



**Hundredth Legislature - First Session - 2007
Committee Statement
LB 622**

Hearing Date: February 1, 2007

Committee On: Government, Military and Veterans Affairs

Introducer(s): (Pirsch)

Title: Require training courses in public records and the Open Meetings Act for all members of a public body, public officers, and public employees

Roll Call Vote – Final Committee Action:

- Advanced to General File
 - X Advanced to General File with Amendments
 - Indefinitely Postponed
-

Vote Results:

- 8 Yes Senators Adams, Aguilar, Avery, Friend, Karpisek, Mines, Pahls, Rogert
 - 0 No
 - 0 Present, not voting
 - 0 Absent
-

Proponents:

Senator Pete Pirsch
Dale Comer
John Bonaiuto
Laura Krebsbach
Larry Dix
Lynn Moorer
Allen Beermann
Lynn Rex
Tami Schendt
Alan Peterson
Jack Gould

Representing:

Introducer
Nebraska Department of Justice
Nebraska Association of School Boards
Great Plains Environmental Law Center
Nebraska Association of County Officials
Eastern Nebraskans Against Chemical Trespass
Nebraska Press Association
League of Nebraska Municipalities
Nebraska County Attorneys Association
Media of Nebraska
Common Cause Nebraska

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 622 requires training courses for members of a public body, public officers, and public employees on the issue of public records and open meetings no later than one year after taking the oath of office or assuming his or her duties as a member of the public body or agency.

The Department of Justice may provide the training and is required to approve any training course offered by a governmental agency or other entity. The Attorney General will make at least one training course available at no cost. The bill outlines what is included in the training. Any governmental agency or entity providing the training course will provide a certificate of completion to those completing the course.

For the open meetings training, the failure of any member of a public body to complete such training will not affect the validity of any action taken by the public body and is not a violation of the Open Meetings Act.

For the public records training, a public officer may designate a public records coordinator to complete the training requirements for the public officer, if the coordinator is primarily responsible for administering the responsibilities of the public officer or his or her governmental agency.

The Attorney General may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the provisions in the bill.

The bill becomes operative on January 1, 2008.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

The committee amendment requires current members of a public body to complete the training on the Open Meetings Act no later than one year after the operative date of this act. Similarly, any current public officer or public employee is required to complete training on the public records statutes no later than one year after the operative date of this act.

Additionally, the committee amendment provides that completion of the required training course on either the Open Meetings Act or the public record statutes will satisfy the obligations of this act for any current or future service.

Senator Ray Aguilar, Chairperson