

2011 Legislative Wrap-Up



Advocacy is a call for action.

Positive change comes
through continued action
and participation.

NHA Nebraska
Hospital
Association

The influential voice of Nebraska's hospitals

The Nebraska Hospital Association's (NHA) public policy and advocacy priorities are driven by a vision that every Nebraskan has equitable access to affordable, safe, high-quality, medically necessary health care. Through effective leadership and member participation, the NHA seeks to develop consensus, establish public policy priorities, represent and serve hospitals and health systems.

The NHA is committed to establishing and maintaining a financial and regulatory environment within which hospitals and health care systems can respond to the opportunities and challenges of health care reform and provide the health care that all Nebraskans deserve.

Strategically collaborating with policymakers, members and other health care stakeholders, the NHA had a successful legislative session in 2011, advocating for our top priorities. The NHA closely watched over 130 bills that would affect health care and the price of medicine. Equally important, the NHA and its allies were able to defeat legislation that would have been harmful to the health care community—and ultimately, the patient.



2011 by the Numbers

- 1st session of the 102nd Legislature
- 90-day session convened on January 5, 2011
- 704 legislative bills introduced
- 131 bills “of interest” to NHA members
 - Of those 131 bills, the NHA:
 - Supported 39
 - Opposed 13
 - Monitored 73
 - Neutral on 6
- The NHA testified 47 times before 7 of the 14 standing committees
- The first session adjourned on May 26, 2011
 - 36 bills of interest signed into law
 - 6 bills of interest indefinitely postponed or withdrawn
 - 89 bills carried over to 2011

2011 Legislative Interim

- 117 legislative interim study resolutions introduced
- 25 identified as “of interest” to NHA members

Legislative Bills Signed Into Law

The following bills of interest were signed into law during the 2011 legislative session:

Appropriations Committee

LB 374: Appropriate Funds for State Government Expenses

Sponsor: Speaker Mike Flood (Norfolk)
NHA Position: Supported, opposed and monitored several provisions
Effective Date: May 17, 2011

LB 374 was the mainline appropriations bill for the biennium that began July 1, 2011 and ends on June 30, 2013. This measure established the budget for all state operations and aid programs. It includes a 2.5 percent reduction in Medicaid reimbursements and a plan to expand physical health managed care statewide.

Banking, Commerce & Insurance Committee

LB 22: Adopt the Mandate Opt-Out and Insurance Coverage Clarification Act

Sponsor: Sen. Beau McCoy (Omaha)
NHA Position: Monitored
Effective Date: January 1, 2012

Under the Mandate Opt-Out and Insurance Coverage Clarification Act, Nebraska will affirmatively opt out from allowing health insurance plans that cover abortions to participate in the health insurance exchanges within the state of Nebraska. It prohibits private health insurance sold in Nebraska from providing coverage for an elective abortion except through an optional rider that is paid for solely by the insured.

Business & Labor Committee

LB 152: Provide for a trauma fee schedule for workers' compensation claim reimbursement

Sponsor: Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha)
Sen. Tanya Cook (Omaha) - priority bill
NHA Position: Supported
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

This bill eliminated the January 2012 sunset on the exemption of claims for workers compensation inpatient trauma services from the diagnostic related group (DRG) inpatient hospital fee schedule established in 2007. This exemption was created to help hospitals cover the extensive costs associated with providing trauma care.

Under this new law, hospitals providing inpatient trauma care will be reimbursed 160 percent of its Medicare rate. For those "outlier" cases that require unusual expense to

treat, the law provides additional compensation. For outlier cases there is a stop loss threshold, which is 1.25 times the basic reimbursement. When billed charges are greater than the stop loss threshold amount, hospitals will be reimbursed the basic reimbursement plus 65 percent of the charges above the stop loss threshold.

LB 502: Change provisions of the Nebraska Workforce Investment Act

Sponsor: Sen. Tanya Cook (Omaha)
NHA Position: Supported
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 502 designates a health care representative to the Nebraska State Workforce Investment Board, which does statewide workforce planning and training. The bill also made the state eligible to compete for future federal health care workforce development grants.

Government, Military & Veterans Affairs Committee

LB 480: Provide for agreements relating to public building commissions

Sponsor: Sen. Bob Krist (Omaha)
NHA Position: Monitored
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 480 clarifies responsibilities for cities and counties for an area within any building, structure or facility controlled by the Public Building Commission.

