

NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE: HOW THEY VOTED 2011

June 2011

SUBJECT: Voting Record of State Senators on Select Issues
TO: State Chamber Members
FROM: Barry L. Kennedy, CAE, IOM, President

This document indicates how Nebraska's 49 state senators voted on eight selected occasions during the 2011 session of the Legislature. All of the particular votes were related to bills and issues important to the Nebraska business community.

To provide a more complete perspective of each senator's voting record on business issues, we have included a column with each senator's percentage of support on select business votes over his/her career in the Legislature. These voting records do not indicate other legislative activities of interest to business, such as committee actions.

This document is not intended as an evaluation of any senator, but is presented only as a factual record of how votes were cast on select issues.

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2011 LEGISLATIVE VOTING RECORD

Senator (Year Term Limited)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2011 %	Career +	Career -	Cum. %
Greg Adams ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	34	3	92%
Brad Ashford ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	100%	27	6	82%
Bill Avery ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	30	7	81%
Dave Bloomfield ('16)	+	+	?	+	+	+	+	+	100%	7	0	100%
Lydia Brasch ('18)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	8	0	100%
Kathy Campbell ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	22	1	96%
Tom Carlson ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	36	2	95%
Mark Christensen ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	32	2	94%
Colby Coash ('16)	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	?	100%	18	2	90%
Danielle Conrad ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	75%	28	9	76%
Tanya Cook ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	88%	17	5	77%
Abbie Cornett ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	42	6	88%
Brenda Council ('16)	+	+	+	+	?	-	+	+	86%	15	3	83%
Annette Dubas ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	88%	28	8	78%
Deb Fischer ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	51	5	91%
Mike Flood ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	58	1	98%
Tony Fulton ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	37	1	97%
Mike Gloor ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	22	1	96%
Ken Haar ('16)	+	+	+	+	?	-	+	+	86%	19	2	90%
Galen Hadley ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	22	0	100%
Tom Hansen ('14)	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	100%	35	2	95%
John Harms ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	36	1	97%
Burke Harr ('18)	?	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	100%	6	0	100%
Lavon Heidemann ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	48	6	89%
Gwen Howard ('12)	?	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	86%	40	18	69%
Charlie Janssen ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	20	1	95%
Russ Karpisek ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	31	6	84%
Bob Krist ('14)	?	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	100%	11	0	100%
Chris Langemeier ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	+	100%	49	0	100%
Tyson Larson ('18)	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	100%	7	0	100%
Steve Lathrop ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	100%	30	6	83%
Scott Lautenbaugh ('14)	+	+	?	+	+	+	+	?	100%	26	1	96%
LeRoy Loudon ('12)	?	+	+	+	?	?	+	?	100%	52	13	80%
Beau McCoy ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	22	0	100%
Amanda McGill ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	?	86%	30	6	83%
Heath Mello ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	88%	20	3	87%
John Nelson ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	34	4	89%
Jeremy Nordquist ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	88%	19	3	86%
Rich Pahls ('12)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	?	100%	46	5	90%
Dave Pankonin ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	35	3	92%
Pete Pirsch ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	37	1	97%
Scott Price ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	21	0	100%
Ken Schilz ('16)	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	+	100%	19	2	90%
Paul Schumacher ('18)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	8	0	100%
Jim Smith ('18)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	8	0	100%
Kate Sullivan ('16)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	100%	19	2	90%
Dennis Utter ('16)	?	+	+	+	+	?	+	+	100%	18	1	95%
Norm Wallman ('14)	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	88%	30	7	81%
John Wightman ('14)	?	+	?	+	+	?	+	+	100%	34	1	97%

KEY

- +** Supported State Chamber position
- Opposed State Chamber position
- ?** Did not vote

NOTE: If a senator did not vote on an issue, the issue is not counted when tabulating the yearly or cumulative percentages. Returning senators (e.g., Senator Ashford) who were absent for one full term or more begin new cumulative records.

