

Telephone conference report on Tuesday, Feb 23, to Imperial, Grant, Palisade.

By Jan Rahn

Managing Editor

With this week being set aside for bill debate, Sen. Mark Christensen was ready to join in following his weekly teleconference Tuesday morning.

First on the agenda for debate was LB689 (Change water resources cash fund, ethanol production incentive cash fund, and ethanol excise tax provisions) introduced by Sen. Langemeier.

Also up for debate Tuesday was LB764 to change provisions relating to integrated management plans under the Nebraska Ground Water Management and Protection Act. The bill, introduced by Sen. Deb Fischer, is one Christensen is supportive of.

“I think it’s a good thing,” he said.

LB951 to change provisions relating to early voting was also up for debate.

Christensen is in favor of Sen. Avery’s bill if it’s limited to military personnel being able to vote. However, he is concerned about the voting procedure being done via fax or through the internet by just anyone who chooses to live abroad and is not involved with the military.

Priority Bills

Last Friday was the deadline to make priority designations on bills, said Christensen.

He received priority designation on three of his bills and said he has a good chance of getting a portion of a fourth bill amended into another priority bill.

Sharing the information on his bills via his weekly “Letter Back Home” Christensen outlined each of them as follows:

- *LB 862*: First, the Natural Resources Committee as their second committee priority bill designated Legislative Bill 862, which is his bill that would make changes to the existing language regarding the current occupation tax on the activity of irrigation.

“I am very grateful to the Natural Resources Committee for their commitment to this important issue in our river basin,” said Christensen. “I believe we can move ahead with this issue and provide a funding source for NRDs to engage in river flow enhancement and groundwater recharge projects to keep our agricultural economies healthy and strong.”

- *LB 443*: Second is Christensen’s senator priority bill, LB 443.

He introduced the bill in the 2009 session, which carried over to the 2010 session. It is designed to lessen the negative secondary effects, such as blight and increased crime among others, to communities and neighborhoods from sexually oriented businesses such as strip clubs, adult bookstores, adult movie and video stores, etc.

It would provide a uniform minimum bar of regulation across the state to protect women and children from exploitation and unwanted influences from such places.

“LB 443 is stalled in the General Affairs Committee, so if this is something that is important to

you, I would encourage you to contact the committee,” said Christensen.

- *LB1051*: Third, the Speaker designated Christensen’s bill LB 1051 as one of his 25 Speaker Priority Bills.

LB 1051 makes needed changes to the Abstracters Act. The bill changes the renewals for Certificates of Authority from an annual to a biannual renewal, harmonizing with the rest of the act.

It also provides for the roster of abstracters to bill published on a biannual basis instead of an annual. These changes should provide some small savings in administration costs and publishing costs.

“Finally, neither of my bills dealing with self-defense or concealed carry changes, LB 889 (Castle Law) or LB 1033 was prioritized,” said Christensen. “However, there is a chance that I will be able to get a provision from LB 889 into LB 817, prioritized by Sen. Fulton.

LB 817 would allow a Concealed Handgun Permit holder to use such permit as a permit to purchase.

“I am working to get the provision from LB 889 that would abolish the civil remedy for a criminal who was injured by a homeowner defending himself or family,” said Christensen. “If someone is justified in using force to defend themselves or others, they should not have to deal with a civil lawsuit from the person against whom they used force.”

Christensen invites anyone with questions, comments, or concerns regarding these bills or any issue to call him at his office at 402-471-2805 or for more information view his legislative website at <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.