

2000 Notices

YOU MAY NOW COME IN THE PRESS & DAKOTA AND PICK UP YOUR BEAUTIFUL BABY PICTURES. MONDAY- FRIDAY BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 8AM-5PM. ANY PICTURES LEFT IN OUR OFFICE AFTER APRIL 15TH WILL BE DISPOSED OF.

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2+23&3+2+9+16
STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA)
COUNTY OF YANKTON)SS:

**IN CIRCUIT COURT
FIRST JUDICIAL CIRCUIT**

In the Matter of the Petition of Joshua Rawlings
(Current Name)

For a Change of Name to

Joshua Hackney
(Proposed Name)

CIV: 13-80

**NOTICE OF HEARING
FOR ADULT NAME CHANGE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN a Verified Petition for Adult Name Change has been filed by Joshua Hackney the object and prayer of which is to change Petitioner's name from Joshua Rawlings to Joshua Hackney. On the 16th day of April, 2013, at the hour of 10:00 am said verified petition will be heard by this Court before the Honorable Cheryl Gering presiding, at the Court Room in the Yankton Public Safety Center, City of Yankton, Yankton County, South Dakota, or as soon thereafter as is convenient for the court. Anyone may come and appear at that time and place and show reasons, if any, why said name should not be changed as requested.

Dated this 20th day of February, 2013.

Luci Youngberg
Fox & Youngberg, P.C.
216 W. 3rd Street
Yankton, SD 57078
(605)665-4308

**3+9+16
PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE**

A monthly meeting of the Yankton County Drainage Board will be held at 4:45 P.M., Monday, March 18, 2013 in the Yankton County Government Center, Commissioners Chambers, 321 West Third St., Yankton, South Dakota.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that a public hearing will be held before the Yankton County Drainage Board, Yankton County, South Dakota, Monday, March 18, 2013, at 4:45 P.M. at the Yankton County Government Center, Commissioners Chambers, 321 West Third St., Yankton, South Dakota.

Said hearing is to consider the following:

Applicant is requesting a Drainage Permit to install tile drainage in Yankton County. Said properties are legally described as NW1/4, NW1/4, S4-T96N-R56W and SW1/4, NW1/4, S4-T96N-R56W and NE1/4, NE1/4, S4-T96N-R56W, herein-after referred to as Jamesville Township, County of Yankton, State of South Dakota.

Patrick Garrity
Drainage Administrator
Yankton County
Published twice at the approximate cost of \$26.51.

**3+9
YANKTON COUNTY
COMMISSION MEETING**
February 20, 2013

The regular meeting of the Yankton County Board of Commissioners was called to order by Chairman Bruce Jensen at 3:30 PM on Wednesday, Feb. 20, 2013 at the Commission Chambers in the County Government Center.

Roll call was taken with the following members present: Bruce Jensen, Mark Johnson, Garry Moore and Allen Sinclair. Absent: Donna Freng.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Action 1348C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to approve the meeting agenda with the following additions: 2013 committee assignments; meeting dates for March; emergency contact designation; and application timeline for Planning Commission applicants. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1349C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to designate Register of Deeds Brian Hunhoff as the Board's emergency contact person

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in the County Government Center. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1350C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to recess the regular session of the Board and convene in Executive Session for personnel and litigation issues at 3:40 p.m. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1351C: A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Moore to reconvene in regular session at 5:30 p.m. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Chairman Jensen announced the Board had reached consensus in Executive Session to move forward with hiring an administrative assistant to be shared by the Highway Department and the Planning and Zoning Office. Applications have been received and interviews will begin next week. Jensen also stated the Board agreed to re-plant the old Highway Shop property.

