



Rural Health Transformation Committee

The Rural Health Transformation Committee held its second meeting on October 21 to continue its review of the status of the state's grant application for the federal Rural Health Transformation Program. Based on public listening sessions and committee feedback, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) developed the following four program initiatives to address rural health care needs:

- Bring high-quality care closer to home;
- Connect technology, data, and providers;
- Strengthen and stabilize the rural health workforce; and
- Make North Dakota healthy again.

The department identified several components for each initiative and assigned preliminary funding allocations. The deadline to submit the grant application is November 5.

The committee approved a motion to endorse the preliminary grant application information developed by DHHS. The committee also reviewed potential policy changes that may increase funding to be received through the grant program. The committee recommended the following bill drafts to the Legislative Management for consideration at a future legislative session:

- A bill draft to require schools to administer the Presidential Physical Fitness Test;
- A bill draft to require a nutrition component for physician continuing education requirements;
- A bill draft for the state to join the physician assistant licensure compact; and
- A bill draft to expand the scope of process for pharmacists relating to lab testing and prescriptive authority.

The committee is scheduled to meet on December 4 to review the completed grant application. The committee also will likely meet again after the grant awards are announced at the end of the year.

Upcoming Meetings

October

- 28-29** Higher Education Institutions
- 30** Employee Benefits Programs

November

- 5** Special Education Funding
- 6** Energy Development and Transmission
- 12** Higher Education Funding Review
- 13** Agriculture and Water Management
- 18** Health Care
- 19** Human Services

December

- 2** Information Technology
- 3** Legislative Task Force on Government Efficiency
- 4** Rural Health Transformation
- 9** Water Topics Overview Legislative Audit and Fiscal Review
- 10** Budget Section
- 11** Child Custody Review Task Force Government Finance



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Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board

On October 22, the Legacy and Budget Stabilization Fund Advisory Board reviewed the status of the Legacy Fund and the Budget Stabilization Fund. The committee received updates regarding in state investments under the Legacy Fund. As of June 30, 2025, the Legacy Fund had a balance of \$13 billion and net investment returns of 12.7 percent for the fiscal year, while the Budget Stabilization Fund had a balance of \$981 million and net investment returns of 6.6 percent for the fiscal year. Under the in state investment program, \$150 million is committed to infrastructure investments managed by GCM Grosvenor, and \$250 million is committed to equity investments managed by 50 South Capital.



Tribal and State Relations

On October 24, the Tribal and State Relations Committee held its second meeting of the interim to meet with the Three Affiliated Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation. The committee toured Native Green Grow, the MHA Emergency Operations Center, and the Elbowoods Memorial Health Center Campus. The committee received information from Chairman Mark Fox and members of the Tribal Council regarding the history of the tribe and tribal-state issues.

The committee also received information from representatives of the Good Road Recovery Center regarding a program overview and discussion of Medicaid barriers. Additionally, the committee received information from a representative of the Department of Indigenous Health, University of North Dakota School of Medicine and Health Sciences, regarding the department and its contributions to indigenous health and the state.

The committee also received information from Native Inc. and the Native American Development Center regarding the services for indigenous persons and current economic development efforts, including the organization's efforts to seek support for the development of a cultural center in Bismarck.

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PET SPOTLIGHT Osha

Osha was named after a Game of Thrones character, not the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

She is a corgi-husky mix and is about 7.5 years old. She likes fetching sticks but as she gets older, she mostly enjoys sleeping on the couch.

Can you guess my human?

Levi Kinnischtzke, Senior Fiscal Analyst

Emergency Response Services Committee

The interim Emergency Response Services Committee's work heated up at its second meeting on October 23.

The committee continued its study of the evolving fire service operational and response needs of the state and received testimony from the State Fire Marshal, Department of Emergency Services, North Dakota Forest Service, and North Dakota Firefighter's Association on the current approaches to fire response used in the state.

The committee also received testimony from the North Dakota Insurance and Securities Department on its emergency medical services delinquent billing reimbursement grant study and considered proposals from two consultants for a survey of emergency medical services providers. The committee recommended the selection of PWW Advisory Group for consulting services to the Chairman of the Legislative Management.

The committee received additional testimony on its study of volunteer emergency responder recruitment and retention from the State Fire Marshal, the Public Employee Retirement System, the North Dakota Firefighter's Association, Workforce Safety and Insurance, and the Department of Career and Technical Education. The testimony reviewed the benefits currently available to volunteers and the committee discussed the potential to expand benefits.

The next committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for late December.



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