

Jim's Perspective...

2025 Nebraska Legislature

The 2025 Nebraska Legislature convened Wednesday, January 8th. The 109th Nebraska Legislature will be in session for two years. This year's session will run for 90 legislative days and then the Legislature will adjourn, and reconvene in January of 2026 for a 60-day session. The 90-day session usually runs until mid-June, while the 60-day session will run until mid-April. The 2025 Legislature consists of 33 Republicans, 15 Democrats and 1 Independent.

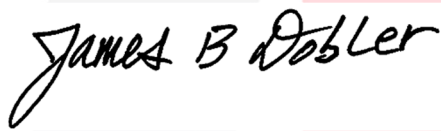
Significant Issues for 2025.

- 1) The Nebraska State Education Association wants to increase family medical leave from the current 10-day leave per year, to six weeks per year.
- 2) The Legislature must develop and adopt a two-year state government budget. This is usually a lengthy process, but it will be even more difficult this session because the Legislature's Tax Rate Review Committee issued a report in November stating that the state is facing a revenue shortfall of \$432 million when the Legislature begins work this session on the two-year budget for 2025 and 2026.
- 3) Property tax relief will be analyzed in conjunction with the Governor's office. This will continue to be a difficult/complicated issue, especially with the projected state budget deficit of \$432 million. Property tax relief will also involve extended debate over funding of Nebraska's K-12 public schools, and proposals to expand the application of sales and use taxes.
- 4) The Legislature will try to pass legislation to provide for the continued operation of the Ombudsman's Office, which has been declared unconstitutional by the Attorney General. The Ombudsman's Office exists to promote accountability in Nebraska's state government. It operates independently and impartially by investigating issues reported to the Ombudsman's Office by citizens of Nebraska. Citizens could report violations of state law by an employee or employees of a state agency. Citizens can also report to the Ombudsman's Office issues related to fraud, waste or mismanagement in state government. The Attorney General asserts that the Ombudsman's Office violates the constitutional concept of "Separation of Powers" within the three branches of government, which are the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of government.
- 5) I don't think we will see any insurance legislation to extend "flex-rating" to farms and ranches. As I understand it, insurance companies have not agreed to change the current flex-rating law in Nebraska. Also, I am not aware of any other specific insurance or insurance agent issues that might arise this session. I have seen some comments related to health insurance and the process used by health insurers to confirm coverage for medical care coverage. I have not seen any proposed bills related to this topic.

Legislative bills can be introduced during the first 10 legislative days. The last day for bill introduction is January 22. As bills are introduced, I will report to the Nebraska PIA Legislative Committee any bills that I think might be of interest to the PIA membership. Soon after January 22, the Nebraska PIA Legislative Committee will meet to discuss any bills that may be of interest to Committee Members or the Nebraska PIA membership. A vote by the Committee to oppose or support a legislative bill must be unanimous in order for the Nebraska PIA Association to officially go on the record in support of, or in opposition to, a legislative bill.

As you know, the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature consists of a total of 49 state senators. There is no house of representatives. There are 17 new senators in the 2025 Legislature. This includes former senator Dan Quick of Grand Island who returns to the Legislature after defeating incumbent Ray Aquilar who was running for a second term. There are 18 senators who have completed 2 year's of their first 4-year term. In total, there are 35 senators with only two years or less of experience in the 2025 legislature. This significant amount of senators who don't have at least four year's of experience will probably cause the legislative process to move a little slower than what it usually does.

Finally, please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns or questions about any 2025 legislative bills, or other legislative actions taking place during the session.



James B Dobler

Jim Dobler, CPCU

PIA Legislative Coordinator

Questions or Comments? Please email jbdobler@outlook.com