

Econ. Development Plan Advances

BY DIRK LAMMERS
Associated Press

PIERRE — Neighbor states are blowing past South Dakota in wind-energy production, but Senate President Pro Tem Corey Brown says the problem has nothing to do with air-flow.

South Dakota's up-front tax structure is why the nation's fifth-windiest state produces just 784 megawatts in wind energy — a number doubled by North Dakota, more than tripled by Minnesota and is surpassed nearly six-fold by Iowa.

"I think it would be difficult to argue that it's any more windy in North Dakota or Minnesota or Iowa," Brown told the House State Affairs Committee Monday.

Committee members voted unanimously to send to the House floor a comprehensive South Dakota economic development fund plan aimed at helping to recruit large ventures such as wind farms as well as smaller projects to the state.

"It puts the 'Open for Business' sign out in the state of South Dakota, particularly for wind developers," said Bob Sahr, general counsel for East River Electric Cooperative.

South Dakota currently has no incentive plan because a previous program that refunded construction taxes for large industrial projects was allowed to expire on Dec. 31. A replacement plan suggested by Gov. Dennis Daugaard was rejected by voters in the November election.

Republicans and Democrats have worked for the past two months to find a compromise to help level the playing field with other states that do a better job recruiting large projects.

South Dakota charges not only a 4 percent sales tax on construction projects, but also a 2 percent contractors' excise tax on gross receipts. Few other states have a contractors' excise tax, so construction is cheaper elsewhere.

The new plan introduced at a bipartisan news conference last week would refund part or all of the state sales tax paid by projects of more than \$20 million that would not be located in South Dakota without such an incentive.

The contractors' excise tax collected on those projects would be placed in the Building South Dakota Fund so the state can reinvest in future projects. The new fund would also get a portion of unclaimed property that

the state receives from abandoned bank accounts.

House Democratic Leader Bernie Hunhoff said the bill tackles economic development with a lot more transparency, vetting and accountability, and it also helps communities build the infrastructure needed to encourage development.

The plan also incorporates a strong educational element, working with the state's technical centers on training and helping K-12 schools bear the cost of English language training when a project draws workers from other cultures.

Hunhoff said some of these programs would otherwise not be considered by legislators if they weren't packaged in this bill.

"It's going to trigger really good things," he said.

Thirty percent of the Building South Dakota Fund would be dedicated to workforce education. Of the remaining money, 25 percent would go to the South Dakota Housing Opportunity Fund, 25 percent to infrastructure and transportation, 15 percent to local development efforts, 5 percent to the state's REDI fund.

Neb. Lawmakers Eye Boosting Tax On Beer

LINCOLN, Neb. — A Nebraska lawmaker said alcohol problems in Whiteclay inspired him to propose a bill Monday that would increase a beer excise tax by 5 cents per gallon.

The increase would generate about \$2.3 million over each of the next two years, Sen. Al Davis of Hyannis told the Legislature's General Affairs Committee. The panel took no action on the bill.

The money would be split evenly between the State Patrol Cash Fund and county law enforcement agencies. Davis said the money would allow law enforcement agencies to hire workers to combat alcohol-related crimes. Counties would be given the extra tax only from alcohol purchases in their area.

Whiteclay, a northwestern Nebraska town that borders the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, has only about a dozen residents but four beer stores. Last year, the Whiteclay stores sold about 4.3 million cans of beer. Tribal leaders have blamed Whiteclay beer stores for alcohol abuse on the reservation.

"Dealing with alcohol-related crimes can be overwhelming for local police force out there," Davis said. "I don't think it will deter consumption much, but it will provide revenue to law enforcement."

Nebraska's current beer tax is 31 cents per gallon, which is higher than in all bordering states. South Dakota taxes 27 cents per gallon of beer, while Wyoming taxes just 2 cents per gallon of beer. Davis said the proposed increase in Nebraska would amount to about a nickel per 12 pack of beer.

Nebraska breweries, the Nebraska Grocery Association and the Nebraska Licensed Beverage Association oppose the bill. Davis said he expected the opposition and that he would be willing to consider exempting Nebraska brew pubs from the excise tax.

SD House Passes Cellphone Ban For Young Drivers

BY CHET BROKAW
Associated Press

PIERRE — A measure that would prohibit beginning drivers from using cellphones was approved Monday by the South Dakota House after an acrimonious debate sparked by an opponent's suggestion that the Legislature also should ban premarital sex, provocative clothing, eating junk food and other teen activities.

Representatives voted 43-23 to pass the measure, which would ban young drivers from using cellphones or other electronic devices until they get unrestricted licenses at age 16. The bill, resurrected after being narrowly rejected by the House last week, now returns to the Senate for consideration of a change made by the House.

