



# The Council

## Under Pressure

Although most standing committees are still holding hearings on bills, with approximately **300 bills** in committees, **the first conference committee meetings are likely to be scheduled next week.**

The conference committee process is generally viewed as the most intense, pressure-filled time of the legislative session. The process also has been characterized as confusing. As a result of changes made to the amendment style and procedures during this last interim, we hope the process will be more straightforward and understandable. The memorandum [Conference Committees - Operation and Procedures](#) provides a detailed description of the formation and operation of conference committees; however, here is the more condensed version.

A conference committee is appointed when a measure is amended in the second chamber and the chamber from which the bill originated chooses not to concur in the amendments. By tradition, the Majority Leader of each chamber appoints a conference committee of three members. A conference committee is not a joint committee, but actually a joint meeting of the two committees representing each chamber. By rule, a conference committee must hold its first meeting within 2 days of appointment.

A conference committee must limit its recommendations to resolving the differences between the language passed by each chamber. The report of a conference committee may consist of one of the following recommendations:

- The chamber of origin accept the second chamber's amendments.
- The second chamber reject its amendments.
- The conference committee replace the second chamber's amendments with new amendments agreed upon by the conference committee.
- The conference committee be discharged and a new conference committee be appointed because the committee is unable to come to an agreement.

**A report of the conference committee must be approved by at least two members of the committee from each chamber.** A conference committee report is submitted first to the chamber of origin. If that chamber adopts the report, the bill and the report are sent to the other chamber for consideration. A conference committee report may not be divided or amended.

Hopefully this summary makes the process more clear!

## Session Statistics

- 475** Bills Awaiting Final Action
- 292** Bills in Committee
- 191** Bills Enrolled
- 133** Bills Signed by Governor
- 913** Amendments Requested

## Important Dates

**Apr. 4:** Deadline for Rereferrals of Bills in Second House to Appropriations Committees

**Apr. 16:** Deadline to Report Bills and Resolutions Out of Committee

## Photos from the Floor



## Employee Spotlight



**Abigail Jankauskas** joined the Legislative Council in December as a legislative editor. Abigail's duties include formatting, editing, proofreading, and final review of legislation, memorandums, and publications. She also assists with entering the short description of bills to populate the online major topics index for the legislative session, a task she enjoys.

Abigail grew up in Wyoming and graduated from Utah State University with a bachelor's degree in international relations. She earned her master's degree in Eastern European and Russian studies at Vilnius University in Lithuania, where she met her husband. In her free time, Abigail enjoys traveling, reading, and completing jigsaw puzzles.

## Employee Spotlight



**Kevin Stankiewicz** joined the Legislative Council in January 2024 as a legislative editor. Kevin is no stranger to public service. He previously worked as a compliance officer for the Tax Department, a polytechnic outreach coordinator for Bismarck State College, and a grant coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department for over 10 years. His duties include formatting, editing, proofreading, and final review of legislation, memorandums, and publications.

Originally from Wisconsin, Kevin graduated from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse with a bachelor of science degree in speech communication and a minor in political science. He also served 4 years in the United States Army as a Spanish linguist. Kevin and his wife Jan enjoy family time with their kids Indigo, Ruby, Frankie, and Harper.



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