



Hundredth Legislature - Second Session - 2008
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 1049

Chairperson: LeRoy Louden
Committee: Natural Resources
Date of Hearing: February 20, 2008

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 1049 makes essential and fundamental reforms to the qualifications and terms of Game and Parks Commissioners:

Currently, it is not uncommon for potential appointees to change their party affiliation to qualify for the commission prior to appointment. LB 1049 provides an effective remedy to this practice ensuring the intent of the law is actually carried out. This would lead to better opportunities for representation of all Nebraskans on the commission as was intended.

LB 1049 changes the length of a commissioner's term from five year terms to four year terms. Four year terms are consistent with many other elected and appointed offices in the state. It would also ensure that the Governor would appoint all members of the commission during their term.

The Governor, State Treasurer, and Members of the Nebraska Legislature among others are eligible for reelection to an additional term under term limits for their offices. Under LB 1049, Game and Parks Commissioners would be eligible for reappointment to one consecutive term; making their position consistent with the same opportunities as the above mentioned offices. It would however place a two term "lifetime" term limit, regardless how the terms were served, on all commissioners after the effective date of the act. This provision would expand the possible appointment to more Nebraskans as commissioners could not continue to be reappointed beyond two terms. These provisions coupled together provide for better accountability via institutional knowledge of the commission as well as ensuring there are opportunities for more Nebraskans to serve on this commission.

Members of the Game and Parks Commission must be equipped and enabled to set appropriate policy for the commission in fulfilling their duties under law. It is imperative that the natural resources of our state, including wildlife and state parks, have appropriate oversight and leadership from the members of the commission and that they are capable of directing the administration and staff of this vital commission.

LB 1049 makes major improvements in accomplishing this goal.

Principal Introducer:

Senator Philip Erdman