Health & Human Services Committee

LB 68: Permit certified nurse midwives to have clinical privileges

Sponsor: Sen. Tony Fulton (Lincoln)
NHA Position: Neutral
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 68 adds certified nurse midwives to the list of practitioners who shall not be denied clinical privileges, solely based on the type of credential held by the practitioner, within a licensed health care facility. The bill allows that certified nurse midwives are able to provide their model of care, as statutorily authorized, to women and newborns within a hospital.

LB 111: Change membership on mental health boards

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)
NHA Position: Supported
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 111 broadens the pool of professionals who are eligible to serve on county mental health boards to include over 400 licensed independent mental health practitioners (LIMHP) in Nebraska who are qualified to diagnose and treat major mental disorders. In rural areas of Nebraska where mental health resources are scarce, LIMHPs are a vital component of the mental health network and are

needed to fill county mental health board positions and to ensure consumer needs are adequately served by the mental health commitment board.

LB 179: Change pharmacy provisions

Sponsor: Sen. Bob Krist (Omaha)
NHA Position: Monitored
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 179 removes the requirement for prescriptions of certain controlled substances that the practitioner filling the prescription must write the date of filling and his or her own signature on the face of the prescription. Additionally, the bill changes licensure procedures for pharmacists in the state by providing that the Board of Pharmacy may recommend for licensure as a pharmacist, without examination, a person who is licensed as a pharmacist by examination in another state or jurisdiction in which, under like conditions, licensure without examination is granted to pharmacists duly licensed by examination in this state. The applicant will be required to provide evidence of having had the required professional education and training and of having been a licensed pharmacist in good standing in another state or jurisdiction.

LB 225: Change provisions relating to issuance of credentials under the Uniform Credentialing Act

Sponsor: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)
NHA Position: Supported
Effective Date: March 10, 2011

LB 225 changes the Uniform Credentialing Act so that credentials for non-immigrants are issued only to those whose visa for entry, or application for visa for entry, is related to employment in the United States. The bill allows a credential to be issued to a United States citizen, an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or a nonimmigrant lawfully present in the United States who is eligible for credentials under the Uniform Credentialing Act.

LB 237: Provide for creation of a prescription drug monitoring program

Sponsor: Sen. Gwen Howard (Omaha) - priority bill
NHA Position: Monitored
Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 237 requires the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), in collaboration with the Nebraska Health Information Initiative (NeHII) or any successor public-private statewide health information exchange, to establish technology for prescription drug monitoring. The new law allows DHHS to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to authorize use of electronic health information, if necessary.

LB 260: Adopt the Concussion Awareness Act

Sponsor: Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha)

NHA Position: Supported

Effective Date: July 1, 2012

LB 260 requires schools to train coaches or athletic teams on how to recognize the symptoms of concussions and seek proper medical treatment. It also requires similar information be provided annually to students and parents, prior to practice or competition. Students who are suspected of sustaining a concussion during a school sporting event will be removed from participation and barred from returning until evaluated by a licensed health care professional and cleared in writing to return.

LB 274: Change provisions relating to the return of dispensed drugs and devices

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)

NHA Position: Supported

Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 274 clarifies under what circumstances an individual may take prescription medications to a pharmacy for disposal, or in the case of long term care facilities, for credit or disposal. Pharmacies are authorized to charge a fee for the service.

LB 406: Provide for reentry licenses under the Medicine and Surgery Practice Act

Sponsor: Sen. Tanya Cook (Omaha)

NHA Position: Monitored

Effective Date: August 27, 2011

LB 406 permits the DHHS to issue a reentry license to a physician who has not actively practiced medicine for the two-year period immediately preceding the filing of an application for a license or has not maintained continuing competency. It also allows the Board of Examiners in Medicine and Surgery to set requirements such as evaluations, assessments, and completion of an educational program, and to require supervision as a condition for granting the reentry license. A reentry license would be valid for one year and could be renewed for up to two additional years if approved by DHHS on the recommendation of the board.

LB 431: Adopt the Health Care Quality Improvement Act

Sponsor: Sen. Galen Hadley (Kearney) - priority bill

NHA Position: Supported

Effective Date: April 26, 2011

The Health Care Quality Improvement Act provides protection for individuals participating on, or in support of, a peer review committee and protects the confidentiality of peer review records. Under the new law, no health care provider, individual or employee who serves on, or in support of, a peer review committee can be held liable for activities within the scope of the peer review committee. Additionally, no individual who supplies

information to a peer review committee shall be subject to suit as a result of the information. This new law states peer review committee processes are confidential and not subject to discovery or evidence in a civil action; nor are individuals working in and with a peer review committee allowed or compelled to testify in any civil action.

