



We are heading into the final weeks of the 2024 legislative session. We've completed six of the nine weeks set aside to work on our State's business. One of the things I've come to appreciate about the legislative process in South Dakota is how open, transparent, and accessible to the public. As I've had an opportunity to learn more about how other states govern, I've learned our State is very rare. In South Dakota, every bill filed gets a hearing. There are no backdoor deals. In committee, both views, for and against the bill, are heard - either in person, in writing, or by video. That is incredibly valuable to me when it comes time to decide on a particular bill.

My experience as a healthcare provider in a smaller community has been invaluable as we work in the legislature to keep South Dakota physically and economically healthy. This week, the Governor signed SB 87 into law, a bill I sponsored to streamline government red tape and strengthen the ability of seven non-physician healthcare professions to be involved in their licensure and practice. The new law lets our allied healthcare professionals know they are valued for their service to South Dakota.

Another bill I've mentioned, HB1074, which expands the eligibility to practice as a dental hygienist and makes getting routine care closer to home more accessible, was also signed into law by the Governor.

Even with our open system, some procedures can be puzzling if you are unfamiliar with the rules. For example, this past week, four bills in the Senate and four in the House that didn't have much substance were passed. Bills with agreeable titles such as "an act to improve agriculture in South Dakota." There were also bills to improve education, public safety, and the workforce. These unusual bills are what the leaders call vehicle bills and are a tool to work within the legislature's rules. Our rules set a deadline for bills to be introduced and for when each branch of the legislature must complete action on a bill and send it to the other body. Cross-Over

Day, the last day bills must be passed by the body in which they were introduced, is February 21, the 27th day of the legislature.

The leaders in both houses each introduced four "vehicle" bills to reserve if an issue arises that needs to be dealt with after the bill introduction deadline and Cross-Over Day.

Individual members sometimes use a similar procedure with a uniquely South Dakota name, "hoghouse." According to the Legislative Research Council, hoghouse is "a procedure used in the Legislature whereby a committee or a member from the floor will move to strike everything after the enacting clause of a bill and insert in lieu thereof the substance of an entirely new bill." In other words, the bill's original content is deleted and replaced with new content.

If you have a student interested in government, Governor Noem has announced her office is now accepting applications for summer interns. The deadline is March 15, 2024. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/governornoeminterns>

As your representative in Pierre, your opinions, questions, and concerns about our State's business are very important to me.

Because of the volume of emails legislators receive, I prioritize emails from District 17 residents. You can help out by including where you live in your email. Contact me at Sydney.Davis@sdlegislature.gov.