



THE NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE



The Nebraska Legislature

History

The Unique Unicameral

The Legislative Process

How a Bill becomes a Law

Legislative Responsibilities

Tax & Spend

Politics & Money

Why should you get involved?

Senators

Do you know your senator?

Questions?

Approval Of Unicameral Plan Represents Fruition Of Another Norris Fight

Nebraska Is Only State To Adopt One House Body; Veteran Senator Fought Proposal Through Almost Single Handed.

Approval of the Norris' unicameral legislature proposal at the hands of Nebraska's electors in the general election Tuesday placed Nebraska in a unique class—that of being the only state in the union to have a single chambered law making body.

The achievement also proved that Senator George W. Norris, independent republican whom Nebraska has sent to sit in the United States senate since 1913, had taken another long step in his cause to reform American legislative practices. It was Senator Norris who almost single-handedly engaged in a spirited moral combat with Speaker Joe Cannon, which only ended when the speaker was deprived of much of his power, and it was the same white-haired liberal who battled for more than 10 years to secure the passage and maintenance approved by the states of his "game duck" amendment to the federal constitution.

Norris himself wrote the amendment which Nebraskans approved in their balloting Tuesday.



GEORGE W. NORRIS.

History of the Nebraska Unicameral Legislature

George W. Norris

Commonly thought of as the father of the Nebraska Unicameral.

Norris was born in Ohio and moved to Nebraska in 1885.

He served as a US Congressman from 1903 – 1913 and as US Senator from 1913 – 1943.

In the early 1930's Norris began campaigning around Nebraska to promote a Unicameral Legislature. Voters approved the Constitutional Amendment in 1934 and it was implemented in 1937.

Nebraska's Unicameral is unique

One House

Nonpartisan

No Traditional Leadership

49 Senators



Non-Partisan?

17 non-partisan Democrats and 32 non-partisan Republicans

Term-Limited

Can serve two four-year terms. Can come back after a term break.

Leadership

Who holds the power?

Committee Assignments

Staff



Making Law is Like Making Sausage

Each Legislative Session is a 2-year affair

Long Session – 90 Legislative Days

Primary Budget Session

Short Session – 60 Legislative Days

Priorities are Everything!

Senator

Committee

Speaker

Major Proposals

Bills Carry-Over to Short Session

The Interim – Does Anything Happen?

Interim Study Resolutions

How a Bill becomes a Law (or doesn't)



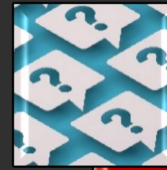
Introduction

- New Ideas!
- First Ten Days of Session
- No Limit on Number of Bills



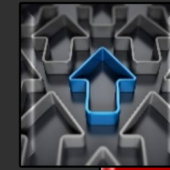
Public Hearing

- Bill Assigned to Committee
- 7-day notice
- Live Testimony or written Comments



Committee Vote

- Vote taken during Executive Session
- Advance
- Amend
- Kill



General File

- Debate
- Adopt Amendments
- Amend
- Advance
- IPP

- What is E&R?

How a Bill becomes a Law (or doesn't)



Select File

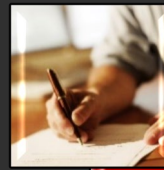
- Debate
- Amend
- Advance
- IPP

- E&R
- Voice Vote



Final Reading

- Magic Number
- Reading of the Bill
- Pass
- Fail to Pass



Governor Action

- Approve
- Allow to become law without approval
- Veto
- Line-item Veto



Enaction

- Veto Override
- Emergency Clause
- Specific Active Date
- General Active Date

TAXES

“There is no such thing as a good tax.”
- Winston Churchill

“Taxes are what we pay for a civilized society.”
- Oliver Wendell Holmes, JR.

State Tax Revenue

Sales & Use Tax

Individual Income Tax

Corporate Income Tax

Miscellaneous Receipts

Excise taxes, financial institutions tax, insurance premiums tax, and organization and qualification fees

Federal Covid 19 Relief

How does this anomaly effect future budgets?

SPENDING

The following are the top five recipients:

TEEOSA / K-12 Education (20%)

Medicaid (20%)

University & State Colleges (14%)

Health & Human Services Operations (5.7%)

Correctional Services (5.7%)

How much is Nebraska's Annual Budget?

