

# Priority Legislative Agenda

The following are some of the pieces of legislation our Public Policy Steering Committee has discussed and supported as priorities for our 2016 legislative efforts. This Agenda also has been reviewed and endorsed by vote of the Chamber Board of Directors. Please contact Bruce Bohrer at 402-436-2358 with any comments or questions.

<b>Lincoln Chamber 2016 Priority Policy Agenda</b>			
<i>Bill/Introducer</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>LCOC Position (Staff Recommendation)</i>	<i>Committee/Comments</i>
<b><i>Taxation and Tax System</i></b>			
<p>Tax Bills – The Chamber continues to support comprehensive income tax relief as proposed under <a href="#">LB 357</a> (Smith, et al). Some form of income tax relief on a phased-in basis should still be on the table during discussions about tax reform and how best to grow jobs. Governor Ricketts has worked with rural interests and senators on a package of property tax bills under <a href="#">LB 958</a> (Gloor, at the request of the Governor) and <a href="#">LB 959</a> (Sullivan, at the Request of the Governor) that proposes to adjust aggregate statewide agland values to keep statewide agland values from rising any more than 3% per year, and also tightens up budget and levy lid provisions in an attempt to keep local spending in check - similar to the Governor and Legislature’s efforts keeping the state general fund budget at reasonable levels. The operation of the several provisions under the two-bill package will be further explained in public hearings before the Revenue &amp; Education Committees in separate hearings throughout the month of February. Many details will need to be reviewed and fully understood before venturing a position statement. Property taxes are a burden for all property owners across the state (indeed, residential property owners pay the great bulk of statewide property taxes). The Lincoln Chamber is supportive of relief on local property taxes, but policymakers must be careful that the proposed “solution” doesn’t simply shift taxes from one set of tax payers concentrated in a particular sector to another set of tax payers. Accountability for local spending decisions and the responsibility to fund such decisions should be of paramount concern in the debate. Local constituents should understand the locus of responsibility for local property taxes.</p>			
<a href="#">LB 812</a> (Smith)	Provide a sales tax exemption relating to custom software.	SUPPORT  Mailani Veney and Brian Zimmer provided excellent support testimony for LCOC.	Revenue Comm.; 2/10/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 723</a> (Schumacher)	Change sales and use tax collection fees (Effective 1/1/2017 Fee goes from 2.5% to 5% on first \$3,000 remitted and .5% to 2.5% on next \$3,000 remitted).	SUPPORT Submitted Letter of Support	Revenue Comm.; 1/22/16.
<a href="#">LB 724</a> (Schumacher)	Change sales and use tax collection fees (Effective 1/1/2017 Fee goes from 2.5% on first \$3,000 to 5% on first \$6,000 remitted).	SUPPORT Submitted Letter of Support	Revenue Comm.; 1/22/16.
<b><i>Infrastructure, Capital Improvement, Misc.</i></b>			

<p><a href="#">LB 960</a> (Smith, At the Request of the Governor)</p>	<p>Adopt the Transportation Innovation Act and provide transfers from the Cash Reserve Fund. LB 960 adopts the Transportation Innovation Act to accelerate the state highway improvement program by creating two additional project delivery methods for NDOR: Design-Build and the Construction Manager/General Contractor Approach. This bill also will include a program to promote innovative solutions to accelerate repair and replacement of deficient bridges on the county road system. LB 960 creates the Transportation Infrastructure Bank (TIB) to support accelerated build out of the Expressway System and other high priority corridors. The TIB will use a \$150M transfer from the Cash Reserve to begin and it is the intent to use state motor fuels tax revenues from last year's fuel tax increase to replenish the fund.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Provided support testimony through Matt Tondl from HDR, Inc. along with AGC, and Omaha Chamber.</p>	<p>Appropriations Comm.; 2/16/16; 1:30 p.m.</p> <p>BRASCH PRIORITY</p>
<p><a href="#">LB 1091</a> (Hilkemann)</p>	<p>State intent relating to appropriations of \$25M in FY2016/17 for purposes of the Site and Building Development Fund.</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p>	<p>Appropriations Comm.; 2/5/16; 1:30 p.m.</p>
<p><a href="#">LB 671</a> (Krist)</p>	<p>Repeal the Build Nebraska Act and transfer funds to the General Fund.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Bruce B. testified in opposition for both the LCOC and the Columbus Chamber.</p>	<p>Revenue Comm.; 2/5/16; 1:30 p.m.</p> <p>At the hearing, Sen. Krist asked that the committee <i>not advance</i> his bill.</p> <p><i>Killed; 2/11/16.</i></p>
<p><b>Talent Attraction, Workforce Development and Veterans Issues</b></p>			
<p><a href="#">LB 586</a> (Morfeld)</p>	<p>Prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity. LB 586 relates to employment and prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The Act applies to employers having 15 or more employees;</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p> <p>Bruce B. testified in support for LCOC.</p> <p>Tom B. testified in support for YPG.</p>	<p>Judiciary; 2/4/15. Advanced from Committee to General File; 2/17/15. <a href="#">AM289</a>; Judiciary <a href="#">AM998</a>; Morfeld (Withdrawn) <a href="#">AM1644</a>; Campbell</p>

