

## **SDFB Legislative Update – Week 8**

The 8<sup>th</sup> week of the legislative session included long days for all with some committee meetings starting at 6:30 a.m. and running into the evening. Four days remain for the main session – Monday is the last day for a bill or joint resolution to pass the second legislative body; Tuesday and Wednesday are reserved for conference committees to deal with bills that passed both the House and the Senate and were amended in the second body; and Thursday the budget for next year – known as the General Bill – will be acted on.

On Monday both bodies will convene at 11 a.m.; the House has four pages for their calendar and the Senate has three. The House has 68 separate items to finish before they adjourn on Monday.

### **ZONING BILL ON THE HOUSE FLOOR ON MONDAY – ACTION NEEDED**

**SB 157**, Governor Noem's zoning bill, passed the House State Affairs Committee 10-3 and will be heard on the House floor on Monday. SDFB President Scott VanderWal was again able to testify in favor of the bill along with the Governor and many agriculture and business groups.

Please **REACH OUT** to your House members this weekend and ask them to vote yes on **SB 157**.

Click [here](#) to find your legislators' contact information. Know that the opponents of the bill are making contacts and we need to balance that and continue to ask for their YES vote.

### **CAPITAL OUTLAY**

**SB 170**, the compromise on capital outlay worked out by the Governor's office between education interests and taxpayer groups, passed the House 65-3. This bill maintains caps on capital outlay taxes while providing some flexibility for schools within the parameters which also govern cities, counties, townships, and other local units of government. The parties agreed that this compromise will forgo the need to revisit the capital outlay issue in the near future.

### **ELECTRIC SERVICE TERRITORY DISPUTE**

**HB 1262**, a bill to provide a process to resolve territory disputes between REA's and municipal electrics, was tabled in Senate Commerce and Energy Committee 6-0. HB 1262 had passed the House 48-20. This highlights the importance which committee a bill is sent to. The members of the Senate Commerce and Energy Committee were not on board with HB 1262. This issue will be back again next year, making it the third consecutive session.

## **EDUCATION LEVIES ON PROPERTY**

The two bills setting the tax levies for K-12 education will be heard in Joint Appropriations Tuesday morning. It is typical for these bills to be among the last heard every year.

**HB 1042**, a bill to set the levy to fund special education, raises the levy to \$1.684 per thousand of valuation, an increase from last year of 7.4 cents per thousand. This is a 4.6 percent increase.

**HB 1043**, sets the general school levies for each class of property. It calls for a 3.9 percent reduction in the levies from last year. Ag land, owner-occupied, and commercial property are treated with an equal percentage decrease based on the statewide total of property valuations. As the total value of property statewide increases, the levy decreases. The numbers are:

- Ag land: \$1.416 proposed, down from \$1.473
- Owner-Occupied: \$3.168 proposed, down from \$3.296
- Commercial: \$6.556 proposed, down from \$6.821.

After approval, these two bills are incorporated into the General Bill.

## **WATERSHED DISTRICTS**

**HB 1166** was amended in Senate Local Government to include an emergency clause and passed the Senate 35-0. Because of the amendment, HB 1166 must go back to the House for their concurrence. The emergency clause would implement the bill upon the Governor's signature and efforts can begin immediately to reorganize a dormant district.

## **RURAL BROADBAND**

One of Governor Noem's priorities is expanding access to broadband in underserved areas. Last year, \$5 million was allocated in the budget. This was matched by federal funds to connect 5,000 underserved households and businesses here in South Dakota.

**HB 1189** appropriates an additional \$5 million for broadband services for the coming year. This bill passed the House floor 54-14 this week and will be considered in the Senate next week.

## **VETERINARY EDUCATION**

**HB 1227**, a bill to provide \$550,000 of "bridge" funding for the 2+2 Veterinary Education collaboration between the University of Minnesota and SDSU, passed the House 61-7, and was sent to the Senate. The dollars are one-time monies for the next two years, and will allow the start of the program until the funding source is converted from the present veterinary education funding track.

## **WRITTEN DRIVER'S LICENSE EXAM**

**SB 70**, a bill to have South Dakota join 47 other states in providing the written portion of the driver's license exam in Spanish, passed the House Transportation Committee 8-3 and will be on the House floor Monday. The driving portion would continue to be conducted in English. This is a large workforce issue since workers who are native Spanish-speakers have become the second largest segment of our state's population. There were 19 proponents of the bill representing the dairy industry, health care, hotel and restaurant workers, ag processing, landscaping businesses, and other segments of the South Dakota labor force. There were no opponents in committee to SB 70 on the House or Senate side.

Thanks for your interest in South Dakota legislative actions. As always, if you have questions, comments or need info, please let me know.

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