

Telephone conference report on Tuesday, Feb. 2 to Imperial, Grant, and Palisade.

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

By the end of this week, the Legislature will be done with one third of their short 60-day session.

Senator Mark Christensen of Imperial told those participating in his Tuesday teleconference that the Natural Resources Committee would hear LB932 on Wednesday.

Christensen's bill would provide forgiveness of the \$8.7 million loan from the state that the NRDs received in 2008 to help pay farmers for the surface water they did not use to help get the state in compliance with Kansas in 2007.

If compliance is a state issue and the NRD revenue sources are unable to be used or taken away, then the NRDs should not be obligated to repay the money, Christensen said in his weekly "Senator's Letter Back Home."

"This is definitely going to be a hard bill to try to accomplish in low economic times," said Christensen. "We're fighting a state issue here."

Christensen's LB893 bill was heard in the Revenue Committee last Thursday.

The bill, modeled after last year's LB681, is another attempt to provide an additional process to

get unconstitutional taxes back to the taxpayers in the district and for similar situations in the future.

Christensen said several senators on the committee are non-supportive of the bill so he thinks the chances of it advancing are unclear, but added, "They held the bill, they didn't kill it this time."

He would like to see it ruled on quickly to see if it's dead or can make it to the floor.

□ "Last year was total frustration," said the senator. "This year there was very good discussion."

□ Also coming up this week is a hearing of the Judiciary Committee on LB889 and LB1033.

□ B889 seeks to strengthen and clarify the self-defense laws by putting in place the Castle Doctrine.

Castle Doctrine derives from English Common Law, and affirms for the lawful occupants of a dwelling the right to use force, up to and including deadly force, to protect against attack. Depending on state law, Castle Doctrine generally applies to a person only if they have a "reasonable fear of imminent peril of death or great bodily harm" to themselves or to others.

Christensen said there has not been a lot of opposition on the bill.

"It seemed to go over so well it's scary, because it's a controversial bill," he said.

LB 1033 would clean up the concealed carry bill. The committee pretty much agrees to send this bill forward, said Christensen. He expects both LB889 and LB1033 to reach opposition in Omaha. "They tend to fight any pro-gun bill."

What Christensen calls the “deer-killing bill” (LB836) probably has a chance of getting out of committee with some modification.

The bill would allow landowners to kill deer that are causing destruction to their property.

Modifying the bill to eliminate a \$25 tax credit for each animal shot for destruction, along with cutting out the spotlighting provision will most likely move the bill forward.

The deer population in the state is so high that a multitude of the wildlife are being hit and killed in accidents each day.

Constituents with questions, comments or concerns may contact Christensen at 402-471-2805.

Other information is also available at his legislative website:
<http://news.legislature.ne.gov/dist44/>

SENATOR MARK CHRISTENSEN *holds a weekly teleconference at 7 a.m. MT each Tuesday with sites at the Imperial Republican, Midwest Electric in Grant and Southwest Public Power in Palisade. The teleconferences are open to the public and Christensen encourages constituent participation.*