



Thank you to everyone participating in the Legislative Coffee in Vermillion last week. As I said during the event, not all districts have a forum like ours, especially including the live streaming, making it possible for so many to participate; we consider ourselves very fortunate. The Vermillion Area Chamber and Development Company provides an excellent service in putting together this forum. Also, thank you to the City of Vermillion for letting us use City Hall, a great location. I appreciate this opportunity to meet with folks during the session.

We have two very full weeks left of the session. There is a lot of activity, and I anticipate several long days as we work to finish our business. During last week's forum, the question was asked whether our 38-day legislative session was long enough to complete the work. One of the best things about South Dakota's government is our "citizen-legislature," which means we only serve in Pierre for a short time and can live our lives among our friends and neighbors. Being at home with the people we serve gives the citizens of South Dakota a better result because we are more responsive to the people we are elected to serve. It also means we have legislators that can bring a wide variety of real-world experience to the business of State government, providing great value and wisdom for the decisions we make on a wide range of issues on behalf of the State.

Following up on the issue I shared with you last week, the Governor has signed into law HB1041. This means effect July 1, 2023, when our new laws take effect, it won't be illegal to possess fentanyl test strips. Professors at the University of South Dakota were essential in raising awareness of this opportunity to battle overdose deaths linked to fentanyl.

This past week, the Senate passed HB1090, which adds essential protections for agricultural producers by enhancing our State's agriculture nuisance laws.

Around the country, there has been an increase in nuisance claims on ag operations, many filed by folks who don't even live near the site. HB1090 makes it so people can only file a nuisance claim if they own property within a mile of the ag operation. Agriculture drives our economy and fuels development in rural South Dakota. In this legislature, we must do everything we can to protect this way of life. HB1090 has passed both the House and the Senate.

Last week I testified before the Joint Committee on Appropriations on HB1079, a bill that would provide funds to the Department of Health to give grants to support mental health and suicide prevention programs. I'm a prime sponsor of this bill. The goal is to support our State's suicide prevention strategy, especially for youth and young adults. This is an opportunity to do more to help address this mental health care crisis. The Committee passed the bill, and action should be taken in the next few days by the full House.

I had previously shared about the defeat of HB1169, which would clarify what the life and health of the mother meant. Negotiations continue with pro-life groups to determine that language to protect the lives of mothers and babies.

I depend on your opinions, questions, and concerns about our State's business.

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.