Additionally, incident and risk management reports are not subject to discovery or admissible as evidence in a civil action for damages for injury, death or loss to a patient. A person who prepares or has knowledge of the contents of an incident report or risk management report cannot testify, nor be required to testify, in any civil action as to the content of the report. Nothing in the law limits discovery of any otherwise available sources and original documents.

LB 465: Eliminate provisions relating to eligibility of legal permanent residents for public assistance

Sponsor: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)

Speaker Mike Flood (Norfolk) - priority bill

NHA Position: Opposed

Effective Date: April 14, 2011

LB 465 was part of the Governor's biennial budget recommendations to the Legislature. The bill repealed the state-option Medicaid and food stamp benefit expansion programs for legal permanent residents (those in the U.S. for at least five years before receiving the benefits). Programs eliminated for this group included the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Cash payments for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) and Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD).

LB 468: Change reporting provisions relating to the medical assistance program

Sponsor: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)

Speaker Mike Floor (Norfolk) - priority bill

NHA Position: Monitored

Effective Date: August 27, 2011

Introduced at the request of the Governor, LB 468 allows the DHHS to implement co-payments for medical goods and services in the Medicaid program. The DHHS will adjust co-payments for medical goods and services, within the federally allowable maximums, where co-payments are currently in place. Beginning on December 1, 2011, the DHHS will notify the Governor, Legislature and Medicaid Reform Council prior to the adoption of changes for premiums, co-payments or deductibles in the Medicaid program. The new law will save an estimated \$609,000 over two years.

LB 494: Require timely review of Medicaid eligibility**Sponsor:** Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)**NHA Position:** Supported**Effective Date:** May 18, 2011

This new law requires the DHHS to process applications for medical assistance and provide determination of eligibility in a timely manner in compliance with federal requirements.

LB 525: Provide for a Medicaid state plan amendment or waiver and transfer of funds relating to the Nebraska Regional Poison Center**Sponsor:** Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha)**NHA Position:** Supported**Effective Date:** August 27, 2011

LB 525 directs DHHS to submit an application to the appropriate federal authorities for an amendment to the state Medicaid plan or to seek a waiver to permit unused administrative cap funds in the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) to be used to match funds from the Nebraska Regional Poison Center to assist in funding the Poison Center. This applies only if there are unused funds available.

LB 542: Require hospitals to offer employee influenza vaccinations**Sponsor:** Sen. Gwen Howard (Omaha)**NHA Position:** Supported**Effective Date:** August 27, 2011

LB 542 requires all hospitals to annually offer on-site influenza vaccinations to all hospital employees when no national vaccine shortages exist. The employee may elect not to be vaccinated. The hospital shall keep a record of which employees received the annual vaccination and which employees did not.

LB 591: Provide for a syndromic surveillance program and change immunization information exchange provisions**Sponsor:** Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)**NHA Position:** Supported**Effective Date:** August 27, 2011

This bill authorizes the use of the Nebraska Statewide Immunization Registry to share and exchange immunization information with health care professionals, schools, licensed childcare facilities, electronic health record systems, public health departments, health departments of other states, and Indian health services and tribes in order to protect Nebraskans from vaccine preventable diseases and to facilitate age-appropriate immunizations.

LB 600: Adopt the Nursing Facility Quality Assurance Assessment Act**Sponsor:** Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln) - priority bill**NHA Position:** Monitored**Effective Date:** April 28, 2011

LB 600 creates a nursing home provider assessment, which is intended to generate additional federal funding for payment of Medicaid rates to Nebraska nursing facilities to partially offset projected financial losses resulting from Medicaid provider rate reductions for the FY 2011-13 biennium. Under the new law, \$3.50 per Medicaid and private day, and \$3.25 for high Medicaid volume (70,000 or more days) is assessed. It is estimated that the \$13.9 million in assessments will generate \$19.5 million in new federal funding for enhanced rates. Nursing facilities across Nebraska anticipate that this revenue will help to ensure adequate funding to maintain quality long-term care services and access to Medicaid-financed care.