The ban on cellphone use by young drivers was part of a package of four bills recommended by a task force set up by Legislature to find ways to reduce teen traffic crashes and the resulting injuries and deaths. The other three bills have been rejected.

Much of Monday's debate was spent on a proposed amendment suggested by Rep. Stace Nelson, R-Fulton, who sought language that also would have banned 14- and 15-year-old drivers from engaging in a long list of behavior that included drinking alcohol, using illegal drugs, getting bad grades, failing to eat broccoli and talking back to parents and teachers. He said he proposed the language to show that law enforcement officers would also be unable to enforce a ban on cellphone use by young drivers.

"It points out the hypocrisy in this bill," Nelson said.

Nelson's proposed amendment failed 2-54 after other lawmakers said they were offended by Nelson's proposal, calling it inappropriate for a bill seeking to prevent teen deaths.

"We should not stoop to that level to make a point," said Rep. Jim Petersen, D-Revillo.

Rep. Steve Hickey, R-Sioux Falls, said Nelson's proposed amendment turned the debate into "kind of a circus."

When the debate focused on the bill itself, supporters said young drivers should not use cellphones because the devices increase the risk of crashes. Opponents said there's no proof that banning cellphones reduces crashes.

Rep. Peggy Gibson, D-Huron, said 33 states and the District of Columbia already ban the use of cellphones by novice drivers because inexperienced drivers are more easily distracted when they talk or text.

"We're talking about saving teens from crashes, from fatalities. These are 14- and 15-year-old children," said Gibson, a member of the task force that recommended the bill.

Rep. Mike Verchio, R-Hill City, said there's no evidence that a ban on cellphones saves lives.

"This is a feel-good bill that will not change a thing," said Verchio said.

South Dakota allows 14-year-olds to get instruction permits, the nation's youngest age for driving while accompanied by an adult. Those young drivers can graduate to restricted permits that allow them to drive alone in the daytime after six months, or just 90 days if they have completed a driver's education course.

Young drivers can move to unrestricted permits at age 16 if they pass a written test and a driving test.

The Legislature has rejected task force proposals that included a longer training period for beginning drivers, a plan to limit passengers in vehicles driven by young drivers, and a proposal to create a standardized statewide system for driver's education courses.

Neb. AG Bruning Planning To Seek Re-Election

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning says he's planning to seek re-election to his current job, and it's "extremely unlikely" that he'll run for governor or the U.S. Senate.

The Republican attorney general stopped short Monday of ruling out a bid altogether, but he says he loves his current position and has no plans to seek any other office.

Bruning made similar statements in January, but those comments came before Republican U.S. Sen. Mike Johanns announced that he wouldn't seek re-election in 2014.

Bruning ran for U.S. Senate in 2012, but lost in the Republican primary to then-state Sen. Deb Fischer. Fischer went on to win the seat.

The governor's seat is an open contest as well. Republican Gov. Dave Heineman cannot seek re-election in 2014 because of term limits.

SD Senate Dismisses Points For Speeding

PIERRE (AP) — The South Dakota Senate has refused to reconsider a measure that would have given South Dakota the option to suspend the licenses of drivers who repeatedly speed.

The Senate Transportation Committee killed the bill last Wednesday, but Republican Sen. Craig Tieszen on Monday tried to force the bill to the full Senate floor. Tieszen's motion received 11 of the 12 needed votes.

Motorists can lose their licenses if they accumulate too many points for moving violations, including drunken driving, reckless driving and running a stop sign. But no points are assessed for speeding.

Agreement Could Expand Prenatal Care In SD

PIERRE (AP) — An agreement between South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard and state lawmakers could provide prenatal care to more than 300 additional pregnant women a year.

At the suggestion of Deb Bowman, a senior adviser to the governor, the Senate Health Committee rejected a bill that would provide prenatal care to pregnant women who are in the country illegally. But Bowman says the governor has agreed an amendment can be suggested to the state budget to cover care for those illegal immigrants.

The committee then passed separate language that would cover prenatal care for additional low-income women who are citizens.

The main sponsor of the bill dealing with illegal immigrants is House Democratic Leader Bernie Hunhoff of Yankton. He says the deal could provide two victories instead of just one.

SF Victim Refuses To Cooperate In Attack

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Sioux Falls police say a man who was attacked by people he knew refused to cooperate with the investigation.

Police say the man was jumped by two or three men outside a Sioux Falls apartment early Sunday morning.

The victim allegedly was punched, kicked and hit with a stick described as a broom handle. He would not give descriptions of the suspects.

The *Sioux Falls Argus Leader* reports that the victim was treated and released from a local hospital.

SD Panel Rejects Gun Rights Expression Bill

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota House panel has shot down a measure aimed at expressing the Legislature's belief that the U.S. Constitution prevents the federal government from restricting gun ownership.

