

ONE HUNDRED FIFTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION - 2017
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB339

Hearing Date: Monday January 30, 2017
Committee On: Transportation and Telecommunications
Introducer: Friesen
One Liner: Merge the Department of Aeronautics into the Department of Roads and rename as the Department of Transportation

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:
Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye: 8 Senators Bostelman, Briese, Friesen, Geist, Hilgers, Hughes, Murante, Smith
Nay:
Absent:
Present Not Voting:

Verbal Testimony:

Proponents:

Senator Curt Friesen
Kyle Schneewis
Ronnie Mitchell
Richard Schmeling
Lucas Billesbach

Julie Harris
Matthew Rogue
David Haring

Opponents:

Jared Esselman
Sandi Decker

Neutral:

James Methe
Diane Hofer
Rodney Storm

Representing:

District 34
Nebraska Department of Roads
Nebraska Department of Aeronautics
Citizens for Improved Transit; ProRail Nebraska Inc.
American Council of Engineering Companies of Nebraska
Nebraska Bicycling Alliance
ProRail Nebraska
Lincoln Airport Authority

Representing:

Nebraska Pilots
Fairbury Airport

Representing:

Self
Self
City of Blair/Blair Airport Authority

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 339 would create the Nebraska Department of Transportation which shall consist of the merged Department of Aeronautics and the Department of Roads.

All references to the Department of Roads are changed to the Department of Transportation and the Department of Aeronautics is established as a division within the new Department of Transportation.

The Director-State Engineer for the Department of Roads shall become the Director-State Engineer for the Department of Transportation. The Director of Aeronautics is currently appointed by the Governor. LB 339 provides that the Director of Aeronautics is appointed by the Director-State Engineer of the Department of Transportation.

The bill retains the Nebraska Aeronautics Commission which consists of five members appointed by the Governor. The Commission is to advise the Director-State Engineer regarding the appointment as well as the performance of the Director of Aeronautics.

Sections 50 through 54 are transition sections for the Division of Aeronautics relating to employment, contractual obligations of the division, litigation, real and personal property and transfer of funds from the Department of Aeronautics to the Department of Transportation.

The bill would be operative January 1, 2018.

Explanation of amendments:

The Committee considered and adopted an amendment which accomplishes the following:

- 1) language is added clarifying that the Director of the Division of Aeronautics shall report directly to the Director-State Engineer of the Department of Transportation;
- 2) Clarifies that in addition to advising the Director-State Engineer of the Department of Transportation regarding the appointment of, and the on-going performance of the Director of the Aeronautics Division, the State Aeronautics Commission shall also advise the Governor on the general status and state of aviation in Nebraska;
- 3) Provides that funds received by the Division of Aeronautics for the hourly lease of state aircraft that are set aside into preventative maintenance reserves shall only be used for that purpose;
- 4) Corrects a drafting error on page 35, lines 5 & 6; and
- 5) Section 54 of the bill is amended. This section is transition language and clarifies the transfer of appropriations from the Department of Aeronautics to the Department of Transportation and the payment of valid encumbrances after the effective date of the bill.

Curt Friesen, Chairperson