-thirds vote of the members of the House present and voting.
2. No bill introduced at the request of an executive agency or the Supreme Court may be introduced after the close of business on the day after the adjournment of the organizational session, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee.
3. Resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota and resolutions directing the Legislative Management to carry out a study may not be introduced after the thirty-fourth legislative day.

**SECTION 7. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 402 is amended as follows:

**402. When introduced.**

1. No member other than the Majority and Minority Leaders may introduce more than five bills as prime sponsor after the third legislative day. No bill may be introduced after the eighth legislative day, and no resolution, except those resolutions described in subsection 3, may be introduced after the sixteenth legislative day, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee or upon two-thirds vote of the members of the House present and voting.
2. No bill introduced at the request of an executive agency or the Supreme Court may be introduced after the close of business on the day after the adjournment of the organizational session before Thanksgiving Day in even-numbered years, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee.
3. Resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota and resolutions directing the Legislative Management to carry out a study may not be introduced after the thirty-fourth twenty-seventh legislative day.

**SECTION 8. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 501 is amended as follows:

**501. StandingProcedural and standing committees.**

1. The Committee on Committees consists of eleven members. The Majority Leader, by virtue of office, is a member of the committee and shall serve as its chairman. The Speaker, by virtue of office, is a member of the committee and is the vice chairman of the committee. The Majority Leader shall appoint five other members from the majority party and four members from the minority party to the committee. The committee shall appoint standing committees concerned with matters in the fields as indicated and procedural committeescommittee members to the Joint Policy Committee under Joint Rule 304 and may appoint replacement members to any committee in the event of an absence.
2. The five-day standing committee is Appropriations: (23 members) Bills and resolutions referred or rereferred under House Rule 329. Except for the committee chairman, each member of the committee must be appointed to one of the following divisions of the committee which, for purposes of North Dakota Century Code Section 54-03-10, are deemed standing committees:
  - a. Education and Environment.
  - b. Government Operations.
  - c. Human Resources.
3. The three-day standing committees, each with up to 14 members, are:
  - a. Education:  
Public Schools; Libraries; Institutions of Higher Learning.
  - b. Finance and Taxation:  
Public Debt; Taxes and Tax Laws.
  - c. Human Services:  
Human Services; Public Health; Public Safety.
  - d. Industry, Business and Labor:  
Banks and Banking; Corporations; Insurance; Matters pertaining to Private Business and Industry; Workers' Compensation; Unemployment Compensation; Labor Laws and kindred subjects.
  - e. Judiciary:  
Elections and Election Privileges; Judiciary; Constitutional Revision.
4. The two-day standing committees, each with up to 14 members, are:
  - a. Agriculture:  
Agriculture; Livestock; Drainage and Irrigation; Warehouse and Grain Grading.
  - b. Energy and Natural Resources:  
Game and Fish; Public Lands; Mines and Mining; Gas and Oil; Forestry.
  - c. Government and Veterans Affairs:  
State and Federal Affairs; Government Pensions and Benefits; Military and Veterans Affairs; Industrial Commission and institutions under its supervision; State Historical Society and State Parks.

- d. ~~Political Subdivisions:~~  
~~Cities; Counties; Townships; Park Districts; Apportionment.~~
- e. ~~Transportation:~~  
~~Highways and Bridges; Railroads; Motor Vehicles; Airlines and Airports.~~
- 5. The procedural committees are:
  - a. Arrangements for House Committee Rooms, to consist of three members.
  - b. Correction and Revision of the Journal, to consist of five members.
  - c. ~~Delayed Bills, to consist of five members.~~
  - d. Employment, to consist of five members.
  - e. ~~Inaugural Planning, to consist of three members.~~
  - f. ~~d.~~ Rules, to consist of seven members.

**SECTION 9. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 504 is amended as follows:**504. Committee meetings.**

- 1. ~~The Appropriations Committee meets on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of each week.~~
- 2. ~~The three-day committees meet on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each week.~~
- 3. ~~The two-day committees meet on Thursday and Friday of each week.~~
- 4. The chairman of any committee, or a majority of that committee, may call meetings at times and on other days as deemed necessary.