Action 1352H: Highway Supt. Brian Gustad requested approval of an agreement with the State of South Dakota for the 2013 County Road Striping Program. The estimated cost is \$29,340 for striping approximately 30 miles of road in Yankton County in 2013. The agreement calls for the State to pay 60 percent of the cost and the County to pay the remaining 40 percent. A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Sinclair to approve and accept the agreement. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Supt. Gustad provided the Board with estimated costs for a list of prioritized equipment needs for the Highway Department. Commissioners asked Gustad to bring the Board an updated 2013 budget status report before they take action on special projects, and the lease or purchase of large equipment items.

Supt. Gustad asked if there were questions about a request he made at the Feb. 5 meeting for a \$1,500 revolving credit line. The money would be used to pay for miscellaneous travel expenses and office supplies. Gustad said receipts would be turned in to the Auditor's Office for each purchase. He stated that staff in the Auditor's Office did not object to the proposal. The Board agreed to place the request on the March 5, 2013 meeting agenda for further discussion and possible action.

Supt. Gustad discussed his plan to build a permanent structure for salt and sand storage on the County Highway Shop property. He said employees in the Highway Department will provide the actual construction labor as their regular work schedules allow. The Board asked Gustad and Commissioner Mark Johnson to research the cost of a topographic survey to determine if building the proposed structure is feasible at that location.

The Board addressed the issue of Commission meeting minutes that have not been available for review, action or publication in recent months. State law requires the County Auditor to transmit County Commission meeting minutes to the county's official newspapers within one week, and also make those minutes available for Board review and approval at its next scheduled meeting.

Because County Auditor Paula Jones is on medical leave, Chairman Jensen asked Register of Deeds Brian Hunhoff to review back issues of the county's official newspapers from the past four months to determine which Yankton County Commission meeting minutes have not yet been prepared, approved or published. Hunhoff reported that minutes from all four November 2012 meetings were published, but three of those sets of meeting minutes were approved with incorrect dates.

Action 1353C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to approve minutes from the Nov. 8, Nov. 9 and Nov. 13, 2012 Board meetings as a corrective action. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Hunhoff said Dec. 4, 2012 meeting minutes had been approved, but not sent to the two official county newspapers for publication. Hunhoff stated those minutes were located and sent to the newspapers last week to be published.

Hunhoff stated that meeting minutes from Dec. 18, 2012 and Dec. 31, 2012; and meeting minutes from Jan. 3, 2013 and Jan. 15, 2013 had not been completed, approved or published. With assistance from Karen Faerber in the Auditor's Office and Zoning Administrator Patrick Garrity, Hunhoff compiled and completed the minutes from those four meetings along with the most recent Commission meeting on Feb. 5, 2013.

Action 1354C: A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Moore to approve the Yankton County Commission meeting minutes from Dec. 18, 2012; Dec. 31, 2012; Jan. 3, 2013; Jan. 15, 2013; and Feb. 5, 2013. All present voted aye; motion carried.

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The Board expressed appreciation to county employees who have taken on additional duties or responsibilities during the Auditor's leave. Commissioners also agreed to have Register of Deeds Hunhoff continue coordinating completion of the meeting minutes until the Auditor returns.

Action 1355A: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to approve the monthly report for January 2013 from Yankton County Emergency Medical Services. There were 156 ambulance runs last month with 3,893 patient-loaded miles. EMS billed out \$96,996 and received \$59,079 in January. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1356A: A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Sinclair to approve \$23,093.22 in EMS insurance adjustments. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1357Z: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to adopt the following resolution: Whereas it appears that Sharon Neumayr, owner of record, has caused a plat to be made of the following real property: Tract A in Block 7 of Deer Run Subdivision in the W1/2 SE1/4 S1-T93N-R57W, County of Yankton, State of South Dakota, and has submitted such plat to the Yankton County Planning Commission and the County Commission of Yankton County, South Dakota for approval. Now therefore be it resolved that such plat has been executed according to the law and conforms to all existing applicable zoning, subdivision, erosion and sediment control and the same is hereby approved. The County Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to endorse on such plat the proper resolution and certify the same. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1358Z: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to set March 1, 2013 as the deadline for applicants interested in serving on the Yankton County Planning Commission. Three openings for three-year terms will be filled. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Roger Smith, of M.T. and R.C. Smith Insurance, discussed current premiums, values, claim history, deductibles and liability coverage for county property and public officials. Smith advised the Board to review the list of current coverage levels and discuss adjustments at a future meeting. The Board agreed to schedule a 30-minute time slot before its regularly scheduled April 2, 2013 meeting to discuss changes in the current coverage package.

