

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 345

Introduced by McDonnell, 5.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this interim study is to examine efforts to protect Nebraska's archeological and paleontological resources and promote cooperation between governmental agencies, tribal governments, and other stakeholders regarding the discovery and the removal or borrowing of archaeological or paleontological resources from all lands in the state.

Nebraska led the original efforts to protect these spaces and resources from destruction and pilfering in 1937 with establishment of the Nebraska Standard Specifications for Highway Construction and again in 1959 by authorizing the Department of Roads, now the Department of Transportation, to enter into agreements with state agencies to remove and preserve archaeological, paleontological, and historical remains.

With more than 10,600 archeology sites with 21 sites on the National Register of Historical Places, Nebraska is home to one of the best records of geological and geoscience history in the United States, second only to the American Museum of Natural History, and Nebraska has a potential abundance of available sources to study.

Nebraska can again lead the nation in protecting this natural record of history, as well as the remains of earlier human impacts in what is now Nebraska, by assuring that discoverers of archeological or paleontological resources discovered on tribal, public, or private property being used for public or state uses shall coordinate with the interested stakeholders, such as adjacent landowners, tribal governments and councils, or other individuals and agencies.

The issues to be addressed by this interim study shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Best practices utilized when archaeological or paleontological resources are discovered;

(2) How other states regulate archaeological or paleontological discoveries;

(3) Methods to prevent any government agency or any private entity or individual from entering onto lands and removing archaeological or paleontological resources without permission or without cooperating with interested stakeholders; and

(4) Improvements that can be made in statute to promote cooperation between all stakeholders in the handling of archaeological or paleontological resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.