

Busy Week for Heidemann, Appropriations Committee

The Appropriations Committee of the Nebraska Legislature kept busy last week. Committee Chairman, Senator Lavon Heidemann of Elk Creek says the committee heard nearly seven hours of testimony last Monday and Tuesday on a bill meant to prevent cuts to the state's Medicaid program.

Heidemann says health care providers and advocates for disabled Nebraskans urged the committee to restore cuts made last year and opposed reductions proposed in the coming year. The cuts were outlined in a letter from the Director of the Department of Health and Human Service's Division of Medicaid and Long-term Care. (play audio :42)

A bill by Senator Jeremy Nordquist of Omaha – LB 952 – would prevent those cuts from taking effect. The Director of the Department of Medicaid and Long-term Care, Vivian Chaumont, told the committee that the cuts were needed to maintain Medicaid as more people are relying on the program than in past years.

On Thursday, the committee heard testimony from University of Nebraska officials on a series of four bills that are part of UNL's initiative called "Building a Healthier Nebraska."

Heidemann says he and Senator John Harms are co-sponsors of a bill that would provide \$13.7 million to renovate Armstrong Gymnasium at Chadron State College and \$8.6 million to renovate the Oak Bowl at Peru State College. (play audio :22)

Heidemann says with an improved state budget outlook, the Appropriations Committee is receiving many requests for funding projects that have been delayed in recent years.