**SECTION 10. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 509 is amended as follows:**509. Reporting of measures.**

- 1. Except for an appropriations bill, a resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of North Dakota, or a resolution directing an interim study by the Legislative Management, no House bill or resolution may not be held in a committee for more than thirty legislative days after it is referred to the committee, unless an extension of time is granted by the House.
- 2. Except for a bill introduced after the deadline for introducing bills, a resolution directing an interim study by the Legislative Management or a resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of North Dakota, all House bills and resolutions must be reported back to the House no later than the thirty-fourth legislative day. A resolution directing an interim study by the Legislative Management or proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of North Dakota must be reported back to the House no later than the fortieth legislative day.
- 3. A bill introduced after the deadline for introducing bills must be reported back to the House within five legislative days after the day of introduction.
- 4. A bill or resolution not reported back as required by this rule must automatically be placed on the calendar without recommendation.
- 5. Senate bills and resolutions must be reported back to the House by the sixty-third legislative day.

6. Senate bills received after the crossover deadline must be reported back to the House within five legislative days after the day of receipt.

**SECTION 11. AMENDMENT.** House Rule 601 is amended as follows:

**601. Report of committees.**

1. The report of a committee must provide for one or more of the following recommendations with respect to the bill or resolution: do pass, do not pass, be amended, be rereferred to another committee, or be placed on the calendar without recommendation. However, when a committee fails to adopt any of the above recommendations due to the lack of a majority, the chairman shall report the bill to the floor with whatever minority reports individual committee members may request in accordance with House Rule 602.
2. During the fifth order of business, the Chief Clerk shall announce that committee reports have been received, if such is the case, and shall list the bill or resolution number, or other identifier, and state the accompanying committee recommendation. If the committee report is divided pursuant to House Rule 602, the Chief Clerk shall announce the majority and minority report, or reports, as well.
3.
  - a. If the committee report is for amendment, the proposed amendment must be placed on the calendar ~~for the next legislative day on the sixth order of business. After the fifty-third legislative day, the proposed amendment must be placed on the calendar~~ on the sixth order of business immediately after the report of the committee is received. On sixth order, the Speaker shall announce that without objection, the proposed amendments on the sixth order are deemed approved. If any member objects to a proposed amendment being approved with other proposed amendments, that amendment must be voted on as a separate item.
  - b. No action may be taken on an amendment until a verbatim copy of the amendment has been distributed to each member; provided, that on a two-thirds vote of the members-elect, this may be suspended, and the amendment acted on immediately after the report of the committee.
  - c. If the amendment is adopted by a majority vote of the members present, the amended measure must then be placed on the calendar ~~for the next legislative day~~ under the applicable order of business for second reading and final passage except as provided in subdivision e ~~or g~~.
  - d. If the amendment is rejected, the measure without amendment must be placed on the calendar ~~for the next legislative day~~ under the applicable order of business for second reading and final passage except as provided in subdivision e ~~or g~~.
  - e. If the committee report is for amendment and then rereferral to another committee, the measure must be rereferral to the appropriate committee after adoption or rejection of the amendment. If, after adoption or rejection of the amendment, a measure is subject to rereferral under House Rule 329, the measure must be rereferral to the Joint Appropriations Committee, regardless of whether the report provides for rereferral.
  - f. If the committee report does not recommend rereferral to another committee but recommends that the measure pass, do not pass, or makes no recommendation, the measure must be placed on the calendar ~~for the next legislative day~~ under the applicable order of business for second reading and final passage ~~except as provided in subdivision g~~.
  - g. ~~On motion Except as provided under subdivision e, a measure must be placed on the calendar for second reading and final passage immediately after action is taken on the amendment. If the committee report recommends the measure be placed on the calendar for second reading and final passage immediately after action is taken on the amendment, the measure must be placed on the calendar for second reading and final passage immediately after the~~

amendment is adopted. After the thirtieth legislative day all House bills, and after the fifty-third legislative day all measures, must be placed on the calendar for second reading and final passage immediately after action is taken on the amendment. Without objection, a measure placed on the calendar under this subdivision must be acted on immediately after placement on the calendar. If more than one amendment was deemed approved under subdivision-a and the measures are placed on the calendar under this subdivision, the Speaker shall announce whether the measures will be acted on immediately after placement on the calendar and the order in which the measures will be considered.

