



# The Council

In consideration of the upcoming bill introduction deadline, the Legislative Council staff will do its best to complete bill drafts received by noon TODAY, before the Monday, January 13 deadline.

## Considering the State's Budget and Revenue Forecasts



Since Governor Burgum presented his budget recommendations to the Legislative Assembly during the organizational session in December, the fiscal staff has been reviewing it and has completed its Analysis of the Governor's Budget report.

With the election of Governor Armstrong, the Legislative Assembly will be considering budget recommendations from two governors this session. Governor Armstrong's budget recommendations will be presented to a joint meeting of the Senate and House Appropriations Committees at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, January 15, in the Brynhild Haugland Room.

The day before, on Tuesday, January 14, at 8:30 a.m. in the Brynhild Haugland Room, the House and Senate Appropriations Committees will meet jointly to receive the state revenue forecast from its economic consultant, S&P Global. The presentation will be given remotely and include outlooks for the agriculture industry, oil and gas industry, and overall economic activity. The Appropriations Committees will consider this information along with Governor Burgum's and Governor Armstrong's revenue forecasts as the Appropriations Committees adopt the base level revenue forecast to begin development of the 2025-27 biennium state budget. The forecast will be updated in March with information from the Office of Management and Budget and S&P Global as the Legislative Assembly begins to finalize its work on the 2025-27 biennial budget.

The fiscal staff conducted a [fiscal notes training webinar](#) for state agency representatives on Thursday, January 2. The purpose of the webinar was to review the fiscal note process, the fiscal note submission system, and to answer questions regarding how to properly complete a fiscal note.

## Explanation of Amendment Changes

During the 2023-24 interim the Legislative Procedure and Arrangements Committee made the decision to eliminate the antiquated page and line number amendment instructions. Similar to the "marked" up or "Christmas tree" version we've all come to know, "[Explanation of Amendment Changes](#)" is a guide to understanding amendment changes to bills and resolutions.

*\*Except study resolutions and amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota*

## Employee Spotlight



**Beth Dittus** joined the Legislative Council in 2024 and serves as the Assistant Legal Division Director. Before joining the Legislative Council, Beth spent several years representing survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault in legal matters, followed by 11 years doing legal and policy work at the Department of Health and Human Services. She grew up in Devils Lake, attended UND, and spent a summer during law school studying in Norway.

Beth enjoys spending time with her husband of 15 years, Daryl, and two daughters, Nora (8) and Pearl (7). When not chauffeuring her kids to various activities or chasing after her mastiff puppy, Beth enjoys traveling with family and friends, being on or near the water, a strong cup of coffee, and exercising to counteract her love for carbs and sweets.

**350** Bills Introduced  
192 House  
158 Senate

**1,146** Bill and Resolutions Requested

## Important Dates

**Jan. 20:** Bill Intro Deadline for Representatives

**Jan. 27:** Bill Intro Deadline for Senators

**Jan. 30:** Resolution Intro Deadline\*

## From the Director

Here we go - the 2025 legislative session is underway! This is my 19th legislative session and the same feelings of excitement and anxiety come with each session. The question that rivals "how many bills are there?" for the most common thing I have been asked over the last week is "are you ready?". The truth is we never feel like we are ready, but we are prepared. As soon as one session ends, we begin working toward the next one.

We usually receive the first bill draft requests for the next session almost as soon as the current session ends. Throughout the interim, the fiscal division is monitoring the state budget and agency appropriations. Our information technology staff is constantly working to update systems and applications--as we go through this session, while our developers are ensuring current systems are operating, they are looking for ways to improve systems and applications. During the interim process, all divisions of the office and aspects of our operations are continually looking forward to plan for the next session. So, even though it may seem like we are going through a last-minute sprint, it's probably more like the burst of energy as we enter the last long uphill portion of a marathon!

Naturally, it is our goal to have everything go perfectly, but we will have some moments when some things do not go as planned. However, there always is a "plan B" and we will be prepared. So, if it's your first session or your 25th, I hope you have a great session and know the Legislative Council staff will be here to help you in any way we can.

John Bjornson, Director

