



LEGISLATIVE UPDATES



March 21, 2025

Update No. 11

Well, we've unofficially entered the third period of the session. If you recall the hockey game analogy a while back, the third period is technically conference committee season. Legislative Council has added the ability to run a conference committee schedule report to the bill tracking website and concur/do not concurs are hitting the House and Senate journal at top speed. By next week we should see our first committee members assigned and meetings scheduled.

This is also a little bit of a weird time during the session, at least for those of us tasked with trying to describe and relay the happenings to others. As Kate Hudson's groupie character in the early-2000's rock and roll comedy says, "It's all happening!" But what exactly is happening is a moving target at best. What was true this morning, is probably false by lunch. Most of the puzzle is finished, but the biggest pieces are still shifting, in several directions all at once. Many lobbyists and legislators are starting to look especially worse for the wear around this time in the session. You could say the same for legislative staff, but you don't typically see them thanks to the exceedingly long hours they're working drafting amendments and the like.

Speaking of biggest puzzle piece – **HB 1167**, the property tax reform and relief bill supported by Governor Armstrong, was given a 6-0 Do Pass recommendation by the Senate Finance and Tax Committee. The committee did not make any changes to the bill from the House version and rereferred it to Senate Appropriations (as expected). There has been some hallway chatter that the committee might pull the bill back in order to make some changes that would lessen the price tag or incorporate some provisions from other property tax bills that would provide relief to other types of property (like Ag land), but that's just chatter so far. We will see what next week brings.

And finally, one last bit of hallway chatter: last night for the first time since early April I heard someone utter the phrase, "we could wrap up by Easter." That's two weeks before the 80th day, and I'm a little more inclined to believe it than I was back in January. While there are a few big fights left to have and some budget balancing to do – we seem to be moving quickly and a bit ahead of the usual pace. Over half of the 1088 bills and resolutions that were introduced have been defeated or signed by the Governor (if necessary) and filed with the Secretary of State. Many more are just a matter of formality at this point.

UPDATES FROM ICBND'S PRIORITY TRACKING LIST

Next week's hearing schedule includes only committee work on SB 2014, which includes the budget for the Bank of North Dakota. As of this update's writing, ICBND's priority list includes only 12 active bills. Of the remaining 12 bills, eight are essentially finished and just waiting for the Governor's signature and/or expected concurrences from their house of origin. The remaining four bills have varying amounts of work left, ranging from first hearings in the second body all the way to potential conference committee work. Here is what happened with our priority list issues week:

On Monday, **HB 1278**, the cash management bill, was heard before the Senate Appropriations Committee. While the bill has already had a policy hearing in the Senate, it also went before the Appropriations committee because it clearly may have a fiscal impact on the state. Majority Leader Lefor introduced the bill to the committee and explained the amendment that makes the Governor chair of the cash management board. The committee asked what the reasoning was for making the Governor rather than the Treasurer chair. Lefor explained that the Governor had asked for the amendment and that all entities covered by the board already reported to the Governor. There were no other questions and no other testimony. The committee gave the bill a 13-1-2 Do Pass as amended recommendation. Later in the week, bill went to the Senate floor where it passed 45-1. The bill will now be returned to the House. Because the Senate amended the bill, the House will have to decide whether they wish to concur or send the bill to conference committee to work out the differences between the two versions of the bill. The only difference is the chairmanship of the committee, so the expectation is that they will concur.

On Wednesday, the Government Operations division of Senate Appropriations Committee heard **HB 1507** for the same reason. The cooperative bank charter bill would allow credit unions and some federally chartered banks to convert their charters to state regulated cooperative charters. Once converted, these financial institutions would become banks. They would pay taxes like banks and be regulated like banks. If their original charters were credit union charters, they would not retain any of the exemptions previously granted to that charter. The subdivision gave the bill a 5-0 Do Pass recommendation. On Thursday, the full Senate Appropriations committee heard the report from the Government Operations subdivision and gave the bill a 15-0-1 Do-Pass recommendation. The bill will now go to the floor of the Senate for a vote.

We expected there to be movement on **HB 1354**, the appraiser bill, but due to some errors in the amendments that were initially drafted by the Legislative Council, the committee was unable to act upon it. We will likely see final amendments and some action next week.

NEXT WEEK'S HEARING SCHEDULE

Monday, March 24

No committee hearings currently scheduled at this time.

Tuesday, March 25

No committee hearings currently scheduled at this time.

Wednesday, March 26

No committee hearings currently scheduled at this time.

Thursday, March 27

2:30 PM [SB 2014](#) NDIC Budget, including BND House Approp - GO Brynhild Haugland

Friday, March 28

No committee hearings currently scheduled at this time.

LEGISLATIVE DEADLINES

May 2 Session limited to 80 legislative days.

Legislator contact information can be found at <https://ndlegis.gov/contact-my-legislators>, and you can check on any legislative activities through the Legislative Council's web page at ndlegis.gov.

Thank you for your participation in the legislative process. Please call, email, or text me with any questions or concerns. If you'd like to be taken off this distribution list or if there are others in your organization that should be receiving these updates, please let me know.

Sincerely,

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