



The 98th Legislature is getting ready to conclude the business of the people. The session has five days left, including "Veto Day" on March 27th.

As I've mentioned, we have a great tradition in South Dakota government - the "citizen legislature," meaning we take care of the people's business and then return to live alongside our friends and neighbors.

Our priority in the final week will be the budget, considering some education-related bills, issues related to Medicaid reimbursement for providers, and compensation for state employees.

I'm pleased to share that my bill HB1079 providing grants for suicide prevention programs, has passed both the House and the Senate. The funding is to address the mental health crisis impacting South Dakota. We must do more to reduce suicide in South Dakota, especially among youth. The bill provides \$2 million for mental health and suicide prevention peer support training, community mental health and suicide prevention data services, and suicide loss response planning and support services. This is a positive step forward in addressing this problem.

Another bill I've worked on, HB1078, that would support adult day services programs, has passed both the House and the Senate. Adult day service providers care for our vulnerable populations and enable patients to live at home longer with family. This program supports innovative ways to address the needs of long-term care, especially important in our rural communities.

We also passed increased funding for South Dakota's Opportunity Scholarship that helps keep our South Dakota students in State. The

opportunity scholarship can be used for all universities in the State, including technical, tribal, and private schools. The bill HB1055 increases the total scholarship amount from \$6,500 over four years to \$7,500. This would apply to any scholarships awarded after July 1st of this year.

The Legislature continues to work on deciding on tax cut measures. As I said during the Legislative Coffee in Vermillion, there is support in the Senate for a tax cut. This final week will be the test to determine if there can be an agreement between the House, Senate, and the Governor on how best to share South Dakota's surplus with the people of the State.

I depend on your opinions, questions, and concerns about our State's business.

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.