

March 22, 2019

SESSION REACHES MIDPOINT

The 2019 Legislative Session is halfway completed as of Wednesday and with the designation of all individual Senator, Committee and Speaker priority bills, the issues to be addressed during the balance of the session have been defined. With only one week remaining for Committee hearings, full-day sessions of floor debate are scheduled to commence on April 2.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL PAID LEAVE BILL STALLS

LB 311 – Paid Family Medical Leave Insurance Act: A proposal to require paid family medical leave for Nebraska workers was debated over the course of two morning sessions of floor debate during the past week.

Introduced by Senator Sue Crawford (Bellevue), LB 311, beginning July 1, 2021, would establish a state-wide paid family medical leave insurance program similar to Nebraska's unemployment insurance system and managed by the state Department of Labor. Employers would be required to contribute up to one percent of gross wages paid to covered employees to pay for the family medical leave benefit, to pay all other benefits to which an employee would have been entitled in the absence of the leave, as well as all other benefits offered to the employee (vacation, sick leave, etc.) and to allow the employee to return to his or her position after exercising the right to family medical leave. **(NBA Position – Oppose)**

During floor debate, numerous state senators noted that the family and medical paid leave mandate would have an adverse impact on businesses across the state. Following three hours of debate, the bill was removed from the legislative agenda and is not likely to reappear.

COMMITTEE HEARING ACTIVITY

LB 685 – Binding Arbitration: Introduced by Senator Steve Lathrop (Omaha), LB 685 would prohibit the denial or delay of a remedy by due course of law resulting from an agreement requiring participation in mediation, binding arbitration, a grievance procedure, or any other form of dispute resolution unless enforcement of such agreement is otherwise provided for by the legislature.

The NBA had expressed its opposition to LB 685 in advance of the Committee hearing, based on the impediments that it would pose for mediation and binding arbitration agreements. In

response, Senator Lathrop submitted an amendment for consideration by the Committee to remove the provisions relating to mediation and binding arbitration, which, if adopted, will remove the basis for the NBA opposition.

PRIORITY BILL DESIGNATIONS

The following bills of interest to the banking industry have been designated as priority bills, which will enhance their likelihood of being considered as the session progresses.

SENATOR PRIORITY

LB 311 – Senator Cavanaugh – Paid Family Medical Leave Insurance Act (NBA Position – Oppose)

LB 470 – Senator La Grone – Educational Savings Plan Trust (NBA Position - Support)

LB 593 – Senator Slama – Medical Assistance Recovery (NBA Position - Support)

LB 610 – Senator Lindstrom – College Savings Tax Credit Act (NBA Position - Support)

LB 720 – Senator Kolterman – Economic Development – Business Incentives (NBA Position - Support)