Action 1359C: Bob Diede from the Yankton County Soil Conservation District reported that interviews were completed for the administrative assistant position in the Soil Conservation Office. Diede stated that the Soil Conservation Board recommends Cassandra Richelieu for the job. A motion was made by Moore and seconded by Johnson to hire Cassandra Richelieu for the position, pending results of a standard county background check. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Chairman Jensen stated that Commissioner Johnson has accepted responsibility for preparing the meeting agenda during the Auditor's medical leave of absence. Johnson reported on his efforts to get meeting agenda items up-loaded to the county website to reduce the large amount of paper passed around at Commission meetings. Johnson, who serves on the County Technology Committee, led three training sessions with various department heads during the previous week.

Commissioners noted the voluminous stacks of paper generated during the Zoning Administrator's monthly Board of Adjustment hearings; department head budget hearings; and the Director of Equalization Consolidated Board of Appeals hearings as examples where computers could facilitate a more efficient meeting. The computers would also be used to view monthly department reports, claims, bids, payroll and various other agenda items or proposals.

The Board has previously discussed purchasing laptops or computer tablets for use at Commission meetings. Johnson said a laptop computer with county software would cost approximately \$680, compared to about \$600 for a computer tablet with keyboard. Johnson recommended the iPad tablet because it is durable, portable and convenient with abundant storage space. He said the Yankton City Commission recently switched from laptops to iPads. Johnson also stated the Auditor should have a computer at meetings that could be used to project information being discussed on the large overhead screen for members of the audience.

Action 1360C: A motion was made by Moore and seconded by Sinclair to purchase five iPad tablets for the Board and a laptop for the Auditor, with Commissioners owning their individual tablets as a benefit to their elected positions. All present voted aye; motion carried.

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Action 1361C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to approve monthly reports for Pooled Cash, Auditor-Treasurer and Welfare. All present voted aye; motion carried.

The January 2013 Pooled Cash report showed a starting balance of \$5,856,906.27 on Jan. 1, 2013 and an ending balance of \$6,000,608.65 on Jan. 31, 2013.

The January 2013 Auditor's Monthly Settlement with the Treasurer reported \$37,440.18 of cash on hand; \$952,571.39 in a checking account at First Dakota National Bank; and savings account balances at the following banks: \$468,650.58 at Wells Fargo Bank; \$952,647.72 at Cor Trust Bank of Gayville; \$1,490,704.70 at First Dakota National Bank; \$947,004.77 at Cor Trust Bank of Yankton; and \$1,149,879.49 at First National Bank South Dakota. The County received 14 bad checks in January totaling \$1,709.82. As of Jan. 31, there was \$4,078,957.79 in the General Fund; \$1,174,100.16 in Special Funds; and \$747,550.70 in Trust and Agency Funds. Grand Total of General Ledger Cash and Investments was \$6,000,608.65.

The Yankton County Welfare Report for January 2013 included 29 contacts, 15 notices of hospitalization, eight requests for payment, and one poor relief application.