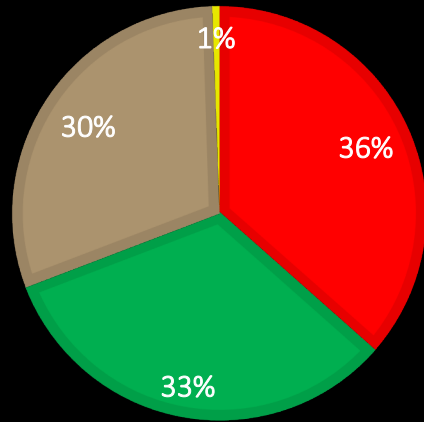
Who decides how much there is to spend?

Legislative Responsibilities
What do they HAVE to do?

Answer: The BUDGET = Taxes & Spending

NEBRASKA BUDGET MAJOR CATEGORIES

■ Agency Operations ■ Aid to Individuals
■ Aid to Local Government ■ Construction



Agency Operations

36.5% = \$1,872,192,160

Aid to Individuals

32.7% = \$1,676,849,756

Aid to Local Government

30.3% = \$1,551,708,727

Capital Construction

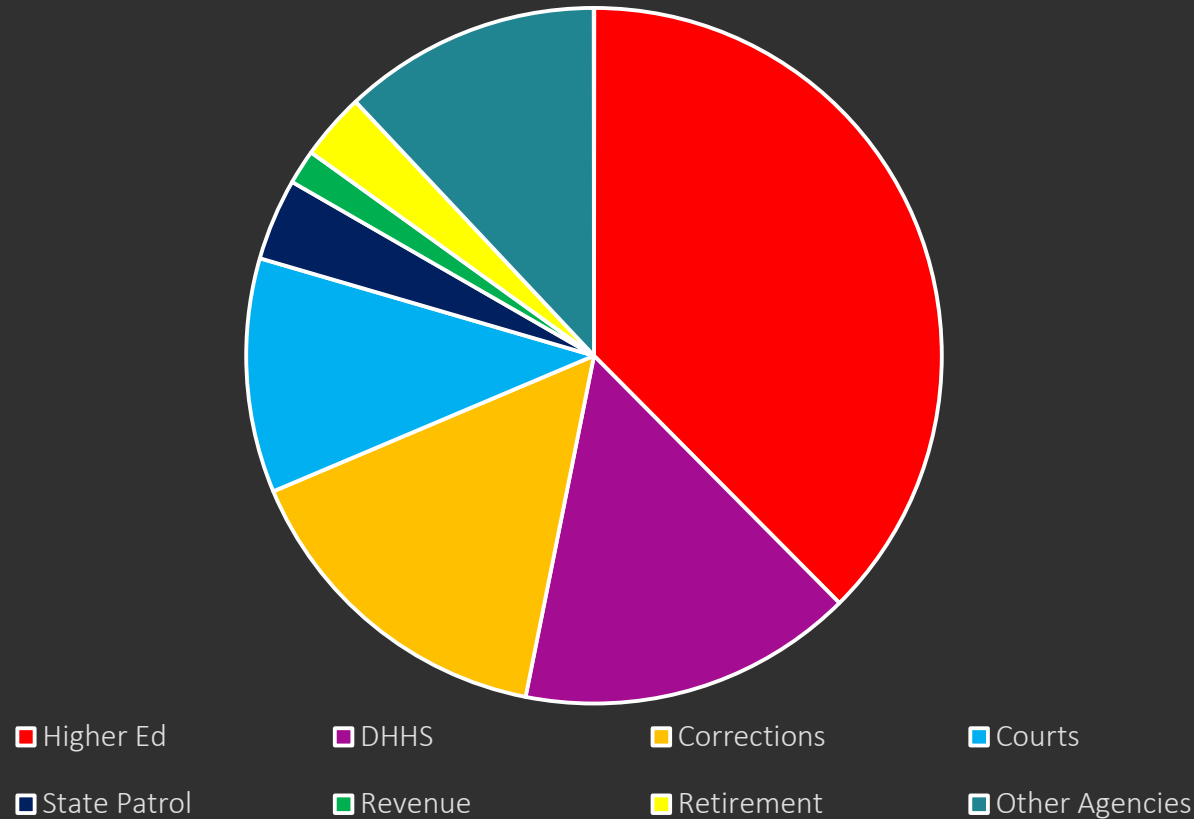
.5% = \$23,921,610

80% is to cover additional costs to complete projects approved earlier.