Judiciary Committee**LB 197: Allow breastfeeding as prescribed****Sponsor:** Sen. Annette Dubas (Fullerton)**NHA Position:** Monitored**Effective Date:** August 27, 2011

LB 197 ensures mothers are able to breastfeed as statutorily prescribed.

LB 479: Authorize a person 18 years of age to give consent to evidence collection and examination and treatment in cases of sexual assault and domestic violence**Sponsor:** Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha) - priority bill**NHA Position:** Supported**Effective Date:** August 27, 2011

LB 479 gives 18-year-olds, who are victims of a sexual assault or domestic violence, the authority to consent to be examined and treated by a physician without the permission or notification of their parent, parents, guardian or any other person having custody of the victim.

Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee**LB 509: Change provisions relating to retirement****Sponsor:** Nebraska Retirement Systems Committee - priority bill**NHA Position:** Monitored**Effective Date:** April 14, 2011

LB 509 was the Committee's omnibus bill, which included substantive changes made to the county, state and Class V school retirement plans and the duties of the Public Employees Retirement Board and Nebraska Investment Council.

Legislative Bills Carried Over

The following bills of interest were carried over to the 2012 legislative session:

Banking, Commerce & Insurance Committee

LB 422: Change eligibility provisions under the Comprehensive Health Insurance Pool Act

Sponsor: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

Business & Labor Committee

LB 245: Provide for release of employee medical records as prescribed under the Nebraska Workers' Compensation Act

Sponsor: Sen. Tom Carlson (Holdrege)
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: In committee

Health & Human Services Committee

LB 222: Change scope of practice considerations under the Nebraska Regulation of Health Professions Act

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

LB 290: Change health care information required to be given to a patient upon request

Sponsor: Sen. Dave Pankonin (Louisville)
NHA Position: Neutral
Status: In committee

LB 466: Change provisions relating to a preferred drug list under the Medicaid Prescription Drug Act

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: In committee

LB 481: Provide exemption from medical radiography licensure for auxiliary personnel and cardiovascular technologists

Sponsor: Sen. Bob Krist (Omaha)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

LB 539: Require a Medicaid state plan amendment or waiver relating to adult emergency room visits

Sponsor: Health & Human Services Committee
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: In committee

LB 541: Provide for third-party contracts to promote Medicaid integrity and cost containment

Sponsor: Health & Human Services Committee
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: Final Reading

LB 557: Provide requirements regarding health care facilities employing surgical technologists

Sponsor: Sen. Annette Dubas (Fullerton)
NHA Position: Neutral
Status: In committee

LB 574: Adopt the Electronic Prescription Transmission Act

Sponsor: Sen. Scott Price (Bellevue)
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: In committee

LB 599: Provide coverage for certain children as prescribed pursuant to the Medical Assistance Act

Sponsor: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

Judiciary Committee

LB 115: Change limitation of action provisions under the Political Subdivisions Tort Claims Act

Sponsor: Sen. Brenda Council (Omaha)
NHA Position: Oppose
Status: In committee

LB 676: Change provisions relating to emergency protective custody under the Nebraska Mental Health Commitment Act

Sponsor: Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

LB 677: Provide criminal penalties for assault on a health care provider in the first, second and third degrees

Sponsor: Sen. Steve Lathrop (Omaha)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

Revenue Committee

LB 40: Change a sales tax exemption for health clinics

Sponsor: Sen. Galen Hadley (Kearney)
NHA Position: Support
Status: General File

LB 436: Change provisions relating to taxation of cigarettes and tobacco products

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)
NHA Position: Support
Status: In committee

Interim Study Resolutions

117 interim study resolutions were introduced by the Legislature; 25 of them have been identified as “of interest” to NHA members. The more notable resolutions, committees with jurisdiction, along with that committee’s prioritization of each are listed below:

Appropriations Committee

LR 282

Interim study to provide for review, assessment and recommendations relating to the implementation of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act

Introducer: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 1st

LR 317

Interim study to examine the funding formulas for the Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs)

Introducer: Sen. Lavon Heidemann (Elk Creek)

Committee Priority: 2nd

LR 248

Interim study to examine the accessibility of health care providers for persons on Medicaid

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 3rd

LR 285

Interim study to examine the nursing shortage in Nebraska

Introducer: Sen. Danielle Conrad (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 4th

LR 269

Interim study to examine the use of strategic plans and performance benchmarks by state agencies

Introducer: Sen. Heath Mello (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 7th

