



Hearings in committees continued this week, as well as the final passage of two bills that will significantly impact our state's economic health.

The Senate Education Committee heard from the Board of Regents (BOR). They provide leadership and policy guidance for South Dakota's six public universities and two special schools. The BOR shared that one of their main goals is to ensure higher education is accessible and affordable for those students considering post-high school plans.

As a parent of two children, I appreciated learning more about the efforts to support our students. There are several initiatives students can benefit from, including improved access and participation in the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) which is the first step for students to get access to more than \$150 billion in college grants, work-study programs, federal student loans, as well as state-based aid.

The BOR also has a college preparation program called Dakota Dreams that has several features to help students, including free online tutoring for K-12 students and career exploration summer camps for 7th and 8th graders. The program also supports teachers in developing leadership skills. Learn more about the program <https://ourdakotadreams.com/>

The BOR regents will be pursuing some legislation to allocate funds to help with building preservation efforts on campuses. If legislation is successful, projects would include funding to update Churchill-Haines Laboratories and the South Dakota Union building on the USD campus.

Also this week, Senate Bill 41, the housing infrastructure bill has passed both the Senate and the House. This is the bill that will provide \$150 million in infrastructure loans and grants for housing. The bill now goes to the Governor.

Also this week, the Senate took final action on House Bill 1011, which delivers an \$18 million tax cut to businesses by lowering employers' contribution rates to the re-employment trust fund. The goal is to free up funds for companies to help with workforce recruitment. This bill has also been sent to the Governor for signature.

My website has information about the legislative process in Pierre, including how ideas become laws and visiting Pierre and our Capitol Building. Visit votesydneydavis.com/visiting-pierre.

As your representative in Pierre, your opinions, questions, and concerns about our state's business are very important to me.

Because of the volume of emails legislators receive, I prioritize emails from District 17 residents. You can help out by including where you live in your email. Contact me at Sydney.Davis@sdlegislature.gov.

Thank you!