Nebraska FY 2022-23 Budget Snapshot

Nebraska FY 2022-23 Budget Snapshot

Nebraska Agency Operations

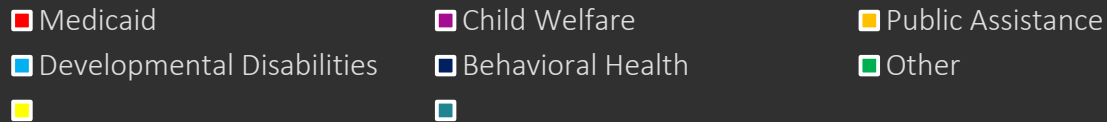
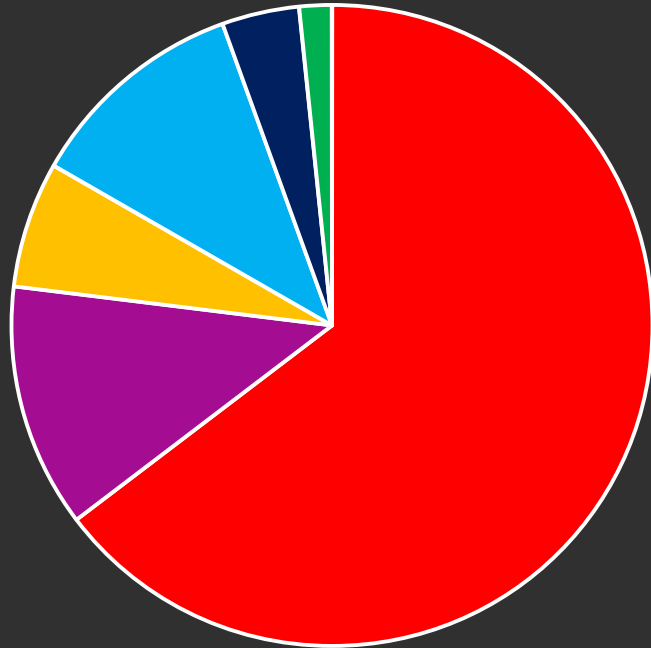


There are 86 different agencies in Nebraska, 47 of them are funded by the state general fund, and seven of them account for 88% of state operations.

Those include:

- University and State Colleges
- DHHS
- Corrections
- Courts
- State Patrol
- Revenue
- Retirement
- **Major cost drivers include salaries, health insurance and other benefits.**
 - 20% to 30% increases over one year.
- **Corrections may soon cost as much as education when you include capital construction and the cost of employing staff for new facilities.**

Nebraska Aid to Individuals

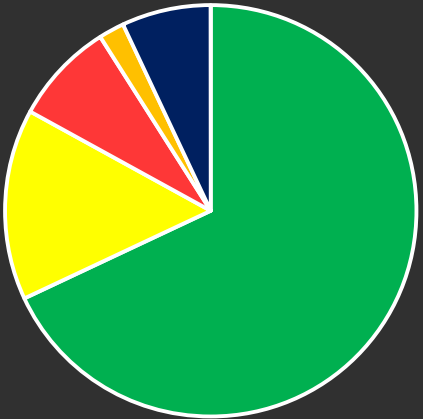


Nebraska FY 2022-23 Budget Snapshot

- **Total Aid to individuals in FY2022-2023 is \$186 million and included the single largest increase in the budget**
- **Provider rate increases ballooned from \$28 million in FY21-22 to \$147 million in FY22-23**
 - In FY21-22 the state recognized a \$49.3 million savings due to increase in Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) and elimination of Health Insurance Provider Fees.
 - Other programs were cut, or funding shifted to other source;
 - *Child Welfare*
 - *Behavioral Health*
 - *Developmental Disabilities*
 - Potential for difficulties in out biennium funding

Nebraska FY 2022-23 Budget Snapshot

Nebraska Aid to Local Governments



- TEEOSA
- Special Education
- Homestead Exemption
- Other
- Community Colleges

Property Tax Relief?

Aid to entities that have the authority to levy property tax:

- Cities
- Counties
- School Districts
- Community Colleges
- NRD's
- ESU's

Although this category accounts for 30% of the budget, its costs have increased at the slowest rate over the past 20 years.

