

# Legislature enters the 'final crunch'

The current session of the Nebraska Legislature is heading into its final crunch, after a highly productive first thirty days, according to Speaker of the Legislature Roland Luedtke of Lincoln.

The crunch, Luedtke explained, occurs at the end of each legislative session. "It is unavoidable. We always have work piled up at the end," he said.

Some 400 bills were introduced during this 60-day session, and 172 bills carried from last session. More than 200 bills remain on general file, Luedtke said.

"If everything goes right, we will have 50 bills left over," he predicted. As of March 13 some 144 legislative hours will remain to this session and of those hours, 24 will be spent on bills in the select file, 30 on appropriations bills, 30 hours for final readings, 10 hours for motions and 15 will be spent on the consent calendar, Luedtke said. The remaining 35 hours will be spent on priority bills.

Luedtke said that he will request one priority bill from each senator and each committee head. Pet bills, or bills which are of interest to a senator's constituency probably will be picked, Luedtke said.

"It can be very frustrating for a senator to choose just one of several bills he may have introduced," Luedtke said.

Two factors contributed to the senators' productivity this session, Luedtke stated. A two-week hearing schedule allowed committees to work without losing legislative days, and a time limit restricted floor debate, Luedtke said.

He said he would urge future legislative speakers to continue use of the two-week hearing schedule during 60-day sessions.

"The one-hour time limit has created no problems. It is the only thing that has kept us going toward final reading," he said.

The first half of this session moved more rapidly than in the past. The senators have killed 116 bills this year as compared with 55 bills killed at this point during the 1974 session and 93 bills killed during this period in 1976.

"To show what the legislature is capable of," Luedtke said. "Thursday we dealt with 27 bills in three hours. That's 11 percent of the bills in general file."

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