Action 1362C: A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Moore to approve the following claims: **Commissioners:** Lois Eli (Supplies) \$58.30, Knology (Utilities) \$56.04, Yankton County Observer (Legal Notices) \$81.94, Lower James RC & D (Services) \$110.00; **Court:** Avera McKennan Hospital (Services) \$368.10, Fox, Youngberg & Lewno (Legal Assistance) \$765.50, Kennedy, Pier & Knoff (Legal Assistance) \$1,676.81, Great Plains Psychological Services (Services) \$2,640.00, Koletzky Law Office (Legal Assistance) \$1,320.20, Dean Schaefer (Transcripts) \$89.40; **Auditor:** Knology (Utilities) \$175.18, McLeod's Printing (Supplies) \$387.80, Western Office Technologies (Maintenance & Supplies) \$308.17; **Treasurer:** Harland Technology (Supplies) \$29.32, Knology (Utilities) \$293.58, Western Office Plus (Supplies) \$91.75; **Data Processing:** Knology (Utilities) \$423.93; **States Attorney:** MidContinent (Utilities) \$46.64, Great Western Bank (Rental) \$25.00, West Payment Center (Maintenance) \$1,276.76; **Government Buildings:** Buhl's (Maintenance) \$142.56, Knology (Utilities) \$27.83, MidAmerican Energy (Utilities) \$1,155.01, Yankton Janitorial (Supplies) \$121.10; **Director of Equalization:** Ecowater Systems (Supplies) \$20.00, Knology (Utilities) \$243.27, SDAAO (Registration Fees) \$400.00, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$58.14; **Register of Deeds:** Knology (Utilities) \$191.59, Microfilm Imaging System (Rental & Supplies) \$794.37, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$275.35; **Veteran's Office:** Knology (Utilities) \$28.10; **Court House & Safety Center:** Ace Hardware (Supplies) \$9.88, City of Yankton (Utilities) \$144.00, Johnson Controls (Maintenance) \$4,068.53; **Sheriff:** Broadway Chrysler (Maintenance) \$16.17, City of Yankton (Supplies) \$2,602.62, FedEx (Supplies) \$11.47, Graham Tire (Maintenance) \$13.25, Hedahl's (Maintenance) \$379.51, Knology (Utilities) \$67.90, SD Quik Lube (Maintenance) \$122.97, Yankton Motor Company (Maintenance) \$229.99, Zuercher Technologies (Equipment) \$5,800.00; **County Jail:** American Institutional (Supplies) \$215.95, CBM Food Service (Meals) \$1,890.98, Emblem Enterprises (Supplies) \$183.77, JCL Solutions (Supplies) \$1,032.44, Benjamin Jensen, DDS (Services) \$199.00, Lewis & Clark Family Medicine (Services) \$103.34, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$27.53, Yankton Winnelson (Supplies) \$18.60; **Juvenile Detention:** Minnehaha County Regional (Child Care) \$3,450.00, Volunteers of America (Shelter Care) \$2,310.00; **Care of Poor:** Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (Care) \$8,831.96, Opsahl-Kostel Funeral Home (Services) \$1,250.00, Yankton Medical Clinic (Services) \$608.06, Yankton Rexall (Medicine) \$131.89, Xerox (Maintenance) \$73.65; **Contact:** Contact (1st Half 2013 Budget) \$22,500.00; **Public Health Nurse:** Knology (Utilities) \$327.03, Xerox (Maintenance) \$73.64; **Ambulance:** Ace Hardware (Supplies) \$477.76, Avera Sacred Heart Hospital (Supplies) \$249.50, City of Yankton (Supplies) \$845.05, Christensen Radiator (Maintenance) \$97.25, Roy Johnson Roofing (Maintenance) \$154.69, Kaiser Heating & Cooling (Maintenance) \$5,743.00, Knology (Utilities) \$174.63, Matheson Tri-Gas (Rental) \$36.28, Purchase Power (Supplies) \$319.99, Henry Schein (Supplies) \$503.50, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$15.95; **Mentally Handicapped:** South Dakota Achieve (January Services) \$240.00; **Mental Health Centers:** Ability Building Services (1st Half 2013 Budget) \$11,192.50; **Mental Illness Board:** Norma Andersen (Hearings) \$15.00, Denise Cody (Hearings) \$30.00, Lucille Lewno (Hearings) \$1,110.80, Lincoln County Treasurer (Hearings) \$63.75, Cathy Rehffuss (Hearings) \$45.00, Shepherd Reporting

