



The Council

Agriculture and Water Management Committee

The Agriculture and Water Management Committee held its third meeting on March 31. The committee received six reports from the Agriculture Commissioner regarding autonomous technology grants, irrigation expansion, the recent transactions of the Low-Carbon Fuels Fund and Environmental Impact Mitigation Fund, the development of a new or updated model zoning ordinance related to animal feeding operations, and capacity requirements to establish and sustain a fertilizer production facility in the state. As part of the committee's study of the formula for conducting economic analyses for assessment drain projects and the projected cost threshold for conducting economic analyses, the committee heard testimony from a representative from the Department of Water Resources regarding potential changes to the economic analysis tool. The committee also heard testimony from representatives of the Department of Water Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality about Devils Lake; specifically, issues related to flood control infrastructure, inundated lands, lake levels, and water quality. Representatives from the Pacific Legal Foundation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the North Dakota Association of Counties provided testimony about the effects of federal wetland programs and federal wetland easements on the agriculture industry and local governments of the state. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2026, on the campus of North Dakota State University in Fargo.



Child Care Survey for Parents

The Legislative Council's Policy and Program Evaluation Division is conducting a survey to collect feedback from parents on child care availability, affordability, and quality in North Dakota. The survey is open until Friday, May 8 at 11:59 p.m., and can be found at <https://ndlegis.gov/survey/child-care-survey-parents>.

This week's newsletter brings a little Easter cheer with bunnies, chicks, and legislative updates.

Upcoming Meetings

April

- 8-9 Higher Education Institutions
- 13 Child Custody Review Task Force
Tribal and State Relations

21-22 Advanced Nuclear Energy

- 22 Legislative Procedure and Arrangements

May

- 7 Employee Benefits Programs
- 13 Protection and Victim Services
Tribal and State Relations



Did you know?

In 1987, the Legislative Assembly officially adjourned on April 19, Easter Sunday, with the Senate adjourning at 12:04 a.m., and the House following at 12:06 a.m. At the time, it was the third-longest session, adjourning after 73 days.

Education Committee

The Education Committee held its second meeting on April 1. The committee continued its dual-credit study, received information regarding the Building Assets, Reducing Risks Program (BARR), and accepted several reports assigned to the committee by the Legislative Management.

The committee received information from representatives of Valley City State University and Lake Region State College regarding dual-credit courses and teacher training; Fargo Public Schools, West Fargo Public Schools, and Drake-Anamoose School District regarding dual-credit courses offered, dual-credit teacher workloads, and the impact of dual-credit courses on students; and the Superintendent of Public Instruction regarding the cost of dual-credit courses.

The committee heard presentations from representatives of the BARR Center, Fargo Public Schools, Williston Basin School District, and Milnor School District regarding the BARR Program.

The committee received reports regarding the activities of the Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve Education Coordination Council, the financial condition of school districts, school district employee compensation, the implementation of intervention measures for chronically low-performing schools, school district expenditures on school safety and security measures, a compilation of state assessment test scores, reading curriculum and professional development, and mathematics curriculum and professional development.

Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board

On March 31, the Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board reviewed the status of the Legacy Fund and the Budget Stabilization Fund. As of January 31, 2026, the Legacy Fund had a balance of \$13.97 billion and returned 10.6 percent for the fiscal year-to-date while the Budget Stabilization Fund had a balance of \$978 million and returned 3.1 percent for the fiscal year-to-date. Representatives of RVK, Inc., presented a review of the investment policy for the Legacy Fund and concluded the in-state investment policy aligns with the overall desired outcomes. The advisory board recommended the Bank of North Dakota consider pausing new investments under the CD Match Program and approved an updated investment policy with updates to reflect the constitutional changes approved by the voters in November 2024.



Judiciary Committee

The Judiciary Committee met on April 1 to receive information relating to the committee's studies of the ownership of alcoholic beverage establishments by licensed charitable gaming organizations, court fines and fees, and costs and savings associated with pretrial service programs operating in the state.

The Attorney General's office provided information on the ownership of alcoholic beverage establishments by licensed charitable gaming organizations, the process of obtaining ownership of alcoholic beverage establishments, the benefits and detriments of licensed charitable gaming organizations owning alcoholic beverage establishments, and the interactions and regulations between gaming manufacturers and distributors and licensed charitable gaming organizations.

The committee received information from the North Dakota League of Cities and North Dakota Association of Counties regarding the role of cities and counties in authorizing charitable gaming locations.

The committee received reports from the Racing Commission regarding the operations of the commission and the liability of charitable organizations that receive and disburse money handled through account wagering; the State Hospital, regarding individuals at the State Hospital who have been committed to the care and custody of the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services; the Supreme Court, regarding the program to assist rural counties and municipalities in recruiting attorneys; and the Legislative Council, relating to a review of executive orders issued by the President of the United States.

The committee received several updates, including an update on the pretrial services study from Parole and Probation, court fines and fees from the Supreme Court, and fines and fees relating to the 24/7 Sobriety Program from the North Dakota Association of Counties. Representatives of the Fines and Fees Justice Center provided information regarding the impact of fines and fees on criminal justice outcomes.