

Tax Modernization Committee to hold public hearings across state

Written by Wauneta Breeze
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By Sheri Hink-Wagner

The Wauneta Breeze

Last Friday, Sept. 6, State Senator Galen Hadley, Chair of the Tax Modernization Committee released an agenda for public hearings on tax reform the committee will hold during September and October.

The Committee was created in the past legislative session by Legislative Resolution 155, which requires the Committee to hold five public hearings across the state.

The public hearing closest to Chase County will be held in North Platte at Mid Plains Community College on Tuesday, Sept. 24 from 1:30-4:30 p.m. CT.

Other public hearings will be held in Scottsbluff, Norfolk, Omaha and Lincoln between Sept. 23 and Oct. 18.

LR 155 requires the Committee to issue a report by mid-December including recommendations for any changes, if deemed necessary, to Nebraska's tax system.

The Committee reports that it has held three public Working Meetings and two Executive Meetings over the past several months and that the purpose of the meetings were to provide

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committee members with background information and an overview of the current tax system.

The meetings were also reported to have included analysis of the tax system by national experts on tax policy, economics and tax reform initiatives.

After these meetings and discussions the Committee has identified tax issues and potential options that could be used to address Nebraska's tax issues.

The issues and options are divided into three categories—property tax, individual and corporate income tax and sales and use taxes.

Their press release stressed that the issues and options below are not recommendations by the Committee, instead they are designed to generate public comment.

The Committee stated these issues were identified after three months of study where they were found to be the most frequent issues that arose from their discussions.

The Committee states one of its goals is to make their review in a “revenue-neutral manner,” meaning if one area of taxes were reduced, they would need to identify where the money would come from to replace the tax income.

Committee members encourage citizens to attend the public hearings to discuss problems to our current tax situation as well as to offer solutions to the problems.

See the print edition of this week's Breeze for tables that provide a summary of the issues and options in each of the categories as identified by the committee.

In their press release, the Committee stated they would welcome public comment on the issues

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and options as well as other tax issues the public would like to include in the discussion.

The hearings will be recorded and transcribed but will not be broadcast or live streamed.

More information can be found at the Committee's website at www.leg.ne.gov/tmc.