



Rural senators will have to continue to fight

MARCIA HORA

Logan, McPherson, and Thomas County Farm Bureaus hosted town hall meetings with Senator Tom Brewer in March.

Senator Brewer visited with constituents Friday, March 8, at DeJoWa's Diner in Stapleton, and at Uncle Buck's in Brewster, later that day.

Nebraska Farm Bureau representatives were on hand to welcome those in attendance and spoke briefly on what Farm Bureau is doing in the state legislature regarding property taxes.

Senator Brewer said there were 739 bills this session and over 100 deal with property tax reform.

Along with LB 58 that would chip away at gun ownership which he is against, Senator Brewer said he felt there needed to be a greater level of professionalism on the floor of the legislature.

He presented the Legislature's Revenue Committee with what he described as a "last resort" proposal designed to apply pressure for enactment of meaningful property tax relief this year.

LB 158 would freeze assessed valuation of property for four years in an attempt to "cap property taxes at the 2019 level" for a period ending in 2025.

Brewer believes it will be an incredibly difficult goal to achieve meaningful tax relief this session.

LB 158 received support from the Nebraska Farm Bureau and six other agricultural organizations, along with the Lincoln Independent Business Association.

City, county, and school representatives lined up alongside the Open Sky Policy Institute in opposing the LB 158 proposal.

"Property taxes are on the minds of all farmers and ranchers," Brewer said. "We have a collapsing ag economy right now and the end is near. It will get long and ugly."

The problem with property tax relief is there are 25 solid rural senators



MARCIA HORA - THE STAPLETON ENTERPRISE

Senator Tom Brewer speaks to a good number of constituents assembled at DeJoWa's Diner in Stapleton, Friday, March 8.

who will vote for property tax relief, but 53 votes are needed.

"We need to look at a lot of unnecessary spending in our state, including UN-L. There are ways that their budget could be cut, but it has always been hands off."

When asked about Senator Ernie Chambers' comments on the U.S. flag on the floor of the legislature, Senator Brewer said he couldn't take the comments any longer. He had to speak out.

"Things are being said that should never be said on the floor of the legislature."

Senator Brewer said he has never been so disappointed in his life as he was on the failure of LB 155 to advance from first-round debate on a 25-8 vote, two short of the needed majority for advancement.

Brewer introduced LB 155 on behalf of his constituents in the Sandhills. Brewer said it is unfair that a neighbor to a wind farm could be forced to accept a feeder line across their property and said LB 155 was a "landowner rights" proposal.

"Fifty people from the Sandhills drove to Lincoln on an extremely cold day and left their ranch duties

to see their government fail," Brewer said.

Fourteen senators were present, but did not vote.

Senator Brewer said there would be repercussions for senators who voted against his bill, or registered as "present but not voting."

OPPD opposed LB 155 because they said it would stifle wind development.

"Private companies should not have the power normally reserved for government to use against their neighbors to make money," Brewer has said.

Brewer said the fight against industrialization of the Sandhills is not over.

The huge discrepancy between rural and urban Nebraska will continue.

"In 1935 the majority of people lived in rural areas, somewhere in the 1980's it crossed and now the majority live in eastern Nebraska. In 2020 we will probably lose two more senators. The 43rd district will in all likelihood be expanded to take in Sioux Co., Rock, Boyd and Holt," Brewer said. "On the path we are on it will mean every rural state senator will have to be on their toes to fight for rural Nebraska."

The Stapleton High School speech team placed third as a team, and several are headed to state after district competition, Saturday, March 16, at North Platte.

"Our team had an amazing day, and I am so proud of how the team has improved all season long," Coach Polly Burnside said. State speech will be Friday, March 22 at Kearney.

Placing at districts were: OID - first place and state bound. Members Tammie Gaites, Keali Florea, Hannah Burnside, Hope Gustason, and Trinity Hansen.

Megan Amos - Humorous, third place and state bound.

Keali Florea - Humorous, fourth place.

Trinity Hansen and

Hannah Burnside - Duet acting, second place and state bound.

Chloe Bassett and Tricia Bernt - Duet acting, sixth place.

Gabby Perez - Poetry, fourth place.

Sadie Dimmitt - Persuasive, sixth place.

Chloe Bassett - Informative, seventh place.

Hope Gustason - Serious Prose, fifth place.

Statebound!



COURTESY

Members of the Stapleton High School speech team with their district medals. Back row, l-r: Tammie Gaites, Trinity Hansen, Hannah Burnside, and Sadie Dimmitt. Middle row, l-r: Trisha Bernt, Keali Florea, and Hope Gustason. Front row, l-r: Megan Amos, Gabby Perez, and Chloe Bassett.

Disaster fund launched

The Nebraska Farm Bureau has launched relief efforts to aid Nebraska farmers, ranchers, and rural communities suffering from the natural disasters that have impacted the state. The relief efforts include the establishment of a disaster relief fund and launch of an online agriculture disaster exchange portal to connect

those in need with those who can help.

"Nebraska is a special place with special people. Many of our friends and neighbors across the state are suffering. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who have lost or are missing loved ones, and to all those who have been impacted by the recent blizzard and massive

flooding events," said Steve Nelson, Nebraska Farm Bureau president. "We want to do what we can to help. We believe our relief fund and information exchange can be of assistance."

Money donated to the Disaster Relief Fund will be targeted to aid Ne-

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Blizzard in the west...flooding in the east

See how our area weathered the storm in next week's issue.

-- News Briefs --

Items Needed For Flood Victims

The Clothing Closet in Burwell is available to anyone who has been affected by the recent flooding occurring across the state. Donations are welcome to be dropped off anytime inside the entryway at the Loup Basin RC&D office and Loup Rivers Scenic Byway Interpretive Center.

A few items needed include boots, overshoes, gloves, western shirts slightly worn, coveralls, work jeans, new men's and women's socks.

Please call Kathy Mann, Sonja Wagner, Amy Hughes or Janet Sanders at 308-346-3393.

Friday Fish Fry at St. John's Rescheduled

The Knights of Columbus "Friday Fish Fry," that was to be held March 15 at St. John's Church in Stapleton, has been rescheduled for Friday, March 22.

Proceeds will go to Knights charities.

The menu will be hand-breaded fillets, french fries, green beans, homemade salads and desserts.

The price is \$8.00 for adults and kids (12 & under) \$4.00. Serving begins at 5:30 p.m.

McPherson Co. News



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- Over The Hills
- McPherson County Land For Sale

Notices



- Village Of Stapleton Board Proceedings
- McPherson County Commissioners

Obituaries

- Dorothy Maxine Montanye
- Marvin A. Hansen
- Leslie James 'Jim' Warner
- Ivan Fillmore, Sr.

Weather



DATE	HI	LOW	MT
5	17	-14	0
6	31	0	0
7	28	12	.35
8	25	13	0
9	31	22	.01
10	31	10	0
11	39	8	0

Snow: 4.4" fell on March 7 and .01" fell on March 9. Windchill: -20 on March 5. Fog was observed on March 7 and March 8.

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