- h. A report for amendment must be approved as to form and style by the Legislative Council staff. When a report for amendment is received by the Chief Clerk without a notation that the report was approved as to form and style by the Legislative Council staff, the Chief Clerk immediately shall cause that report to be delivered to the Legislative Council office with a request that the report be examined and receive a notation approving its form and style.
4. If the committee report is divided as provided in House Rule 602, the reports must be placed on the calendar for the next legislative day on the seventh order of business. The Speaker shall receive and announce a motion that the report of the minority be substituted for the majority committee report. If the minority report is adopted, that report is substituted for the majority report and must be placed on the calendar on the eleventh or fourteenth order of business. If the minority report is not adopted, the majority report is deemed adopted and must be placed on the calendar on the eleventh or fourteenth order of business. If a "do not pass" report is adopted under this subsection, the measure must be placed on the calendar on the eleventh or fourteenth order of business. If no report is adopted under this subsection, the measure must be placed on the calendar on the eleventh or fourteenth order of business unless the measure is subject to rereferral under House Rule 329.
5. ~~If~~ If practicable, the Chief Clerk shall ensure that the daily calendar contains appropriate notation of committee reports.

**SECTION 12. AMENDMENT.** Joint Rule 202 is amended as follows:

**202. Receding before conference.** Either house may recede from any subject matter of difference existing between the two houses at any time before a conference whether the papers on which the difference has arisen are before the house receding formally or informally, and a majority of the members-elect governs, except in a case where two-thirds of the members-elect is required by the Constitution, and the question having been put and lost, may not be again put the same day, and the consideration thereof in other respects is regulated by the rules of the respective houses.

**SECTION 13. AMENDMENT.** Joint Rule 203 is amended as follows:

**203. Limitation on messaging of measures - Crossover days.**

1. A bill or resolution that has passed one house may not be sent to the other house for concurrence after the thirty-seventh legislative day, except a bill or resolution approved for introduction after the deadline for introduction of bills or resolutions.
2. A resolution that has passed one house may not be sent to the other house for concurrence after the forty-third legislative day, except a resolution approved for introduction after the deadline for introduction of that type of resolution.

**SECTION 14. AMENDMENT.** Joint Rule 207 is amended as follows:

**207. Consideration of items on consent calendar.**

1. ~~No item on the consent calendar may be considered for adoption on the same legislative day it is placed on the consent calendar.~~

2. Bills or resolutions on the consent calendar are not debatable, except that the presiding officer shall allow a reasonable time for questions from the floor and shall permit the proponents of the bills or resolutions to answer the questions.
- 3.2. The question of the final passage of more than one item contained on the consent calendar may be voted on in a single vote if the vote is on either bills or resolutions and not on any combination thereof in the same vote.
- 4.3. Immediately before voting on the first consent calendar bills or resolutions, the presiding officer shall call to the attention of the members the fact that the next vote will be the vote on the bills or resolutions on the consent calendar. A recorded roll call vote is necessary on items on the consent calendar only if a recorded roll call vote is required under Senate or House Rule 341.

**SECTION 15.** Joint Rule 303 is created as follows:

**303. Joint Appropriations Committee.**

1. A Joint Appropriations Committee must be appointed during a special session.
2. The committee consists of thirty-nine members, the twenty-three members from the House who served on the Appropriations Committee during the most recent legislative session and the sixteen members from the Senate who served on the Appropriations Committee during the most recent legislative session. In the event a member who served on the Appropriations Committee during the most recent legislative session is no longer a member of the Legislative Assembly, the respective house's Majority Leader may appoint a substitute member to serve on the committee. The first-named member from each house is co-chairman of the committee.
3. The presiding officer shall refer to the committee all bills and resolutions that serve primarily to provide an appropriation. The committee shall meet at the call of the co-chairmen. For each bill under consideration by the committee, the co-chairman from the house of introduction of the bill shall preside. Members of the committee are excused from attending a meeting of any other committee while the members are attending a meeting of the Joint Appropriations Committee.
4. The committee shall issue joint reports on the measures referred to it, with a report first being presented to the house having possession of the measure, and later presented to the other house if appropriate. A majority of each house's committee members must approve a recommendation before the committee may issue a joint report.
5. If there is a successful division or floor amendment in the house of introduction after the joint report is reported out of the joint committee, a bill messaged to the second house must be rereferred to the joint committee by the second house.

**SECTION 16.** Joint Rule 304 is created as follows:

**304. Joint Policy Committee.**

1. A Joint Policy Committee must be appointed during a special session.
2. The committee consists of twenty-eight members, fourteen from the House and fourteen from the Senate, appointed by the Majority Leader in each house. The first-named member from each house is co-chairman of the committee.
3. The presiding officer shall refer all bills and resolutions not referred to the Joint Appropriations Committee to the Joint Policy Committee. The committee shall meet at the call of the co-chairmen. For each bill under consideration by the committee, the co-chairman from the house of introduction of the bill shall preside. Members of the committee are excused from attending a meeting of any other committee while the members are attending a meeting of the Joint Policy Committee.

