

Advocating for Growth: The 2025 Legislative Scorecard Recap and a recap of the 100th Legislative Session

A core value of Chamber membership is knowing your business has a strong, informed voice in Pierre. The Greater Sioux Falls Chamber of Commerce works year-round to advocate for policies that support business success and community growth. Throughout the legislative session, we engage directly with lawmakers, provide guidance on key issues and communicate with members about how legislation could affect their businesses.

Each year, the Chamber compiles a Legislative Scorecard to help members understand how Sioux Falls-area legislators voted on key bills during the session. These are the bills where the Chamber took a formal position, based on the legislative platform set by the Issues Management Council (IMC) and approved by the Board of Directors.

How the Scorecard Works

The Scorecard highlights select legislation with a direct impact on the Sioux Falls business community. It shows whether each legislator's vote aligned with the Chamber's

position on the final form of each bill, as considered by the full House or Senate. Only legislation that was considered by the entirety of one or both legislative bodies are recorded on the scorecard. Recorded votes correspond to the final form of each bill that was considered by each legislative body, and the Greater Sioux Falls Chamber's position on the final form of that piece of legislation.

The Scorecard is not an evaluation of any individual lawmaker. It serves as a factual record of how legislators voted on issues important to the Chamber, its members and the Sioux Falls business community.

Legislators who voted with the Chamber 100% of the time earned the Sioux Falls Community Champion designation. Those who aligned on at least 75% of the bills were recognized as Sioux Falls Supporters. These designations reflect 2025 voting records, with cumulative scores included to show long-term alignment with Chamber positions.

2025 Legislative Voting Record - Senate

	SB 132	SB 178	SB 219	SB 193	HB 1132	HB 1052	SB 52	HB 1189	SB 177	Cumulative	2025	
Sen. Steve Kolbeck (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	🏆
Sen. Liz Larson (10)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	88%	89%	👤
Sen. Jamie Smith (15)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	92%	89%	👤
Sen. Larry Zikmund (14)	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	93%	78%	👤
Sen. Ernie Otten (6)	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	82%	56%	
Sen. Kevin Jensen (16)	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	67%	44%	
Sen. Arch Beal (12)	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	67%	44%	
Sen. Joy Hohn (9)	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	44%	44%	
Sen. Sue Peterson (13)	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	69%	44%	
Sen. Chris Karr (11)	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	59%	33%	
Sen. Tom Pischke (25)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	47%	22%	

👤 SUPPORTERS 🏆 COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

✗ Opposed Chamber's position ✓ Supported Chamber's position — Did not vote*

Note: If an elected official did not vote on an issue, the issue is not counted when tabulating the annual score.

2025 Legislative Voting Record - House

	SB 127	HB 1189	HB 1186	SB 219	SB 193	HB 1132	HB 1052	HB 1223	SB 52	Cumulative	2025	
Rep. Amber Arlint (12)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	🏆
Rep. David Kull (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	🏆
Rep. Keri Weems (11)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	100%	100%	🏆
Rep. Greg Jamison (12)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	94%	89%	👤
Rep. Brian Mulder (11)	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	94%	89%	👤
Rep. Taylor Rehfeldt (14)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	97%	89%	👤
Rep. Erin Healy (10)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	95%	89%	👤
Rep. Kady Wittman (15)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	94%	89%	👤
Rep. Erik Muckey (15)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	89%	89%	👤
Rep. Jack Kolbeck (13)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	—	✓	✓	92%	88%	👤
Rep. Tim Czmowski (6)	✓	—	✓	✓	✓	✗	—	✓	✓	83%	83%	👤
Rep. Leslie Heinemann (25)	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	33%	33%	
Rep. John Sjaarda (2)	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	49%	25%	
Rep. Jon Hansen (25)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	61%	22%	
Rep. Karla Lems (16)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	40%	22%	
Rep. Tesa Schwans (9)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	22%	22%	
Rep. Bobbi Andera (10)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	22%	22%	
Rep. John Hughes (13)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	22%	22%	
Rep. Tony Kayser (14)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	22%	22%	
Rep. Aaron Aylward (6)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	34%	11%	
Rep. Bethany Soye (9)	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	42%	11%	

Reviewing the 100th Legislative Session

The 100th South Dakota Legislative Session concluded with Veto Day on March 31. Over the course of the session, the Chamber engaged on dozens of bills—many focused on workforce needs, infrastructure development and long-term economic growth.

Unfortunately, a number of important pro-growth initiatives fell short of reaching the Governor's desk. This outcome points to a broader challenge. We must continue building support and educating our elected officials that addressing growth and promoting development and innovation are essential to making South Dakota great.

New and expanding businesses bring higher wage jobs, provide economic benefits to businesses, reduce the tax burden on individuals and generate critical revenue for public services like education, safety and infrastructure. South Dakota has long prided itself on being "Open for Business." To maintain that standing, we must continue to support policies that foster innovation, development and opportunity.