Banking, Commerce & Insurance Committee

LR 85

Study to determine how insurance laws should be amended by the Legislature to respond to the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Introducer: Sen. Rich Pahls (Boys Town)

Committee Priority: 1st

LR 138

Interim study to find a solution to the exit of insurers from the health insurance marketplace for stand-alone health insurance policies for children

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 3rd

LR 197

Interim study to examine issues relating to the implementation of an all-payer claims database in Nebraska

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 9th

LR 270

Interim study to examine the current state of health insurance coverage in the state to meet health insurance needs of Nebraskans

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 10th

LR 258

Interim study to examine the availability of technology to provide the electronic request and approval of prior authorization requests for medical and pharmacy interventions

Introducer: Sen. Scott Price (Bellevue)

Committee Priority: 11th

Business & Labor Committee

LR 266

Interim study to examine the feasibility of creating regional skills alliances, in which employers, government agencies, educational institutions and labor unions pool resources to train workers for emerging region-wide job opportunities

Introducer: Sen. Heath Mello (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 2nd

Health & Human Services Committee

LR 293

Interim study to continue the work of the select committee appointed pursuant to LR 467, 2010, to conduct research regarding the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

Introducer: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 1st

LR 282

Interim study to provide for review, assessment and recommendations relating to the implementation of the Nebraska Health Care Funding Act

Introducer: Sen. Kathy Campbell (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 2nd

LR 212

Interim study to review the operations and usefulness of the Nebraska Regulation of Health Professions Act

Introducer: Sen. Mike Gloor (Grand Island)

Committee Priority: 3rd

Health & Human Services Committee (con't.)

LR 298

Interim study to examine the usage of models of collaborative management of multi-agency services provided to children and families in Nebraska and in other states

Introducer: Sen. Amanda McGill (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 6th

LR 270

Interim study to examine the current state of health insurance coverage in the state to meet health insurance needs of Nebraskans

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 9th

LR 197

Interim study to examine issues relating to the implementation of an all-payer claims database in Nebraska

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 10th

LR 248

Interim study to examine the accessibility of health care providers for persons on Medicaid

Introducer: Sen. Jeremy Nordquist (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 11th

LR 281

Interim study to conduct research and provide recommendations on how the state is currently providing home and community-based health care services to Nebraska seniors

Introducer: Sen. Tanya Cook (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 12th

LR 306

Interim study to assess the effectiveness of the ACCESS Nebraska system in building partnerships with community-based organizations and serving clients via the new system

Introducer: Sen. Danielle Conrad (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 14th

LR 291

Interim study to evaluate methods of reporting and preventing hospital-acquired infections (HAIs)

Introducer: Sen. Gwen Howard (Omaha)

Committee Priority: 15th

LR 285

Interim study to examine the nursing shortage in Nebraska

Introducer: Sen. Danielle Conrad (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 16th

LR 275

Interim study to examine Nebraska's behavioral health model concerning transport service of persons who have been placed in emergency protective custody

Introducer: Speaker Mike Flood (Norfolk)

Committee Priority: 17th

LR 258

Interim study to examine the availability of technology to provide the electronic request and approval of prior authorization requests for medical and pharmacy interventions

Introducer: Sen. Scott Price (Bellevue)

Committee Priority: 22nd

Judiciary Committee

LR 298

Interim study to examine the usage of models of collaborative management of multi-agency services provided to children and families in Nebraska and other states

Introducer: Sen. Amanda McGill (Lincoln)

Committee Priority: 6th

LR 275

Interim study to examine Nebraska's behavioral health model concerning transport service of persons who have been placed in emergency protective custody

Introducer: Speaker Mike Flood (Norfolk)

Committee Priority: 13th

Revenue Committee

LR 226

Interim study to examine the feasibility of implementing a pilot program to incentivize individuals to move to rural counties which has experienced population loss

Introducer: Sen. Galen Hadley (Grand Island)