4. The committee shall issue joint reports on the measures referred to it, with a report first being presented to the house having possession of the measure, and later presented to the other house if appropriate. A majority of each house's committee members must approve a recommendation before the committee may issue a joint report.
5. If there is a successful division or floor amendment in the house of introduction after the joint report is reported out of the joint committee, a bill messaged to the second house must be rereferred to the joint committee by the second house.

**SECTION 17.** Joint Rule 305 is created as follows:

**305. Remote testimony and participation.** The Joint Appropriations Committee and the Joint Policy Committee shall allow remote testimony during committee meetings. Committee members may participate remotely upon approval from the Majority Leader of the Senate or the Speaker of the House.

**SECTION 18. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 4 of Joint Rule 501 is amended as follows:

4. a. The agency or department preparing the fiscal note for a bill or resolution as introduced shall complete and return the fiscal note to the Legislative Council not later than five days one day from the date of the request. The agency or department preparing the fiscal note for an amended bill or resolution shall complete and return the fiscal note to the Legislative Council not later than one day from the date of the request.
- b. The Legislative Council shall provide an electronic copy of the fiscal note to the Office of Management and Budget and the Governor. The Legislative Council shall make an electronic or paper copy of the fiscal note available to the Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Clerk of the House.

**SECTION 19. SUSPENSION.** House Rules 338, 403, 502, and 509 are suspended.

**SECTION 20. EFFECTIVE DATE.** The amendments to House Rules 402 and 509 and Joint Rule 203, in Sections 7, 10, and 13 of this rules amendment, become effective upon the conclusion of the 69<sup>th</sup> special session of the Legislative Assembly, convening on January 21, 2026.

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that the report be adopted, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

#### **JOINT APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**REPRESENTATIVE LEFOR APPOINTED** the following House members to the Joint Appropriations Committee: Representatives Vigesaa, B. Anderson, Berg, Bosch, Brandenburg, Fisher, Ista, Kempenich, Louser, Martinson, Meier, Mitskog, Monson, Murphy, Nathe, Nelson, Pyle, Richter, Sanford, Stemen, Swiontek, Wagner, and Warrey.

#### **JOINT POLICY COMMITTEE**

**REPRESENTATIVE LEFOR APPOINTED** the following House members to the Joint Policy Committee: Representatives M. Ruby, Beltz, Davis, Dobervich, Dressler, Frelich, Heinert, Jonas, Klemin, Novak, Porter, Rohr, Vollmer, and Weisz.

#### **MOTION**

**SPEAKER WEISZ ANNOUNCED** that the House will stand in recess until 10:00 a.m.

**THE HOUSE RECONVENED** pursuant to recess taken, with Speaker Weisz presiding.

**THE HOUSE RECOGNIZED THE PRESENCE OF:**

United States Senator John Hoeven

Chairwoman Lonna Jackson-Street, Spirit Lake Nation

#### **MOTION**

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that a committee of two be appointed to escort the Honorable Lt. Governor Michelle Strinden to the rostrum, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

**SPEAKER WEISZ APPOINTED** Representative Schauer and Senator Klein to the escort committee.

**MOTION**

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that a committee of four be appointed to escort the Honorable Kelly Armstrong, Governor, to the podium and First Lady Kjersti Armstrong to a reserved seat in the chamber and that Governor Armstrong's remarks as submitted to the front desk, be printed in the journal, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

**SPEAKER WEISZ APPOINTED** Representatives Lefor and Ista and Senators Hogue and Hogan to the escort committee.

**SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE SESSION ADDRESS**  
The Honorable Kelly Armstrong  
Governor of the State of North Dakota  
January 21, 2026

Good morning. Before we begin, I think it's important to pause to remember Governor Allen Olson, who served as North Dakota's 28<sup>th</sup> governor from 1981 to 1984 and as attorney general for eight years before that.

Governor Olson passed away the day after Christmas. Tomorrow, his family and friends will gather in Edina, Minnesota, to pay their respects at his funeral. Flags will fly at half-staff across our state in his honor.

To the Olson family, we extend our deepest sympathies and prayers, and our heartfelt thanks for his dedicated service to North Dakota. Please join me in a moment of silence as a mark of respect for the memory and legacy of Governor Al Olson.

Lieutenant Governor Strinden, Justices of the North Dakota Supreme Court, Mr. Speaker, legislators, elected officials, tribal leaders, family and friends, and fellow citizens. Thank you for joining us today, and welcome. And a special thanks to Senator Hoeven, the congressional delegation and President Trump for passing the legislation that gives us the opportunity to be here today.