	employers with state contracts regardless of the number of employees; the State of Nebraska; governmental agencies and political subdivisions.	Omaha Chamber also supports.  Passed over until 2016.	(Failed) Hansen Motion to Reconsider vote on AM1644 (Pending) Sen. Pansing Brooks 2015 Priority Bill.
<a href="#">LB 685</a> (Bolz)	Adopt the Student Loan Repayment Tax Credit Act. LB 685 provides a 50% tax credit (max. of \$1,800 per employee and max. of 20 employees) for companies that provide student loan repayment programs within certain guidelines.	SUPPORT  Bruce B. testified in Support for LCOC and YPG.	Revenue Comm.; 1/27/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 870</a> (B. Harr)	Provide a sliding scale income tax credit to recent graduates of certain educational institutions meeting criteria as outlined. Steve Glenn and others in Lincoln have promoted this concept as a way of attracting/keeping young workforce talent in our state.	SUPPORT  Tom B. testified in Support for YPG and LCOC.	Revenue Comm.; 1/27/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 1017</a> Lindstrom	Enhance InternNE program. Boosts program funding by \$1.5M for two consecutive FYs. LB 1017 also expands program for H.S. upperclassmen, and eliminates residency requirements.	SUPPORT	Appropriations Comm.; 2/5/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 753</a> (Crawford)	Extend protection under federal Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act to Nebraska employees serving in the National Guard of another state.	SUPPORT  Bruce B. testified in support for LCOC and LCOC MAC.	Gov't, Military & Veterans Affairs Comm.; 2/3/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 754</a> (Crawford)	Create the Commission on Military and Veteran Affairs.	SUPPORT	Gov't, Military & Veterans Affairs Comm.; 2/11/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 915</a> (McCollister)	Create a Veterans' Treatment Court Pilot Project.	SUPPORT	Judiciary Comm.; 2/5/16; 1:30 p.m.
<b><i>Innovation Eco-System</i></b>			
<a href="#">LB 987</a> (Morfeld)	Create the Legislature's Bioscience Steering Committee. The committee would include Revenue Committee Chairman or designee, Appropriations Chairman or designee and 3 Senators selected by the Executive Board. The	SUPPORT  Submitted Letter of Support	Executive Board; 2/3/16; Noon

	committee would conduct a study to measure the impact of the bioscience economy in Nebraska and prepare a strategic plan for growing it. The strategic plan would estimate the wealth and number of jobs generated from expanding the bioscience economy.		
<a href="#">LB 1028</a> (Morfeld)	Change provisions relating to funding under the Business Innovation Act and mandate certain spending levels. LB 1028 increases BIA program spending from \$7M to \$8M in FY16/17 and from \$7M to \$9M per FY thereafter. The DED shall spend at least \$2M under a commercialization program and shall contract with a certain type of non-profit entity to carry-out the changes. For the small business investment program, the DED is required to award at least \$1.25M but not more than \$2M for FY16/17. For FY17/18 and each FY thereafter, the DED shall award at least \$1.5M but not more than \$2M under this section.	SUPPORT	Appropriations Comm.; 2/5/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 1051</a> (Harr)	LB 1051 would include "Data Analysis" as a qualified business under a NE Advantage Act Tier 2, 3, 4, or 5 Project.	SUPPORT	Revenue Comm.; 2/25/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 1083</a> (Williams)	LB 1083 adopts the Next Generation Business Growth Act and creates the Legislature's Venture Development and Innovation Task Force. The Executive Board would appoint six (6) members of the Legislature to the task force, and shall appoint one (1) of the six members as chairperson and another member as vice-chairperson. The task force would develop a statewide strategic plan to cultivate a climate of entrepreneurship and innovation and would adopt policy criteria to be used in the development of the plan. The plan would include: (a) an	SUPPORT  Bruce B. testified in support for LCOC and Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry.	Executive Board; 2/3/16; Noon