What will this category look like if we continue to cut income and property taxes?



Income, Sales & Property Taxes

The Three-Legged Stool

a state should have a balanced tax policy -
tax revenue should be split evenly among income, sales, and property taxes.

- In FY 21-22 Nebraska received \$4 billion in Income Taxes, \$2.2 billion in Sales & Use Taxes, and \$250 million in misc. receipts.
- In 2021 Local taxing entities levied \$4.7 billion in Property Taxes. (Levied = Paid?)

\$4 - \$2.5 - \$4.7



Nebraska's Piggy Bank aka The Cash Reserve Fund

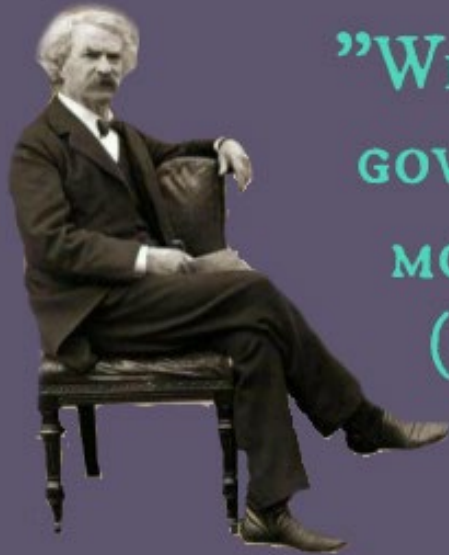
Created to cover cash flow needs of the state, also a place to store revenue received by the state in excess of the "certified forecast" used once the budget is finalized.

Started in 1983 with just over \$37 million, the fund has dropped as low as \$17 million and now sits at a record high of \$1.7 billion.

In 2022 the Legislature approved transfers out of the Cash Reserve of more than \$525 million.

What is the Future of the Cash Reserve Fund?

Politics & Money – Can you buy influence?



”WE HAVE THE BEST
GOVERNMENT THAT
MONEY CAN BUY”
(MARK TWAIN)

How much does a Campaign for
Legislature cost?

Are there contribution limits in
Nebraska?

The role of Political Action Committees

Should you contribute?

Why Should You Get Involved?



“The Salvation
of the State
is the Watchfulness
in the Citizen”

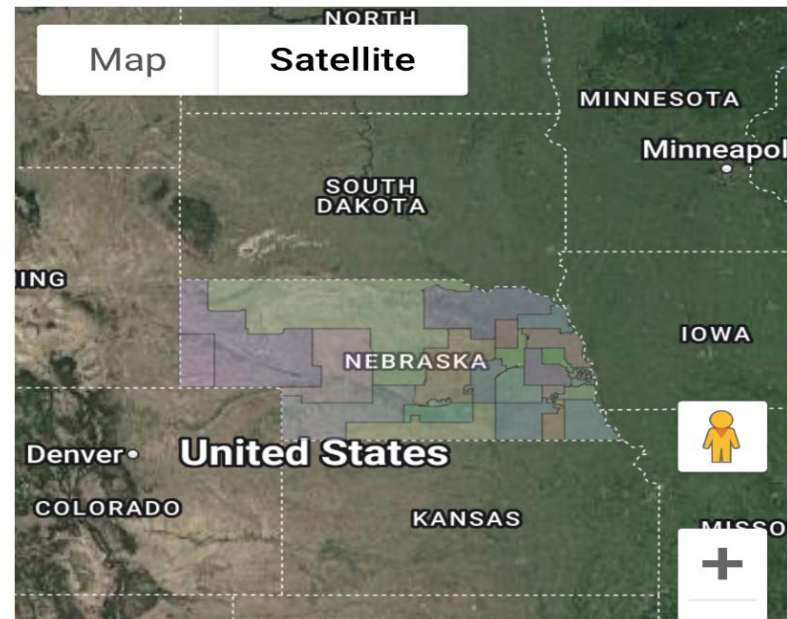
NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

*The official site of the
Nebraska Unicameral Legislature*

 MENU

Find your Senator and District

Enter Street Address, City State Zip



Do You Know Your Senator?

Nebraskalegislature.gov

Click "MENU"

Click "Senators"

Click "Find your Senator"

Questions?

