The Council

Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee

The Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review Committee met on September 22. The committee received reports from the State Auditor's office and independent public accounting firms regarding audits of state agencies and institutions, including the financial statement and performance audits of the North Dakota Development Fund (NDDF).

The committee approved a motion to recommend the 2027 Legislative Assembly repeal the NDDF, transfer its remaining fund balance to the General Fund, and provide for the Bank of North Dakota to administer outstanding loans and equity investments until repaid or otherwise resolved. The committee also approved a motion to refer both NDDF audit reports and related testimony to the Attorney General for investigation of possible violations of state law.

The committee received information regarding Department of Health and Human Services account write-offs, school meal debt, University of North Dakota School of Law admissions procedures, and Boards Review Task Force recommendations relating to the Private Investigation and Security Board.

The committee recommended three bill drafts to the Legislative Management relating to withholding state payments for recurring audit findings of political subdivisions, penalties for recurring audit findings of occupational and professional boards, and penalties for political subdivisions and occupational and professional boards for failure to submit required audit reports and annual reports.

Information Technology Committee

The Information Technology Committee met on September 24. The committee received information regarding major information technology projects, statewide technology planning, the Statewide Longitudinal Data System, and the Information Technology Department’s 2027-29 biennium budget request. The committee also received updates on the K-12 student information system transition and cybersecurity maturity assessment participation.

The committee received the Emergency Services Communications Coordinating Committee biennial report, discussed emergency communications funding and governance, and considered a bill draft revising the definition of "prepaid wireless service." No recommendation came out of the committee regarding the bill draft.

As part of its study of the enterprise resource planning system, the committee received information regarding system procurement, project scope, and estimated costs. The committee also received information security audits of the Information Technology Department and the North Dakota University System.

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Higher Education Institutions Committee

The Higher Education Institutions Committee held its final meeting of the interim on the campuses of Lake Region State College and the University of North Dakota on September 21 and 22. The committee received information from representatives of the institutions regarding enrollment, changes in offered academic programs, and shared services with other higher education institutions.

The committee received information from the State Auditor regarding audit findings related to tuition waivers awarded by the campuses, including a lack of written policies and procedures for the waivers and appropriate documentation of the awards. Representatives of the University System office provided information to the committee regarding dual-credit costs, including the potential impact of instituting a flat rate across the campuses for the determination of state aid for "subsidized dual-credit." Subsidized dual-credit includes dual-credit courses for which the instructor is employed by the high school and for which the student is charged a reduced tuition rate.

The committee recommended the Legislative Assembly implement a flat rate for the determination of state aid under the higher education funding formula for subsidized dual-credit student credits completed. The committee also recommended a bill draft to the Legislative Management to clarify eligibility for certain student financial assistance programs, enact eligibility requirements for the Professional Student Exchange Program, adjust funding for certain student financial assistance programs, and enact the North Dakota Governor's School in the North Dakota Century Code.

Did You Know?

We're hiring session staff and interns

Those interested in getting a behind-the-scenes look at North Dakota's legislative process can now apply for one of several temporary staff positions available during the 2027 legislative session. Temporary staff play a vital role in keeping the legislative process moving while gaining a behind-the-scenes look at how state government works. Open positions include Secretary of the Senate, Chief Clerk of the House, journal reporters, committee clerks, a session tour guide, and more.

College students interested in gaining hands-on legislative experience can apply for internship opportunities available during the session. Students can earn a $4,000 monthly stipend along with college credits in an amount approved by their educational institution.

Temporary staff and internship positions run concurrently with the 2027 legislative session, from January through April.

Upcoming Meetings

September

29 Legislative Task Force on Government Efficiency
Tax Reform and Relief Advisory

30 Budget Section
(including divisions)

October

1 Employee Benefits Programs
Government Finance
Protection and Victim Services

6 Artificial Intelligence and Data Center
Health Care
Higher Education Funding Review

7-8 Energy Development and Transmission

13 Emergency Response Services

Tribal and State Relations Committee

The Tribal and State Relations Committee held its sixth meeting of the interim on September 24. The committee received information from a representative of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation regarding state and tribal taxation issues. The committee received information from the Secretary of State regarding the use of tribal identification for voting. The committee received a summary of the recent activities of the Indian Affairs Commission from the Executive Director of the commission. The committee also received information from a representative of the Highway Patrol regarding terminology used in missing persons cases.

The committee considered three bill drafts and one resolution draft. The committee approved bill drafts related to public communications during a missing persons investigation, and a legislative management study of the impacts of an institution for mental diseases waiver. The committee also approved a resolution draft urging Congress to provide payments in lieu of taxes to local governments for trust land held by the federal government on behalf of tribal nations.