

## Issues-Programs List for July-September, 2023

Programming in this quarter

### ND State Government

#### Special session looms after ND Supreme Court rejects the catch-all OMB budget bill

By [Dave Thompson](#) 1:46

September 28, 2023 at 4:17 PM CDT

The North Dakota Supreme Court has ruled that the Office of Management and Budget bill – SB 2015, the last bill voted on in the 2023 Legislative Session – violates the state Constitution.

The OMB bill has traditionally been used as a “catch-all” measure – that goes beyond the budget of the OMB office. This version had 70 sections.

### Education – Native American

#### North Dakota Indian Education Summit held in Bismarck

By [Dave Thompson](#) 1:55

July 7, 2023 at 4:41 AM CDT

More than 150 educators are attending the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Indian Education Summit in Bismarck.

State school superintendent Kirsten Baesler said the idea for the Summit came after she first looked at the state’s high school graduation rates. She said while the overall rate was at 90 percent, for Native American students, it was 50 percent or less. And Baesler said it wasn’t just an issue with tribal schools – it was also an issue with larger population schools.

"Fast forward to a decade later, and Native American graduation rates — prior to the pandemic — were higher than our overall average," Baesler said. "Even on the last NAPE test, we saw, while the entire nation declined on reading scores, our Native American 4th grade students' scores went up."

### ND State Government

## **Investigative report on AG building lease, deleted e-mails completed**

By [Dave Thompson](#) 1:35

September 28, 2023 at 10:33 AM CDT

In addition to the cost overrun, analysts and investigators from Montana’s Division of Criminal Investigation looked into the deletion of emails following former North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem’s death in January of 2022 and former Deputy Attorney Troy Seibel’s subsequent resignation.

## **Transgender treatment**

### **ND law prohibiting doctors from prescribing hormone therapy and puberty blockers for transgender children being challenged in court**

By [Dave Thompson](#) 1:29

September 15, 2023 at 4:06 AM CDT

Gender Justice announces lawsuit over health care for transgender children The lawsuit seeks to declare the law unconstitutional under the Constitution’s equal protection clause.

The law was passed in the 2023 Legislature. It makes it a misdemeanor for a doctor to prescribe medication such as hormone therapy and puberty blockers to transgender children – and it’s punishable by up to 360 days in jail, as well as \$3,000 in fines. The group Gender Justice said these treatments are available for other children — but not for transgender children.

## **ND State Worker Retirement**

### **Retirement plan for new state hires will become effective Jan. 1, 2025**

By [Dave Thompson](#) 2:02

August 23, 2023 at 8:02 AM CDT

PERS director Scott Miller testifying before the interim Retirement Committee

North Dakota’s Public Employees Retirement System says the change in the retirement plan for new state hires will be ready to go for people hired after January First, 2025.

The current “Defined Benefit” plan is being closed to new hires, who then will be offered a 401-K style “defined contribution” plan.

## **Agriculture and Environment**

### **Extreme Weather**

From NPR 3:36

August 22, 2023 between 6 and 9 am

There has been a lot of extreme weather lately. What's the cause? Weather / Hurricanes & Tropical Storms / Forest & Brush Fires / Heat / Disasters / Climate Change

## **Business, Economics and Finance**

### **Energy Transition Hurdles**

From NPR 4:52

August 18, 2023

A year in, landmark U.S. climate law is driving energy transition but hurdles remain. Law & Legislation / Climate Change / Alternative & Renewable Energy / Manufacturing Industry / Tax Credits / Domestic Policy

## **Immigration/Workforce**

### **Immigration as a solution to a workforce shortage**

By [Dave Thompson](#) 2:36

September 28, 2023 at 7:48 AM CDT

This comes as North Dakota is experiencing a workforce shortage. And the legislature approved creating an "Office of Legal Immigration" in the state's Commerce Department.

A program to bring Ukrainian immigrants to the Bakken is underway. It's called "Bakken Grow." North Dakota Petroleum Council President Ron Ness — the panel's moderator — said the energy industry needs those workers.

Ness says there are currently 37 workers from Ukraine in the Bakken — and he's hoping that will be more than 50 by mid-October. The president and CEO of Sanford Health-Bismarck said Sanford has hired more than 300 immigrant nurses at its Bismarck and Fargo locations, and that number will likely grow to 600.

## **Workforce**

## **Amazon to hire 250,000 full and part time employees, as holiday season looms**

By [Dave Thompson](#) 1:18

September 19, 2023 at 1:35 PM CDT

Amazon says it plans to hire 250,000 full time, part time and seasonal employees. And Amazon is offering \$1,000 sign-on bonuses in North Dakota.

Agboka said that investment will bring the average pay for customer fulfillment and transportation jobs to \$20.50 an hour. He said hundreds of people will be hired in Fargo.