

For

T STATECHAMBER 

Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry

MANUFACTURERS

Only



Summer 2014

State Lawmakers Begin Leadership Bids for 2015

Earlier this summer, State Senator Galen Hadley of Kearney announced that he would seek to become the next speaker of the Nebraska Legislature when the 2015 session begins in January. Senator Hadley is currently chairman of the Legislature's Revenue Committee and played a key role in the efforts of the Unicameral's Tax Modernization Committee. He is the second candidate for the job, since Lincoln Senator Colby Coash has also announced his interest in being speaker.


According to several reports in the news media, Senators Kathy Campbell of Lincoln and Mike Gloor of Grand Island have decided to seek other leadership positions within the Nebraska Legislature instead of running for speaker. Senator Campbell said she will run again to chair the Health and Human Services Committee, while Senator Gloor, who currently chairs the Banking, Commerce and Insurance Committee, has announced he will run for Revenue Committee chairman.

Committee chairs and the speaker will be elected by all 49 state senators on the first day of the 2015 legislative session. Seven standing committees are losing chairs who cannot run again due to term limits. The committees losing chairs are:

- Business and Labor;
- General Affairs;
- Government, Military and Veterans Affairs;
- Judiciary;
- Natural Resources;
- Transportation and Telecommunications; and
- Urban Affairs.

In addition, the chairs of several special committees will not return, including the Executive Board, Legislative Performance Audit and the Legislature's Planning Committee.

Other senators who have announced they are seeking chairmanships include: Senators Jerry Johnson of Wahoo, Agriculture; Heath Mello of Omaha, Appropriations; Kate Sullivan of Cedar Rapids, Education; John Murante of Gretna, Government, Military and Veterans Affairs; Les Seiler of Hastings, Judiciary; Jim Smith of Papillion, Transportation and Telecommunications; Sue Crawford of Bellevue, Urban Affairs; Ken Schilz of Ogalala, Natural Resources; Dave Bloomfield of Hoskins and Bob Krist of Omaha, Executive Board. Other Senators will also likely seek leadership positions.

Due to term limits, at least 17 of Nebraska's 49 state lawmakers will be new next year, ensuring at least a 35% turnover. 

Manufacturing is a vital component of the Nebraska economy. It also represents an essential segment of the membership within the Nebraska Chamber. The State Chamber Manufacturers Council evaluates and recommends policy positions to the State Chamber Board of Directors and serves as a forum for the exchange of views and information that the State Chamber manufacturing members wish to share.

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August 7 Federal Summit Will Showcase U.S. Senate, Governor Candidates

The Nebraska Chamber's 2014 Federal Legislative Summit is set for Aug. 7 at the Strategic Air and Space Museum near Ashland (Exit 426 off I-80). If you have not yet registered, now is the time to do so. Co-hosted by the Lincoln Chamber, this will mark the sixth consecutive year for this well-attended event.

This year's federal summit will feature a special treat, since attendees will have the opportunity to hear from all the major candidates for Nebraska's open U.S. Senate seat, as well as the candidates for governor.

The summit will also feature Capitol Hill

updates from all five members of Nebraska's congressional delegation, as well as a keynote presentation by Rob Engstrom, the national political director at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The event starts at 8:30 a.m. (CT) and concludes at 1:30 p.m. A buffet lunch will be served.

To register online, go to <http://www.ne-chamber.net/event/2014-legislative-summit-online-registration>. Or call the State Chamber at (402) 474-4422. The cost is \$95 for members of any chamber of commerce in the state; this includes lunch, as well as a continental breakfast. □



REPORT: Nebraska Manufacturing Jobs Increase

For the third year in a row, industrial employment in Nebraska posted a gain. That's according to the 2014 Nebraska Manufacturers Register, an industrial directory published annually by Manufacturers' News Inc.

According to the report, Nebraska gained 1,731 manufacturing jobs from July 2012 to July 2013, and is now home to 2,765 manufacturers employing 123,505 workers. Nebraska's "friendly business environment and abundant natural resources" are credited in part for the employment growth.

Food products manufacturing accounts for the most industrial employment in the state with 38,659 jobs, followed by industrial machinery and equipment manufacturing with 12,372 workers.

Nebraska's industrial employment gains were spread out across most sectors including textiles/apparel, stone/clay/glass, primary metals, electronics, transportation equipment and chemicals. Losses were seen in fabricated metals, lumber/wood and instruments/related products.

Data shows Omaha remains Nebraska's top city for manufacturing employment with 33,558 industrial jobs. Lincoln was second with 17,487 jobs, followed by Grand Island with 8,067 jobs. □

NEBRASKA CASH RESERVE: \$707.5 MILLION

Due to higher than expected tax collections, Nebraska's state government rainy day fund is projected to grow to \$707.5 million. That's according to the latest projection from the Nebraska Department of Revenue.

