



The Council

Advanced Nuclear Energy Committee

The Advanced Nuclear Energy Committee met on June 16 to continue its study of advanced nuclear energy. The committee received information from the National Association of State Energy Officials regarding state-level policy and legislation related to advanced nuclear energy in other states. The Public Service Commission, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Emergency Services, and Department of Water Resources provided perspective on potential administrative or regulatory roles that may be anticipated if nuclear development were pursued in the state. The Industrial Commission and Bank of North Dakota provided information regarding state grant and loan programs that may support potential advanced nuclear energy development. The committee also received an overview of community engagement and social interest evaluation best practices from North Dakota State University (NDSU) and a presentation from the State Geologist regarding uranium and critical mineral exploration in the state.

The committee's consultant, Nucleon Energy, Inc., presented two reports. The first outlined advanced nuclear technologies suitable for the state, including small modular reactor and microreactor systems. Nucleon also presented a final report, which addressed statutory considerations related to advanced nuclear development and tied together the four companion reports to outline a measured, technology-agnostic readiness approach for policymakers.

Employee Spotlight



Ethan Renfandt joined the Legislative Council as an Information Technology Specialist in the Information Technology Services Division. Before joining the Legislative Council, he worked for Trinity Health in Minot.

Ethan grew up in Minot and earned his bachelor's degree in management information systems from Minot State University. Outside of work, he enjoys hunting, fishing, and playing disc golf.



Yaswanth Satyanadh joined the Legislative Council as a Quality Assurance Analyst in the Information Technology Services Division. He previously worked for Stifel Financial in St. Louis, Missouri.

Yaswanth grew up in India and moved to the United States in 2023. He earned his master's degree in computer science from Southeast Missouri State University. In his free time, he enjoys watching movies, playing games, and reading.

Upcoming Meetings

June

23 Tax Reform and Relief Advisory

24 Budget Section
(including divisions)

Tax Reform and Relief Advisory
Subcommittee

25 Government Finance

30 Legislative Task Force on
Government Efficiency

July

8 Information Technology

15 Health Care

Judiciary Committee

The Judiciary Committee held its fourth meeting on June 17. The committee received several statutory reports, including a report from the Department of Health and Human Services on the findings and recommendations of the task force established to review juvenile justice diversion services and programs. The Director of the North Dakota Lottery provided a report on the operation of the lottery. Additionally, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation provided a report on procedures to track uniform data points and improve data connectivity between system partners, including a proposal to develop a data sharing portal to alert the Department of Health and Human Services of changes to the Medicaid status of offenders in the custody of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

The committee received an update from North Dakota Association of Counties and North Dakota Sheriff's and Deputies Association regarding fees and services associated with the 24/7 Sobriety Program. The North Dakota Racing Commission presented a summary of the State Auditor's report and discussed its plans to address the report's findings.

The committee also received testimony from the Attorney General's office, Burleigh County State's Attorney's Office, and Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation as part of its study of the state's sentencing, corrections, and parole systems.

Higher Education Institutions Committee

The Higher Education Institutions Committee met on the campuses of NDSU and the North Dakota State College of Science on June 18 and 19, respectively. The committee received information from representatives of the institutions regarding enrollment, new and expanding academic programs, and shared services with other higher education institutions.

The committee also received information from a representative of Sagency, a consultant contracted by the North Dakota University System to conduct a review of academic and administrative duplication and needs across the state. Representatives of the University System provided information to the committee regarding dual-credit costs, a compliance investigation at Dickinson State University, low-completion academic programs, and anticipated funding requests for the 2027-29 biennium.

The committee reviewed but did not act on a bill draft to clarify eligibility for certain student financial assistance programs, to enact eligibility requirements for the Professional Student Exchange Program, and to adjust funding for certain student financial assistance programs.

Agriculture and Water Management Committee

On June 17, the Agriculture and Water Management Committee held its fourth meeting of the interim at NDSU in Fargo. The newly appointed president of NDSU provided welcoming remarks at the beginning of the meeting. A representative of the Department of Agriculture presented a report on the findings and recommendations of a study examining the potential benefits of expanding irrigation statewide. A representative of the State Board of Agricultural Research and Education provided a statutorily mandated report regarding the board's annual evaluation of research activities and expenditures. The committee also heard presentations from representatives of the North Dakota Water Resources Research Institute and ND AgTech regarding the organizations' missions and recent activities.

A representative from the Department of Water Resources and the North Dakota Water Users Association provided information on the upcoming changes to the formula used to conduct economic analyses for assessment drain projects. The committee also received testimony from a representative of the North Dakota Association of Counties and discussed legislator proposals regarding the committee's study of water and wetlands regulations and the taxation of inundated lands in the state. The committee concluded the meeting following a tour of the NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Fargo.

Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee

The Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee met on June 17. The committee received information from the State Auditor's office and independent public accounting firms regarding audits of state agencies and institutions. The committee also received information from the Department of Public Instruction regarding school meals; a presentation by the Private Investigative and Security Board regarding the status of corrective actions related to audit findings; and a presentation by the North Dakota Insurance Reserve Fund regarding claims activity, claims payment history, balances, a history of complaints, and executive staff and board compensation.

The Legislative Council staff presented information relating to political subdivision noncompliance with state law and the Wonder Fund North Dakota and Angel Match programs.