The House State Affairs Committee voted 8-4 Monday to defeat the Senate bill. Republican Sen. Larry Rhoden of Union Center was the measure's main sponsor.

Committee chairman David Lust of Rapid City says the bill is "clearly resolution material" and a state statute is not the place to make a statement.

Attorney General Marty Jackley urged support of the bill and a proposed amendment that would have directed him to be vigilant and proactive in protecting the state's Second Amendment rights.

Lust says the amendment could have set the attorney general's office up for lawsuits.

Retired Generals Call For Child Ed. Increase

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Three retired Air Force generals joined a Nebraska state senator on Monday to call for increased spending on early childhood education, which they deemed important for future recruitment.

The veterans said they were pushing for \$10 million in yearly funding in the two-year budget that lawmakers will complete this year. The funding would go to the state's Early Childhood Education Endowment Cash Fund, which targets children in the years before their formal schooling starts.

If approved, the bill by Sen. John Harms of Scottsbluff would expand early childhood services to an additional 2,200 infants and toddlers throughout Nebraska who are considered at risk to fail in school.

Harms, a former teacher and president of Western Nebraska Community College, said the money would help lay a foundation for children who might otherwise struggle in school.

"If they're going to be successful in the future, if they're going to be successful in their careers, it's extremely important to catch children early," he said. "Early educational development is critical — particularly from birth until age 3."

The former generals — Air Force Brigadier Gens. Paul Cohen and Randolph Scott, and Major Gen. Mark Musick — said they were concerned that the military service is out of reach for youths who don't finish high school, fail the military entrance exam or have criminal records.

A 2010 report by the Education Trust, a Washington advocacy group, found that 15 percent of Nebraska high school graduates who applied for military service scored too low on the entrance exam.

OBITUARIES

Faye Beran

Faye Beran, 90, of Yankton passed away Saturday, March 2, 2013 at Avera Sister James Care Center, Yankton.

Funeral services will be 11 a.m., Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Chapel, Yankton with Rev. Bob Cappel officiating. Burial will be in the Garden of Memories.

Visitations and a time to greet the family will be from 6-8 p.m., Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at the Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home and Crematory, Yankton. Visitations will resume one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

Faye is survived by her two daughters, Mary Kathryn Law and her husband, Robert and



Beran

Rebecca Faye Wagner and her husband, Harold; 6 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren, and 13 great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Edward, and all her sisters and brothers.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
March 5, 2013



Online condolences at:
www.opsahl-kostelfuneralhome.com

Virginia Bee

Virginia D. Bee, 75, of Yankton, died Saturday, March 2, 2013 at the Avera Sister James Care Center in Yankton, South Dakota.

Memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 9, 2013 at 2 pm at the Kingdom Hall of the Jehovah's Witnesses in Yankton, with Edward J. Wilmes officiating. The Wintz & Ray Funeral Home and Cremation Service is assisting with arrangements.

Virginia was born on August 5, 1937 in Chicago, Illinois to William and Alvina (Goers) Bee. Virginia spent 21 years in Whittier, California before moving to Yankton in 1973. She enjoyed working for various employers within the Yankton community over the years including Save-U-More, Sunshine Foods and most recently, Yankton County Courthouse.

Virginia was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1961 and was very active in the bible education work within the community. "Ginny" — as she was fondly known by her family —



Bee

enjoyed reading, embroidery, and researching various subjects that interested her. She took great pleasure in spending time with family and friends.

Virginia is survived by four siblings, Carolyn Whipple of Reno, Nevada; Doris Hussing of Yankton; Evelyn Klein (Bee) and her husband Harvey of Hemet, California; William Bee and his wife Joyce of Hemet, California; as well as several nieces and nephews from various areas.

She was preceded in death by her parents, William and Alvina Bee.

Yankton Press & Dakotan
March 5, 2013



Online condolences at:
www.wintzrayfuneralhome.com

Steven Lackas

Funeral Services for Steven W. Lackas, 67, of Wausa, Neb., are at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 6, 2013, at Thabor Lutheran Church, Wausa. Pastor Michelle Oetken will officiate, with burial in Magnet Cemetery.

Visitation is 4-8 p.m. today (Tuesday) at Brockhaus Funeral Home, Wausa.

Steven died Sunday, March 3, 2013, at Osmond General Hospital.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Donor's Choice.

Johanna Pudwill

Johanna Pudwill, 106, of Avon died Monday, March 4, 2013, at the Good Samaritan Society, Tyn-dall.

Funeral services are at 10:30 a.m. Friday, March 8, at the First Baptist Church, Avon. Burial is in the Baptist Cemetery, rural Avon.

Visitation is 4-6 p.m. Thursday at the church.

Crosby-Jaeger Funeral Chapel, Avon, is in charge of arrangements.

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