Committee Priority: 5th

Nebraska's Governor & 102nd Legislature

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Dist.	Senator	Committees	Election
1	Lavon Heidemann	Appropriations	Term-limited 2012
2	Dave Pankonin	Banking, Commerce & Insurance; Nebraska Retirement Systems	Term-limited 2014
3	Scott Price	Vice Chair of Government, Military & Veterans Affairs; Transportation & Telecommunications	Up for re-election 2012
4	Pete Pirsch	Banking, Commerce & Insurance; Revenue	Term-limited 2014
5	Heath Mello	Appropriations; Nebraska Retirement Systems	Up for re-election 2012
6	John Nelson	Appropriations	Term-limited 2014
7	Jeremy Nordquist	Appropriations; Vice Chair of Nebraska Retirement Systems	Up for re-election 2012
8	Burke Harr	Agriculture; Business & Labor; Judiciary	Term-limited 2014
9	Gwen Howard	Vice Chair of Education; Health & Human Services	Term-limited 2012
10	Bob Krist	Vice Chair of General Affairs; Health & Human Services	Up for re-election 2014
11	Brenda Council	Education; Judiciary	Up for re-election 2012
12	Steve Lathrop	Chair of Business & Labor; Vice Chair Judiciary; Agriculture	Term-limited 2014
13	Tanya Cook	Vice Chair of Business & Labor; Health & Human Services	Up for re-election 2012
14	Jim Smith	Business & Labor; Natural Resources; Urban Affairs	Up for re-election 2014
15	Charlie Janssen	Government, Military and Veterans Affairs; Nebraska Retirement Systems	Up for re-election 2012
16	Lydia Brasch	Agriculture; General Affairs; Government, Military & Veterans Affairs	Up for re-election 2014
17	Dave Bloomfield	Agriculture; General Affairs; Health & Human Services	Up for re-election 2014
18	Scott Lautenbaugh	Judiciary; Transportation & Telecommunications	Term-limited 2014
19	Mike Flood	Speaker	Term-limited 2012
20	Brad Ashford	Chair of Judiciary; Business & Labor	Term-limited 2014
21	Ken Haar	Education; Natural Resources	Up for re-election 2012
22	Paul Schumacher	General Affairs; Government, Military & Veterans Affairs; Urban Affairs	Up for re-election 2014

Dist.	Senator	Committees	Election
23	Chris Langemeier	Chair of Natural Resources; Banking, Commerce & Insurance	Term-limited 2012
24	Greg Adams	Chair of Education; Revenue	Term-limited 2014
25	Kathy Campbell	Chair of Health & Human Services; Transportation & Telecommunications	Up for re-election 2012
26	Amanda McGill	Chair of Urban Affairs; General Affairs; Judiciary	Term-limited 2014
27	Colby Coash	Vice Chair of Urban Affairs; General Affairs; Judiciary	Up for re-election 2012
28	Bill Avery	Chair of Government, Military & Veterans Affairs; Education	Term-limited 2014
29	Tony Fulton	Appropriations	Term-limited 2012
30	Norm Wallman	Vice Chair of Agriculture; Business & Labor; Health & Human Services	Term-limited 2014
31	Rich Pahls	Chair of Banking, Commerce & Insurance; Government, Military & Veterans Affairs	Term-limited 2012
32	Russ Karpisek	Chair of General Affairs; Agriculture; Government, Military & Veterans Affairs; Nebraska Retirement Systems	Term-limited 2014
33	Dennis Utter	Vice Chair of Revenue; Banking, Commerce & Insurance	Up for re-election 2012
34	Annette Dubas	Natural Resources; Transportation & Telecommunications	Term-limited 2014
35	Mike Gloor	Vice Chair of Health & Human Services; Banking, Commerce & Insurance	Up for re-election 2012
36	John Wightman	Appropriations	Term-limited 2014
37	Galen Hadley	Vice Chair of Transportation & Telecommunications; Revenue	Up for re-election 2012
38	Tom Carlson	Chair of Agriculture; Business & Labor, Natural Resources	Term-limited 2014
39	Beau McCoy	Vice Chair of Banking, Commerce & Insurance; Natural Resources	Up for re-election 2012
40	Tyson Larson	Agriculture; General Affairs; Judiciary	Up for re-election 2012
41	Kate Sullivan	Education; Government, Military & Veterans Affairs	Up for re-election 2012
42	Tom Hansen	Appropriations	Term-limited 2014
43	Deb Fischer	Chair of Transportation & Telecommunications; Revenue	Term-limited 2012
44	Mark Christensen	Banking, Commerce & Insurance, Natural Resources	Term-limited 2014
45	Abbie Cornett	Chair of Revenue; Education	Term-limited 2012
46	Danielle Conrad	Appropriations	Term-limited 2014
47	Ken Schilz	Vice Chair of Natural Resources; Education	Up for re-election 2012
48	John Harms	Vice Chair of Appropriations	Term-limited 2014
49	LeRoy Loudon	Vice Chair of Nebraska Retirement Systems; Revenue; Transportation & Telecommunications	Term-limited 2012

Effective Tools For Year-Round Advocacy

Traditional ways of doing business in the development of health care policy are quickly becoming obsolete. Term limits in Nebraska's legislature and health care reform, coupled with the current economic conditions, have intensified and accelerated the need for innovative and resourceful efforts that advance the NHA's advocacy agenda.

