

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

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### FEDERAL

#### Super Tuesday Results

Former Vice President Joe Biden was the clear winner on Super Tuesday, racking in the following 10 states- Alabama, Arkansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Virginia and Texas. Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders won his home state along with California, Colorado and Utah. Former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg won the American Samoa before he and Senator Elizabeth Warren from Massachusetts joined the long list of candidates that dropped out of the Democratic Presidential race. Hawaii's Rep. Tulsi Gabbard remains in the race alongside Biden and Sanders.

Presidential Candidates	Dropped Out
Joe Biden, former vice president	Sen. Amy Klobuchar (Minn.)
Sen. Bernie Sanders (Vermont)	Pete Buttigieg, former mayor of South Bend, Ind.
Rep. Tulsi Gabbard (Hawaii)	Tom Steyer, former hedge fund executive
President Donald Trump	Deval Patrick, former governor of Mass.
William Weld, former governor of Mass.	Andrew Yang, former tech executive
	Sen. Michael Bennet (Colorado)
	John Delaney, former congressman from Maryland
	Sen. Cory Booker (NJ)
	Marianne Williamson, self-help author
	Julian Castro, former housing secretary
	Sen. Kamala Harris (Calif.)
	Steve Bullock, governor of Montana
	Joe Sestak, former congressman from Penn.
	Wayne Messam, mayor of Miramar, Fl.
	Beto O'Rourke, former congressman from Texas
	Rep. Tim Ryan (Ohio)
	Bill de Blasio, mayor of NYC
	Sen. Kristen Gillibrand (NY)
	Rep. Seth Moulton (Mass.)
	Jay Inslee, governor of Washington State
	John Hickenlooper, former governor of Colorado
	Rep. Eric Swalwell (Calif.)
	Richard Ojeda, former WV state senator
	Joe Walsh, radio host
	Mark Sanford, former congressman from SC
	Michael Bloomberg, former mayor of NYC
	Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.)

#### Congress

Following a number of hearings on the Hill related to emergency preparedness and response to a COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S., Congress swiftly advanced emergency funding.

The \$8.3 billion funding package includes the following provisions:

- \$3 billion for research and development of vaccines and diagnostics;

- \$2.2 billion in public health funding for prevention, preparedness and response;
  - \$950 million of which to support state and local health agencies.
- \$1 billion for pharmaceuticals and medical supplies to support healthcare preparedness and Community Health Centers and to improve medical surge capacity;
- \$435 million to support health systems overseas to prevent, prepare and response to coronavirus;
- \$300 million available to the greater public to ensure all Americans have access to a vaccine, regardless of their ability to pay;
- \$61 million for FDA to facilitate the development and review of medical countermeasures, devices, therapies and vaccines, and to help mitigate the potential supply chain interruptions;
- \$7 billion in low-interest loans to affected small businesses;
- Repayment of \$136 million that had been transferred by HHS for the response.

While Congress will continue to prioritize the coronavirus outbreak, they did last week manage to advance [H.R. 2339](#), *The Protecting American Lungs and Reversing the Youth Tobacco Epidemic Act of 2020*. The bill includes a number of provisions aimed at curbing youth use of tobacco and e-cigarettes, including a ban on all flavored tobacco and e-cigarette products—including menthol cigarettes—a prohibition of online sales of e-cigarettes, restrictions on e-cigarette advertising, and a prohibition on marketing of tobacco products to individuals under 21. It is unclear if and when the Senate will take up the legislation. However, it is possible we could see several of these provisions included in future legislative efforts, particularly as policymakers look towards a May package.

#### Federal hearings this week:

- [Hearing](#) in the House Appropriations Committee- “*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Budget Request for FY 2021.*” Tuesday, March 10 at 9:00am (CST).
- [Hearing](#) in the Committee on Small Business- “*The Impact of Coronavirus on America’s Small Businesses.*” Tuesday, March 10 at 10:30am (CST).
- [Hearing](#) in the Committee on Homeland Security- “*Community Perspectives on Coronavirus Preparedness and Response.*” Tuesday, March 10 at 1:00pm (CST).
- [Hearing](#) in Committee on Oversight and Reform- “*Coronavirus Preparedness and Response.*” Tuesday, March 10 at 8:30am.
- [Hearing](#) in House Education & Labor Committee- “*The Healthy Families Act (H.R. 1784): Examining a Plan to Secure Paid Sick Leave for U.S. Workers.*” Wednesday, March 11 at 1:00pm (CST).
- [Hearing](#) in the Ways & Means Committee- “*Combating Childhood Poverty in America.*” Wednesday, March 11 at 1:00pm (CST).
- [Hearing](#) in Homeland Security- “*Confronting the Coronavirus: The Federal Response.*” Wednesday, March 11 at 1:00pm (CST).

## **STATE**

### ***Nebraska Legislature***

Last week marked the first week of full day debate on the 2020 priority bills this session and dozens of bills advanced to the next round of debate- newborn screening for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA), liability exclusions for an endangered child left in a hot vehicle, asynchronous telehealth coverage for dermatology, and surprise medical billing to name a few.

Lawmakers spent the greater part of Thursday morning debating a confirmation report for former state Senator John Kuehn, a veterinarian who is opposed to medical marijuana, to the Nebraska health board. This 17-member board advises the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Those state senators that are members of the group Nebraskans for Medical Marijuana are working to gain 120,000 signatures to place the decision to allow medical marijuana use in Nebraska on the November ballot. The concerns mentioned in the body were whether Kuehn could implement medical marijuana if the voters approved. Other issues likely to be decided by Nebraskans on the November ballot- massive property tax relief, authorize casino gambling at horse tracks, and the creation of an independent citizen’s redistricting commission to attempt a nonpartisan oversight committee to respond to the results of the 2020 census.

This week, the Appropriations Committee will advance the 2020 budget bills to the floor- debate scheduled for Thursday, March 12. It is also expected that the Revenue Committee will attempt an up and down vote on LB974, the committee’s

priority bill to provide property tax relief by recalculating the school aid formula. Chairwoman of Revenue Committee Lou Ann Linehan (R-Dist. 39, Elkhorn) has routinely said she has 32 ½ votes, where 33 are needed to overcome a filibuster or Governor veto. Until a decision on property taxes has been made, the business incentives bill LB720 will not be scheduled for debate on Select File.

Finally, last week was the final week for anyone to enter their name for a legislative seat. Children's is preparing a document of all candidates for legislature ahead of the May 12 primary. According to the Secretary of State webpage, only four senators seeking reelection are unopposed- Senators Tom Breise (R-Dist. 41, Albion), Steve Erdman (R-Dist. 47, Bayard), Steve Halloran (R-Dist. 33, Hastings) and Justin Wayne (D-Dist.13, Omaha). There will be a minimum of six new state senators due to term-limits.

If you would like to follow along during session, visit [www.nebraskalegislature.gov](http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov) and livestream debate or public hearings on the NETV app at the bottom of the screen.

**Key Dates:**

Monday, March 9	Nebraska Chamber Evening with State Legislators
Tuesday, March 10	Nebraska Hospital Association (NHA) Advocacy Day & Luncheon
Wednesday, March 11	Democratic Party's Salute to Senators Annual Dinner at The Graduate in Lincoln
March 18 – April 8	Late Night Sessions
Thursday, April 23	Last Day of the 106 <sup>th</sup> Legislative Session-Second Session
Tuesday, May 12	Primary Election Day
Tuesday, November 3	General Election Day

(Sources: CHA, OWH, LJS, NY Times, Nebraska Chamber, house.gov, senate.gov, Nebraskalegislature.gov, Peetz & Co.)