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(Hearings) \$192.50, Karen Swanda (Hearings) \$60.00; **County Extension:** Appera (Supplies) \$53.02, Lauren Fosheim (Travel) \$65.00, Franco-ty-Postalia (Rental) \$339.50, Hy-Vee (Supplies) \$15.96, Mid-American Energy (Utilities) \$160.41, Northwestern Energy (Utilities) \$219.04, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$93.41; **Planning & Zoning:** Knology (Utilities) \$46.53, Western Office Technologies (Supplies) \$32.45, Yankton Daily P&D (Legal Notices) \$55.29; **Road & Bridge:** A-Ox Welding (Supplies) \$36.64, Ace Hardware (Supplies) \$84.90, Appera (Supplies) \$59.03, B-Y Electric (Utilities) \$31.33, Butler Machinery (Maintenance) \$1,845.95, Ban Koe Systems (Maintenance) \$360.00, City of Yankton (Utilities) \$556.60, Cox Auto (Supplies) \$669.21, Brian Gustad (Supplies) \$52.67, Graham Tire (Supplies) \$1,965.23, Hedahl's (Supplies) \$2.86, Investigative Services (Services) \$121.00, Janssen's Garbage (Supplies) \$40.00, Knology (Utilities) \$258.51, Kimball Midwest (Supplies) \$488.12, Rick Hlavac (Supplies) \$600.00, Miller Consulting (Maintenance) \$37.50, Mead Lumber (Supplies) \$136.40, Pro Auto (Supplies) \$25.00, SD Assoc County Hiways (Training) \$80.00, Southwestern Electric (Utilities) \$25.13, Vanderhule's (Supplies) \$56.00, Yankton Daily P&D (Legal Notices) \$22.36; **911 Fund:** CenturyLink (Utilities) \$83.20, Golden West (Utilities) \$145.10, Knology (Utilities) \$72.97; **Emergency Management:** Ace Hardware (Supplies) \$34.20, B-Y Electric (Utilities) \$47.46, City of Yankton (Supplies) \$99.20, Complete Communications (Maintenance) \$825.17, Knology (Utilities) \$387.85, Motorola (Repair) \$78.00, Power Source Electric (Maintenance) \$926.12, R&D Repair (Maintenance) \$80.49, Smart-Draw Software (Supplies) \$9.00, Sioux Falls Two-Way Radio (Maintenance, Supplies, Travel) \$404.97, Telephone Systems (Maintenance) \$524.30, Tabor Lumber (Supplies) \$726.21, Tri-State EMA (Membership Renewal) \$10.00; **24/7 Program:** Redwood Toxicology Lab (Supplies) \$2,303.56. Manual checks not included in totals: Harold Klimisch (Surplus Refund) \$87.04, Department of Veterans Affairs (Ambulance Refund) \$120.74, SDACO (M & PR Fund) \$664.00, SD State Treasurer (SDHSC and Redfield) \$7,090.25, SD State Treasurer (Fees) \$253,610.11, SD Department of Health (1st Quarter 2013 Budget) \$2,575.00.

Total General Fund \$93,025.85, Road & Bridge \$7,554.44, 911 Fund \$301.27, Emergency Management \$4,144.87, 24/7 Program \$2,303.56. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1363C: A motion was made by Johnson and seconded by Sinclair to approve 12 end-of-year contingency transfers totaling \$108,054.65, made by the Auditor on Dec. 31, 2012 as budget supplements. These included \$3,428.10 to Elections; \$16,840.32 to Courts; \$7,432.68 to CLEERP; \$673.92 to Predatory Animal; \$12,089.53 to Court-house and Safety Center; \$606.28 to County Jail; \$15.25 to Local Emergency Planning; \$16,377.33 to Mentally Handicapped; \$24,120.75 to Mental Illness Board; \$20,000.00 to Library; and \$6,470.49 to Senior Citizens. All present voted aye; motion carried.