According to information released in mid-July, the state's net tax receipts totaled more than \$4.1 billion for the budget year

that ended on June 30. Nearly \$97 million in tax revenue was collected above the estimates of the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board. By law, the difference must go into the state's rainy-day fund, which some have said should be used for tax relief.




Nebraska Incentives Continue to Attract Jobs, Investment

According to several accounts, interest remains high among businesses when it comes to utilizing Nebraska's business incentives under the state's primary economic development program – the Nebraska Advantage Act.

A new report from the Nebraska Revenue Department shows that 53 companies signed agreements with the state during 2013 in hopes of qualifying for tax incentives.

State revenue officials said that compares with 58 agreements signed in 2012 and is about the level of activity anticipated following less activity during the recession years of 2009 and 2010.

Since the Advantage Act went into effect in 2006, the program has been a factor in the creation of 9,302 jobs and \$4.2 billion in qualified investments, the report said. 



Manufacturing is more than just putting parts together. It's coming up with ideas, testing principles and perfecting the engineering, as well as final assembly.

~ James Dyson


NEBRASKA IS NO. 4 IN COMPETITIVENESS STUDY

Nebraska is No. 4 in the 2014 "State Competitiveness Index" compiled by Suffolk University's Beacon Hill Institute in Boston. The report measures the long-term competitiveness of all 50 states, taking into account 46 indicators in eight sub-indexes.

Nebraska trailed only Massachusetts (No. 1), North Dakota (2) and New Hampshire (3) in this year's index. Neighboring Iowa and Colorado also made the top ten. The lowest-ranked states were West Virginia (48), Hawaii (49), and Mississippi (50).

According to the authors, the breadth of the BHI index distinguishes it from more narrowly-focused measures of competitive-

ness that target only taxes, high technology, or economic freedom. "States that paid attention to fostering a well-educated and healthy workforce scored well," the authors wrote. "It also helps for a state to be business-friendly with reasonable labor costs and an environment with consistent firm births and a culture of risk-taking."

Within the eight sub-indexes, Nebraska was ranked No. 8 for government and fiscal policy; No. 7 for security; No. 7 for infrastructure; No. 25 for human resources; No. 15 for technology; No. 40 as a business incubator; No. 4 for openness; and No. 4 for environmental policy. 

Forbes

LINCOLN AND OMAHA ON FORBES' BEST PLACES FOR BUSINESS LIST

Lincoln is again in the top ten of this year's Forbes "Best Places for Business and Careers" ranking, landing at No. 6.

This marks the third-straight year Lincoln made the Top 10 on the list, which ranks the nation's 200 largest metropolitan areas on factors including costs of living and doing business, educational attainment and projected job and economic growth."

Meanwhile, Omaha also cracked the list's top 25, coming in at No. 25. □

PLAN TO ATTEND THE STATE CHAMBER MANUFACTURERS SUMMIT, OCTOBER 8

The State Chamber's Manufacturing Summit is set for October 8 at Fonner Park in Grand Island. This is one of Nebraska's top events for those involved in manufacturing or related businesses. It is held in the same location as the Nebraska Product Show to allow manufacturers the opportunity to take in the show afterward.

This event will kick off with a luncheon and keynote speaker and then feature presentations from area experts who will highlight actions taken by local companies to ensure growth in the manufacturing sector.

In addition, the winner of the 2014 Nebraska Innovation in Manufacturing Award – presented by RSM McGladrey in partnership with the State Chamber – will be announced.

For more information or to register, call Charlie Volnek at (402) 474-4422 or e-mail cvolnek@nechamber.com. □

SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 14 IS MANUFACTURING DAY IN NEBRASKA

The Nebraska Chamber of Commerce & Industry is working with Governor Heineman's office to recognize October 14, 2014, as Manufacturing Day in Nebraska.

While specific details are still being planned, manufacturers across the state are encouraged to open their doors to the public, to share their story and spotlight the innovative and advanced operations that make modern manufacturing among the most rewarding career options available.

Several Nebraska manufacturers participated in last year's Manufacturing Day, including Norfolk's Nucor Steel, which was visited by 13 state lawmakers; Columbus' Behlen Manufacturing, which was visited by Governor Heineman; and Lincoln's Kawasaki Motors, which was visited by more than 550 students from Lincoln, Chambers, Beatrice and Milford.

Kawasaki Vice President and Plant Manager Mike Boyle said: "Gone are the days of a person doing the same thing over and over all day long. Manufacturing companies are looking for people that are flexible, willing to grow and obtain new job knowledge. If someone enjoys building cool products with computer controlled equipment and robotics, manufacturing can offer them high paying and rewarding careers."

Stay tuned to the Nebraska Chamber's News Update and other communications for more details on this exciting event. □

STATE CHAMBER ANNOUNCES SCHEDULE FOR FALL FORUMS

The Nebraska Chamber, in cooperation with local chambers of commerce across the state, will present its annual legislative forums beginning Aug. 26 and continuing through November.