2011 NEBRASKA LEGISLATIVE VOTES

- 1. Nebraska Internship Act: LB386** establishes a statewide internship program aimed at providing more career opportunities for young people and recent college graduates. The program focuses on specific industries, including research and development, data processing and manufacturing. It provides \$1.5 million annually, using redirected job training funds and a 100% match from participating employers. The State Chamber supported LB386, which could create an estimated 700 new internships in Nebraska over the next year. The law took effect June 1, 2011. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 43-0. (May 11)
- 2. Business Innovation Act: LB387** creates a modern incentive program to encourage research, innovation and development in Nebraska's small businesses and in its colleges and universities. It allocates nearly \$7 million in financial assistance, with 40% of the funding dedicated for economically distressed areas, mostly in rural Nebraska. The State Chamber supported LB387, which implements several recommendations from the 2010 Battelle study that examined Nebraska's industries and talent base. Studies have shown Nebraska lags in technology transfer and support for entrepreneurs who want to move their product to market. The law takes effect October 1, 2011. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 49-0. (May 18)
- 3. Site & Building Development Act: LB388** provides approximately \$2.2 million for the development of industrial sites and buildings in Nebraska. The financial aid will go to public and non-profit developers for land and infrastructure costs, with 40% going to rural areas. Also created is the Industrial Recovery Fund, capped at \$1 million and financed with unused housing dollars, for communities impacted by a sudden and significant business closure or downsizing. The State Chamber supported LB388. In recent years, Nebraska has lost several business projects due to the lack of readily available industrial and commercial sites. The law takes effect October 1, 2011. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 46-0. (May 20)
- 4. Angel Investment Credit Act: LB389** creates a refundable income tax credit for those who invest in Nebraska's high-tech startup companies. The program will be capped at \$3 million annually. A 35% credit will be provided to certified investors (minimum investment of \$25,000 per year) and investment funds (minimum \$50,000 investment per year and at least three investors). A 40% credit will be provided to those who invest in qualified startups located in distressed areas. The State Chamber supported LB389, which will enhance Nebraska's efforts to diversify its economy and attract well-paying jobs. Prior to the passage of LB389, several national studies had given Nebraska low marks for its access to venture capital. LB389 is effective for the current tax year. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 49-0. (May 18)
- 5. CIR Reform: LB397** reforms the state's Commission of Industrial Relations (CIR) for the first time in more than 40 years. With the adoption of AM1528, which embodied the CIR compromise reached by several parties, the State Chamber changed its position on LB397 from "oppose" to "support". The compromise maintains collective bargaining for public union employees and retains the CIR, but provides local officials with new tools to contain public labor costs, while also ensuring more transparency for taxpayers. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. AMENDMENT PASSED, 42-0. (May 20)
- 6. Roads Funding: LB84** is the most significant roads bill in several years. When it takes effect in July 2013, LB84 will utilize a small portion (0.25%) of the state's 5.5% sales tax to fund the construction of high-priority capital improvements and reconstruction projects throughout Nebraska. It will generate an estimated \$60-\$70 million a year, over 20 years – with 60% dedicated for the state's priority projects, 25% used for construction of the expressway system and federally designated high-priority projects, and 15% for cities and counties. The State Chamber supported LB84, which will provide a more reliable method of funding new roads and infrastructure improvements. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 33-10. (May 11)
- 7. Tourism Planning: LB684** was the primary tourism bill of the session. It formally establishes the Department of Economic Development's (DED) Travel and Tourism Division Advisory Committee, which will develop a statewide strategic plan to cultivate and promote tourism in Nebraska. The proposal will go before the Legislature no later than September 1, 2012. Among other things, the plan will include a review of existing and potential funding for tourism at the state and local levels, as well as marketing strategies for promoting tourism. The State Chamber supported LB684. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 48-0. (May 18)
- 8. Telecommunications Occupation Tax: LB165** limits local occupation taxes on telephone and cell phone services at a maximum rate of 6.25%. Local occupation taxes may not be imposed on equipment and accessories. The State Chamber supported LB165. Recent national studies conducted prior to the enactment of LB165 showed Nebraska had the nation's highest average tax on wireless phone service, with nearly 24% of a Nebraskan's wireless bill going to taxes and fees. A YES vote was in accord with the Chamber's position. BILL PASSED, 42-1. (May 12)

T H E S T A T E C H A M B E R 

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