	<p>inventory of existing state-sponsored and locally sponsored programs and resources that are targeted to small businesses, microenterprises, and entrepreneurial endeavors in the state; (b) an economic impact analysis of the existing programs under the Business Innovation Act; (c) an overview of best practices from other states; (d) a review of previously issued statewide strategic plans focused on high-growth businesses; and (e) various policy options. The task force would file their statewide strategic plan by December 1, 2016. \$75K is appropriated to fund the task force efforts.</p>		
<p><a href="#">LB 1022</a> (Legislative Audit Comm.)</p>	<p>Change provisions relating to the office of Legislative Audit and extend E.D. program sunset dates.</p>	<p>OPPOSE</p> <p>Work to amend - extend E.D. programs beyond 1-year &amp; clarify agency data issues</p>	<p>Executive Board; 2/5/16; Noon</p>
<b><i>Tourism and CVB Related</i></b>			
<p><a href="#">LB 884</a> (Sheer)</p>	<p>Change the Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act and the Sports Arena Facility Financing Assistance Act. LB 884 would amend the Convention Center Facility Financing Assistance Act and the Sports Arena Facility Financing Assistance Act in to provide more uniformity and flexibility regarding “state turnback sales tax” for our municipally owned convention centers and arenas. This bill expands the radius for the turnback to 600 yards of the eligible arena. In Lincoln’s case, this would expand the zone so that Embassy Suites and the planned hotel at 9<sup>th</sup> and O would generate turnback funds. This bill also would permit the funds to be used for</p>	<p>SUPPORT</p>	<p>Revenue; 1/26/16; 1:30 p.m.</p>

	capital improvements to the arenas, and also would allow up to 10% of turnback funds in Lincoln to be used for housing in “areas with high concentrations of poverty.” This is mandated in Omaha.		
<b>Local Development (TIF, Landbank, Local Option Muni. E.D. Act)</b>			
<a href="#">LB 719</a> (Groene)	Change provisions relating to undeveloped vacant land under the Community Development Law. TIF would not be allowed to be used for the acquisition, planning, and preparation for development or disposal of undeveloped vacant land, nor shall undeveloped vacant land be declared or designated blighted and substandard to qualify for the use of tax-increment financing.	OPPOSE	Urban Affairs Comm.; 2/9/16; 1:30 p.m.
<a href="#">LB 1042</a> (Freisen)	LB 1042 adds another layer of approval to tax-increment financing (TIF) projects. Before approval by the governing body of the TIF project, the county board of equalization may approve the plan. LB 1042 also changes the property valuation information certified by the Property Tax Administrator to the State Department of Education. This is used to determine the adjusted valuation of school districts for purposes of allocating state aid through TEEOSA. LB 1042 requires that “excess valuation” for properties that qualify for tax increment financing will be included in the assessed valuation of school districts for state aid purposes.	OPPOSE	Urban Affairs Comm.; 2/9/16
<a href="#">LB 1102</a> (Davis)	Permit Legislative Performance Audit Committee to audit TIF projects.	OPPOSE  Tom Huston testified in opposition for client cities and LCOC.	Executive Board; 2/5/2016
<a href="#">LR 399CA</a>	Require voter approval before	OPPOSE	Urban Affairs Comm.;

(Davis)	pledging taxes for the payment of indebtedness related to redevelopment projects.		2/9/16
<a href="#">LB 1059</a> (Crawford)	LB 1059 requires prior disclosures from developers related to applications for state tax incentive programs prior to receiving assistance from TIF or a local ED program under LOMEDA. The local authority may use such information in its determination to provide or not provide assistance.	MONITOR	Urban Affairs Comm.; 2/2/16
<b><i>University of Nebraska</i></b>			
<a href="#">LB 1109</a> (Murante)	Change public records provisions and provide for an enhanced public scrutiny process for certain University appointees.	SUPPORT  As Chamber Coalition with State Chamber. Kim Russel did an excellent job testifying for our two Chambers.	Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Comm.; 2/10/16; 1:30
<b><i>Employment Law</i></b>			
<a href="#">LB 850</a> (Crawford)	The intent of LB 850 is to adopt the Paid Family Medical Leave Insurance Act. The act will create a paid family leave insurance program to provide income replacement for eligible workers to care for themselves or a family member following a serious illness or to care for a new family member.	OPPOSE  Part of coalition of business groups, including State Chamber, Omaha Chamber and LIBA who oppose.	Business & Labor Comm.; 2/1/16; 1:30 p.m.