It's my constitutional duty – and my great honor – to address this special session of the 69<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly.

It's also my duty to set the scope of this session, and to that end, working with legislative leadership, we identified a singular purpose: To address the \$199 million in federal dollars awarded for the first year of our Rural Health Transformation Program.

This program is a pivotal step forward in strengthening health care across North Dakota.

The need is clear: Nearly 75% of North Dakota's rural counties face primary care shortages. Over the last 20 years, health care has concentrated in our larger communities, leaving our rural residents without adequate services. These challenges demand bold action.

By expanding access, promoting long-term wellness and driving innovation, we have the chance to be the healthiest state in the nation.

I want to begin by thanking you all for your valuable input into North Dakota's application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

I'll admit, I was a bit skeptical when Senator Hogue told me he was forming a 34-member interim committee, given the complexity and short timeframe. So, to my team, HHS and, most of all, you legislators – thank you for accomplishing this goal during a short interim period. This is one time I was happy to be proven wrong.

Our application to CMS reflected thoughtful planning and collaboration. The priorities came directly from the people who know rural health care best – our residents, providers, tribal partners, and our community leaders, along with the Legislature, Governor's Office, and especially HHS.

We appreciate the Rural Health Transformation Committee for green-lighting four pieces of legislation that significantly helped improve our application score with CMS. Those four bills will:

- Require the Presidential Physical Fitness test in P.E. courses;
- Require nutrition education as part of physicians' continuing ed requirements;
- Join the physician assistant licensure compact; and
- Expand the scope of practice for pharmacists.

I look forward to signing these bills, along with the accompanying appropriations bill.

When we first learned about the funding that Congress and President Trump made available, we knew North Dakota was in line for at least \$100 million per year. To see that number nearly doubled in the final award is a testament to the countless hours of hard work that went into the application.

From Bowman to Bathgate, from Wahpeton to Williston, and everywhere in between, North Dakotans deserve access to high-quality health care. This is a generational opportunity to not only improve how health care is delivered to our citizens, but also help revitalize communities as people continue to seek out safe places to live with strong health care, great schools, and abundant economic opportunity.

Our plan is built on four pillars:

First, we want to Make North Dakota Healthy Again by promoting wellness and healthy lifestyles in communities across the state through initiatives focused on nutrition, exercise, and reducing the risk of substance abuse, just to name a few.

For all the advancements we've made in health care, far too often we treat symptoms and not people. Obesity is a killer. Sedentary lifestyles lead to negative health outcomes. It's time to shift the focus to front-end solutions: eating better, getting proper exercise, and building resilient and connected communities.

Second, we want to strengthen our communities and stabilize our rural health workforce. That means keeping health care workers in rural North Dakota with training, support, and retention grants.

Third, we want to bring high-quality health care closer to home by expanding local access to essential health services through telehealth, transportation, virtual medical rooms, and mobile clinics for hard-to-reach populations.

And finally, we want to connect technology and data to create a health care system that is smarter, faster, and more responsive – one that meets people where they are, when they need services.

Now, let me tell you what's not in the plan.

We are not building new buildings. We are not standing up unsustainable programs and hiring new employees that will become North Dakota taxpayer obligations when this federal funding runs out. And we are not propping up underperforming programs that haven't made North Dakotans healthier.

This is about transforming rural health, and that means embracing 21<sup>st</sup> century solutions – not repeating the policies of the past.

We aren't spraying federal dollars into North Dakota with a firehose.

All government money comes from taxpayers in one way or another. And we owe it to them to make the most of this investment. We must create lasting impact that we can sustain after this federal funding expires.

North Dakota is projected to receive at least \$500 million over five years. But as we saw with this first award, we could receive much more based on how we deploy those dollars. That's why this special session – and the work that will come after it to implement these programs – is so important.

This process began last summer with a statewide survey. We had three listening sessions last fall. The interim committee wrote and endorsed the four bills in October. We filed our application to CMS in early November and received notice of the award right before the New Year.

Now it's January, and we'll have only nine months to obligate this \$199 million. The Year 2 award will start Oct. 1. While we don't know that amount yet, we are asking you to approve two years of appropriation authority to ensure that we can quickly disburse the second tranche of funding.

This program only works if North Dakota taxpayers have confidence in how we're spending the money. It needs to be authorized and appropriated quickly. We need to be responsible stewards and track it closely. And it needs to have a tremendous impact on the well-being of our citizens.