Action 1364C: A motion was made by Sinclair and seconded by Johnson to approve the Board's committee assignments for 2013. All present voted aye; motion carried.

The 2013 assignments include the following: Ambulance Supervisor, Bruce Jensen; alternate: Donna Freng. Chamber Governmental Affairs, Mark Johnson; alternate: Donna Freng. Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Bruce Jensen; alternate: Donna Freng. City Master Plan, Bruce Jensen. Community Health Nurse, Mark Johnson. District III, Garry Moore; alternate: Allen Sinclair. Director of Equalization, Mark Johnson. E911, Mark Johnson. Emergency Contact, Bruce Jensen; alternate: Allen Sinclair. Extension Board, Donna Freng; alternate: Garry Moore. Federal Prison Board, Garry Moore. Federal Health Clinic Planning, Donna Freng. Highway Committee, Bruce Jensen; alternate: Donna Freng. Historical Society, Donna Freng; alternate: Allen Sinclair. Human Services Center, Bruce Jensen. James River RC&D Council, Garry Moore. Joint Powers, Garry Moore; alternate: Bruce Jensen. Keep Yankton Beautiful, Allen Sinclair. Local Emergency Planning, Bruce Jensen; alternate: Allen Sinclair. Library Board, Allen Sinclair; alternate: Donna Freng. Mental Health Board, Garry Moore. Physical Plant Supervisor, Donna Freng; alternate: Mark Johnson. Planning Commission, Allen Sin-

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clair and Donna Freng. Prisoner Transportation Committee, Donna Freng. Safety Center, Bruce Jensen and Allen Sinclair; alternate: Donna Freng. Senior Center, Mark Johnson. Sedimentation Board, Allen Sinclair. Soil Conservation Board, Allen Sinclair. Technology, Mark Johnson. Trail Committee, Mark Johnson. Weed Board, Bruce Jensen and Donna Freng. Yankton City/County Planning; Mark Johnson and Bruce Jensen. Yankton Area Progressive Growth; Allen Sinclair. Youth and Family Services Board, Jim Vlahakis. Safety Center Advisory Committee: Two city commissioners, two county commissioners, city police chief, county sheriff, city manager and county auditor.

Action 1365C: A motion was made by Moore and seconded by Johnson to move the regularly scheduled Commission meeting on Tuesday, March 19, 2013, to Monday, March 18, 2013. All present voted aye; motion carried.

A motion was made by Johnson to adjourn.

The next regular meeting of the Board will be Tuesday, March 5, 2013 at 3:00 PM in the Commission Chambers at the County Government Center.

Bruce Jensen, Chairman
Yankton County Commission

ATTEST:
Lois Eli, Deputy Auditor
Published once at the approximate cost of \$241.13.

Furlough Plans Vary Widely At Gov't Agencies

BY SAM HANANEL
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Federal workers could face seven days of furloughs at the Housing and Urban Development Department, but Homeland Security personnel might see twice that number. At the Environmental Protection Agency, workers would get four-day holiday weekends with a catch — one day would be a furlough day.

Other agencies are avoiding furloughs altogether.

Government agencies vary widely in how they are dealing with \$85 billion in across-the-board budget cuts that went into effect last week, according to labor unions that represent federal workers.

"It just depends on their flexibility," said Patrick Lester, director of fiscal policy for the Center for Effective Government. "If they are largely personnel-driven, there's no way to avoid personnel-related cuts."

The American Federation of Government Employees, which represents more than 600,000 federal workers, is trying to keep track of all the different plans, as their members face the prospect of lost wages and growing frustration about getting their work done. More than half of the nation's 2.1 million federal workers could be furloughed over the next six months.

