

May 24, 2019

Lawmakers adjourned for the Memorial Day weekend on Friday. When they return to action next Thursday, they will finish the last two days of the 2019 legislative session. At that time, bills on Final Reading and any vetoes issued by Governor Ricketts will be considered.

TAX INCENTIVE BILL ADVANCES

LB 720, the proposed ImagiNE Nebraska Act, earned first-round approval on Wednesday on a vote of 29-5. Lawmakers were able to overcome a filibuster on the bill and invoked cloture on a vote of 37-8.

Introduced and designated as a priority bill by Senator Mark Kolterman (Seward), LB 720 would revise and improve Nebraska's business incentives. The bill is designed to attract more high-paying jobs and investments from businesses located in Nebraska, as well as out-of-state companies. The bill would replace the Nebraska Advantage Act, which is set to expire at the end of 2020.

Prior to advancing to Select File, amendments were adopted to enhance workforce development provisions, ensure that new jobs created are filled by full-time employees with healthcare and other benefits, provide additional incentives for economic development in rural areas and for benefit corporations.

LB 720 was given Select File consideration late Friday afternoon. Following three hours of debate, a motion to invoke cloture failed on the following vote of 30-18:

Yes: Senators Arch, Blood, Bolz, Clements, Crawford, DeBoer, Geist, Hansen, B., Hansen, M., Hilgers, Hilkemann, Howard, Kolowski, Kolterman, La Grone, Lathrop, Lindstrom, Linehan, Lowe, McCollister, McDonnell, Moser, Pansing Brooks, Quick, Stinner, Vargas, Walz, Wayne, Williams, Wishart

No: Senator Albrecht, Bostelman, Brandt, Briese, Cavanaugh, Chambers, Dorn, Erdman, Friesen, Gragert, Groene, Halloran, Hughes, Hunt, Morfeld, Murman, Scheer, Slama

Excused-Not Voting: Brewer

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PLAN FALLS SHORT

Efforts to increase property tax relief beyond the \$51 million annual increase in the property tax

credit fund contained within the state budget fell short of breaking a filibuster on Wednesday evening. Senator Tom Briesse (Albion) had proposed amendments to LB 183 that would have provided approximately \$112 million in additional property tax relief. The Briesse proposal would have eliminated 28 sales tax exemptions, including exemptions for candy, soft drinks, bottled water and motor vehicle repairs, while increasing the earned income tax credit for low-income Nebraskans. Following three hours of debate, the motion to invoke cloture failed on a vote of 23–7, likely signaling the end of debate on property tax relief measures this session.