Hospital leaders must be proactive in public policy development—identifying important issues and developing strategies to address them. When Nebraska's hospitals adapt, adjust and respond to new health care policy initiatives in a timely and informed manner, they position themselves as reliable, trusted resources and empower policymakers to make informed decisions.

Effective advocacy that produces substantive change is a year-round effort. During the 2011 legislative session that adjourned on May 26, NHA members and staff took active roles on numerous bills by promoting those that positively impacted the delivery of health care and opposing those that would have an adverse affect on the health of the Nebraskans served by our state's community hospitals; however, there is a great deal more to be done.

The NHA encourages all of its members to participate in activities throughout the year that build stronger working relationships with those who have the power to change health care policy with their vote. Strong working relationships with legislators are the foundation for thoughtful, informed and substantive public policy changes. In cooperation with its members, the NHA staff has developed several programs and tools that hospital leaders can use to implement successful advocacy efforts.

- **Policy Development Committee:** In July of each year, the policy development process is initiated when the NHA surveys its members on state and federal issues. In August, the Policy Development Committee (PDC), a group of more than two dozen hospital executives and policymakers, meets to evaluate the outcome of the annual membership survey. The PDC reviews the members' comments, prioritization of the issues and the policy briefs prepared by staff. The PDC will then forward its recommendations to the entire NHA membership for review during the fall round of NHA district meetings. Final action on each of the issues will be determined by the NHA board of directors in October.
- **Advocacy Teams:** Advocacy teams are members of the hospital team selected by the hospital's chief executive officer to serve as advisors, planners and active participants in the hospital's political and community advocacy efforts. The team gathers and delivers political and community information for the CEO and helps develop and implement strategies to influence policymakers at the state and federal levels. Advocacy teams also coordinate grassroots political action, such as letter writing, meetings with legislators and hosting policymakers when they visit their facility.
- **Mini-Residencies:** Mini-residencies are designed to give policymakers a first-hand look at health care delivery. The program is designed to educate legislators about health care issues and encourage them to view local hospitals as reliable sources of information. It is an opportunity to establish a comfortable working relationship and open a line of communication with the policymaker, which can help advance the NHA's advocacy agenda.
- **CEO/Policymaker Meetings:** CEO meetings with state senators and members of Nebraska's congressional delegation are designed to educate policymakers about health care issues and further develop comfortable working relationships. Such meetings may take place at the hospital, Nebraska State Capitol, Washington, DC or other locations.
- **American Hospital Association Political Action Committee (AHAPAC) and Nebraska Hospital Association Political Action Committee (NHA PAC):** Contributions to the AHAPAC and NHA PAC are crucial for effectively advancing the NHA's advocacy agenda. As the premier vehicle for collecting candidate contributions, the AHAPAC and NHA PAC both set aside funding in order to highlight the importance of health care to Nebraska leadership in Washington, DC and in Lincoln.
- **Advocacy Day:** In March of each year, the NHA hosts its annual Advocacy Day event. All members of the NHA are invited and encouraged to attend. The agenda includes presentations on key legislative and regulatory issues, provides hospital representatives the opportunity to meet with state senators, and advances the NHA's advocacy agenda during the legislative luncheon. Please mark your calendars for next year's NHA Advocacy Day on March 21, 2012.

If you would like further information on any of the programs described above, please contact Bruce Rieker, Vice President, Advocacy, at (402) 742-8146 or e-mail brieker@nhanet.org.

Positive change comes through continued action and participation.

The NHA's advocacy priorities are driven by our vision of providing high-quality, affordable health care to the patients we serve. Through the Board of Directors and Policy Development Committee, NHA PAC Steering Committee, membership and staff, the NHA strives to promote public policy issues to make positive changes in Nebraska's health care environment.



Together, we are the influential voice for Nebraska health care.



The NHA staff thanks everyone who participated in the development of public policy during the 2011 legislative session. Your efforts of attending NHA meetings, participating in conference calls and contacting policymakers on behalf of Nebraska's hospitals, are invaluable.



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