"A lot of people think federal employees are fat-cat bureaucrats in Washington, but they don't realize more than 85 percent of these workers live outside of D.C.," AFGE spokesman Tim Kauffman said. "A lot of them are not highly paid folks, like VA nurses and emergency response workers."

Meat and poultry inspectors at the Agriculture Department initially were told they might be furloughed for 11 consecutive days between June and July, possibly leading to a meat supply shortage and higher prices. But Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack backed away from that at a House hearing this week, telling lawmakers that the furloughs would not be consecutive after all.

"Furloughs are going to cause disruption," USDA spokeswoman Courtney Rowe said Wednesday. "We're looking to do it in ways that cause the minimum impact."

Some agencies, including the Justice Department, already have sent out formal furlough notices to workers indicating furloughs of up to 14 days could begin as soon as April. All furloughs are subject to 30-day notices and subject to bargaining with unions representing government workers.

While the unions can't stop the furloughs, they can try to ease the pain for employees by negotiating different times, allowing employees to swap days, or

Energy Bill Meant For Rural Neb.

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A lawmaker who introduced a wind-energy tax-credit bill says criticism of his measure is "puzzling," because it was designed to help rural Nebraska.

Sen. Steve Lathrop of Omaha said Friday that his bill would encourage investment in rural parts of the state, and give farmers a potential new revenue source. Lathrop says he intends to designate the measure as his "priority bill" for the year.

His comments came in response to a statement issued by Republican Gov. Dave Heineman, shortly after the Legislature's Revenue Committee advanced the measure to the full Legislature.

Senator Seeks Helmet Law Repeal

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Nebraska lawmaker wants to repeal a state law that requires motorcyclists to wear helmets.

Sen. Dave Bloomfield of Hoskins presented his measure this week to the Legislature's Transportation and Telecommunications Committee.

The bill would lift the requirement for motorcyclist operators and passengers who are at least 21 years old. Those who are younger than 21 would still have to wear helmets, and all motorcyclists would still have to wear eye protection.

other changes. Unions are also trying to persuade agencies to make other cuts that don't affect worker pay, such as cutting government contracts with private companies.

The Social Security Administration, for example, says it hopes to avoid furloughs altogether, instead saving money by terminating more than 1,500 temporary and other workers and losing more than 5,000 other positions through attrition.

"In some cases, the agencies can figure out ways to slow down federal contracts instead of taking it out of federal personnel," Lester said.

The federal government is the country's single largest employer, with its employees making up about 1.2 percent of the nation's work force.

Some of the longest furloughs are expected at the Defense Department, where about 800,000 civilian employees face up to 22 unpaid days off over the next several months. The agency has not yet specified when those will happen, but some agencies may try to put off furloughs for several months in hopes that Congress will come up with a budget fix.

More flexibility could be coming soon. A House measure passed Wednesday that prevents a shutdown of federal agencies on March 27 also would grant the Pentagon greater latitude in implementing its share of short-term spending cuts. Senate Democrats could try to expand that flexibility to other agencies, potentially reducing the number of workers who are furloughed.

Sen. Roy Blunt, R-Mo., said he plans to introduce legislation that would allow the Obama administration to exempt from furloughs essential federal employees, such as those who perform food inspections and other urgent functions, so the consequences of the budget cuts would not harm the economy or public safety.

Border Patrol agents at the Homeland Security Department, for example, face up to 14 days of furloughs and a moratorium on regular overtime pay, which could mean a 35 percent decline in wages for the rest of the fiscal year. Union officials warn that could mean trouble for border security, as agents aren't used to stopping work just because their shifts end, especially if they are chasing drug or gun smugglers.

At the EPA, officials are planning up to 13 furlough days, with the first four coming between April and June 1, said John O'Grady, president of AFGE local 704 covering EPA employees in Chicago. There also would be mandatory furlough days on May 24, July 5 and Aug. 30 — coming around the Memorial Day, July Fourth and Labor Day holidays — that would shut the agency entirely, he said.