The State Chamber's forums are held every autumn to provide insight on the Nebraska Legislature's business-related activities, while also gathering input from the business community on key concerns. State Chamber members, as well as members of local chambers and the news media, are invited to participate. This year, state senators and candidates for Legislature will be invited to speak at the forums in his/her district, time permitting.

See the last page of this issue for a detailed schedule of the legislative forum tour, which includes 30 local chambers.

For more information, call the local chamber that is hosting the forum in your area. □

Nebraska Chamber's 2014 Legislative Forums

Tuesday, Aug. 26

McCook (Breakfast), 7:30 a.m.

Weeth Theater at Tipton Hall, McCook Community College Campus
402 East M St.

Contact: Tacie Fawver, (308) 345-3200

Scottsbluff (Lunch), noon

Scottsbluff Country Club

Contact: Karen Anderson, (308) 632-2133

Wednesday, Aug. 27

Sidney (Breakfast), 7 a.m.

Holiday Inn

Contact: Glenna Phelps-Aurich, (308) 254-5851

Ogallala (Lunch), noon

Front Street

Contact: Brenda Ketcham, (308) 284-4066

Thursday, Aug. 28

North Platte (Breakfast), 7 a.m.

Holiday Inn Express

Contact: Kathy Swain, (308) 532-4966

York (Lunch), noon

Chances R

Contact: Todd Kirshenbaum, (402) 362-5531

Tuesday, Sept. 2

Beatrice (Lunch), noon

Aunt Mary's Center

Contact: Lora Young, (402) 223-2338

Wednesday, Sept. 3

Wahoo (Lunch), noon

Heritage Inn

Contact: Doug Watts, (402) 443-4001

Thursday, Sept. 4

Aurora (Lunch), noon

Bremer Center

Contact: Barb Ernst, (402) 694-6911

Monday, Sept. 8

O'Neill (Lunch), noon

The Blarney Stone

Contact: Makayla Oltjenbruns, (402) 336-2355

Tuesday, Sept. 9

Broken Bow (Breakfast), 8 a.m.

Bonfire Grill (509 S. 9th Ave.)

Contact: Donnis Bullock, (308) 872-5691

Wednesday, Sept. 10

Columbus (Breakfast) 7 a.m.

Columbus Chamber (753 33rd Ave.)

Contact: Sharyle Sands, (402) 564-2769

Fremont (Lunch), noon

Midland University (Private Dining Room)

Contact: Kyrsten Mottl, (402) 721-2641

Monday, Sept. 15

Gothenburg (Lunch), noon

Gothenburg Senior Center

Contact: Anne Anderson, (308) 537-3505

Tuesday, Sept. 16

Kearney (Breakfast), 8 a.m.

Kearney Chamber Conference Room

Contact: Marion McDermott, (308) 237-3101

Grand Island (Lunch), noon

Riverside Golf Club

Contact: Cindy Johnson, (308) 382-9210

Hastings, 5 p.m. (Social) and 6 p.m. (Dinner)

Pastime Lanes Family Fun Center

Contact: Tom Hastings, (402) 461-8400

Wednesday, Sept. 17

Holdrege (Lunch), noon

Holdrege Country Club

Contact: Carol Repstine, (308) 995-4444

Thursday, Sept. 18

Norfolk (Lunch), noon

First Choice Catering & Party Rental (1110 S. 9th St.)

Contact: Mark Zimmerer, (402) 371-4862

Tuesday, Sept. 23

Plattsmouth (Lunch), 11:30 a.m.

Plattsmouth State Bank

Contact: Tabitha Foster, (402) 296-6021

Thursday, Oct. 2

Sarpy County/Bellevue (Lunch), noon

TBA

Contact: Nisa Visty, (402) 339-3050

Friday, Oct. 3

Deshler (Lunch), noon

Rock Island Crossing

Contact: Chris Roth, (402) 365-7251

Monday, Oct. 6

Blair (Lunch), noon

Memorial Community Hospital (810 North 22nd St.)

Contact: Harriet Waite, (402) 533-4455

Wednesday, Oct. 15

Nebraska City (Lunch), noon

Eagles Club

Contact: Tim Pendrell (402) 873-6654

Thursday, Oct. 16

South Sioux City (Lunch), noon

Marina Inn

Contact: Lori Warner, (402) 494-1626

Thursday, Oct. 23

Omaha (Breakfast), 7:30 a.m.

DC Centre (11830 Stonegate Drive)

Contact: Christine Fortier, (402) 233-7146

Wednesday, Oct. 29

Lincoln (Breakfast), 7:30 a.m.

N-Club

Contact: Bruce Bohrer, (402) 436-2355

West Point (Lunch) noon

Pizza Ranch

Contact: Tina Biteghe Bi Ndong, (402) 372-2981

Monday, Nov. 24

Henderson (Lunch), noon

Dutch Kitchen

Contact: Kelsey Bergen, (402) 723-4228