In my first State of the State Address, I spared you any baseball references – not easy for this old American Legion baseball coach and future Ditch Chickens manager. No such luck today.

Let's keep our eye on the ball. Tune out the chatter from the bleachers. Lay off the pitches that can wait until later. Focus on hitting a home run by making the best possible use of this huge investment. If we execute our game plan, we can continue to receive an outsized share of these federal dollars – nearly a billion dollars over the next five years.

By doing so, we can make North Dakota the healthiest state in the nation and the best place to live, work and raise a family.

Thank you for allowing me to address you today. God Bless you, and may God continue to bless the State of North Dakota and the United States of America.

**MOTION**

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that the Joint Session be dissolved, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

**MOTION**

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that the absent members be excused, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

**MOTION**

**REP. BOSCH MOVED** that the House be on the Fourth, Fifth, Seventh, Ninth, and Thirteenth orders of business and at the conclusion of those orders, the House stand adjourned until 8:30 a.m., Thursday, January 22, 2026, which motion prevailed on a voice vote.

**FIRST READING OF HOUSE BILLS**

Legislative Management introduced:

**HB 1621:** A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subsection 1 of section 15.1-21-01 and subsection 1 of section 15.1-21-02 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to requiring the presidential physical fitness test in physical education courses in elementary, middle, and high schools; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Policy Committee**.

Legislative Management introduced:

**HB 1622:** A BILL for an Act to create and enact chapter 43-17.5 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the physician assistant licensure compact; to amend and reenact section 43-17-01, subsection 1 of section 43-17-02.1, and sections 43-17-02.2 and 43-17-46 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the requirements of physician assistants privileged to practice under the physician assistant licensure compact; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Policy Committee**.

Legislative Management introduced:

**HB 1623:** A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of health and human services for federal rural health transformation program grant funds; to provide an exemption; to provide for application; to provide a report; and to provide

an effective date.  
Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Appropriations Committee**.

Reps. Nathe, Heinert, Jonas, Martinson, Novak, Richter, Stemen, Conmy and Sens. Axtman, Schaible, Roers, Bekkedahl introduced:

**HB 1624:** A BILL for an Act to create and enact two new sections to chapter 15.1-07 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to offering school breakfast and lunch at no cost and the school meals fund; to provide an appropriation; to provide for a transfer; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Appropriations Committee**.

Rep. Sanford introduced:

**HB 1625:** A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 15-10-64 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the sale of the Ray Richards golf course; to provide an appropriation; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Appropriations Committee**.

Reps. Headland, Hagert, Nathe, Porter, Stemen, Toman and Sens. Bekkedahl, Weber introduced:

**HB 1626:** A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact subdivision d of subsection 1 of section 57-02-08.9, section 57-20-09, and subsection 1 of section 57-55-03 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to application of the primary residence credit and discount for early payment of tax; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Policy Committee**.

Rep. Dressler introduced:

**HB 1627:** A BILL for an Act to provide an appropriation to the department of public instruction to provide school meals at no cost to eligible students; and to provide an effective date.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Appropriations Committee**.

#### **FIRST READING OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

Reps. Bosch, Christianson, Ista and Sens. Axtman, Cleary, Davison, Sickler introduced:

**HCR 3038:** A concurrent resolution to recognize and congratulate the Young Men's Christian Association on its 175th anniversary.

Was read the first time and referred to the **Joint Policy Committee**.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE HB 1621**

**Joint Policy Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Co-Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.1383.01004)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 1 NAY, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1621 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE HB 1622 (25.1385.01000)**

**Joint Policy Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Co-Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1622 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE HB 1623**

**Joint Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Co-Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.1392.01005)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (22 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1623 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

#### **REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE HB 1624**

**Joint Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Co-Chairman)** recommends **AMENDMENTS (25.1395.03007)** and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** (17

YEAS, 5 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1624 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1625 ([25.1396.02000](#))**

**Joint Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Co-Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (22 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1625 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1626 ([25.1400.01000](#))**

**Joint Policy Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Co-Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1626 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HB 1627 ([25.1417.01000](#))**

**Joint Appropriations Committee (Rep. Vigesaa, Co-Chairman)** recommends the measure **BE PLACED ON THE CALENDAR WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION** (12 YEAS, 10 NAYS, 1 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HB 1627 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**HCR 3038 ([25.3120.01000](#))**

**Joint Policy Committee (Rep. M. Ruby, Co-Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). HCR 3038 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

The House stood adjourned pursuant to Representative Bosch's motion.

**Buell J. Reich, Chief Clerk**