Bills included in the 2025 Legislative Scorecard

SB 132 / SB 127 - Make an appropriation for grants to support airport terminal improvement and expansion.

SB 132, and later SB 127, aimed to appropriate \$30 million in one-time grant funding to support airport terminal infrastructure projects and terminal improvement and expansion. The Chamber was a strong supporter of both bills. Supporting our airline infrastructure is critical to the continued growth of our community and state. Between passengers traveling for business and pleasure and supporting freight transportation, the continued investment into our airports is critical to commerce and economic opportunities in South Dakota.

SB 132 was defeated in the Senate (16-19). After this, stakeholders made what is known as a “Hoghouse” amendment to a bill that had already passed the Senate, SB 127. SB 127 was heard on the House floor later in session and was also defeated (37-32).

HB 1189 - Extend by two years the date on which moneys appropriated to the Governor's Office of Economic Development in 2021 for marketing, route restoration, business development and air service marketing will revert to the general fund.

HB 1189 extended by two years the deadline for previously appropriated dollars to be spent by South Dakota airports for the purposes of marketing, route restoration, business development and air service marketing. These dollars will be used by our commercial airports to continue to expand flight opportunities to and from our state, which generates commerce and promotes economic growth.

HB 1189 passed the House (45-24) and the Senate (24-11) and was signed by Governor Rhoden.

HB 1186 - Provide for the revision and eventual repeal of the employer's investment in South Dakota's future fee.

HB 1186 sought to revise and eventually repeal the South Dakota Future Fund. The Future Fund was created under Governor Mickelson and uses fees from the employer's investment fund to invest in economic development in South Dakota. The Future Fund has been critical to the growth and thriving business climate in South Dakota for decades. If this fund had been repealed, the State would lose its only economic development tool to recruit and incentivize new businesses to come to South Dakota, and also to invest in our local communities.

HB 1186 was defeated on the House floor (32-36).

SB 178 - Increase a tax on aviation gasoline and jet fuel.

SB 178 would have increased the tax on jet fuel from \$0.04 to \$0.07. The increase would go to support and grow the aeronautics fund in South Dakota. This fund is used to address airport infrastructure and safety needs in the state.

The Chamber supported SB 178 as we understand the importance of supporting our critical air infrastructure in the state. Airports continue to be vital to economic growth and commerce in South Dakota by transporting both people and goods.

SB 178 passed the Senate (28-7) but was later defeated in the House Commerce and Energy Committee (7-4).

SB 219 - Require the acceptance of a cash payment for admission to a school-affiliated event.

SB 219 required that cash be accepted as a form of payment for admission by all South Dakota schools for any sanctioned high school activity or event. While the Chamber does not have an opinion on the acceptance of cash at events that take place at a South Dakota school, this bill also required that any venue hosting an event with a participating school must also accept cash for admittance. The Chamber opposes government overreach into private businesses, this includes laws that create mandates telling businesses how they must operate.

SB 219 passed both the Senate (19-16) and the House (36-34) and was signed by Governor Rhoden.

SB 193 - Allow an applicant to have an interpreter present during the driving portion of a driver license exam.

SB 193 allows for a driver's license applicant to have a translator present while performing the driving portion of a drivers education test. This bill will allow English-second language applicants to have a safer driving experience as well as help bolster workforce by increasing the number of licensed and insured drivers in our state that can transport themselves to the workplace.

SB 193 passed the Senate (33-2) and the House (59-11) and was signed by Governor Rhoden.

HB 1132 - Establish provisions for eligibility in the child care assistance program for certain child care employees.

HB 1132 would have allowed employees of childcare providers to be eligible for childcare assistance for their own children as long as they are employed by an eligible childcare provider. This bill was brought forward in an effort to recruit more childcare workers to increase the amount of available childcare across the state. Childcare continues to be one of the largest barriers to employment today in South Dakota and this bill would have incentivized workers to go into the childcare industry.

HB 1132 passed the House (39-31) and the Senate (20-14), however the bill was vetoed by Governor Rhoden. HB 1132 failed to receive enough votes to override the Governor's veto and ultimately failed.

HB 1052 - Prohibit the exercise of eminent domain for a pipeline that carries carbon oxide.

HB 1052 is an act to prohibit the exercise of eminent domain for the pipeline that carries carbon dioxide. The Chamber believes in regulatory certainty for industries that do business or seek to do business in South Dakota. HB 1052 changed the rules in the middle of the permitting process for carbon pipelines and also targeted one specific industry instead of all privately owned pipelines. HB 1052 makes it nearly impossible for any carbon pipeline to be constructed in South Dakota, which will negatively impact our ethanol producers for the foreseeable future.

HB 1052 passed the House (49-19) and the Senate (23-12) and was signed by Governor Rhoden.

HB 1223 - Provide for conscience exemptions from certain medical treatments.

HB 1223 was an act to provide for conscience exemptions from certain medical treatments. If passed, HB 1223 would have allowed employees to enter a workplace with contagious and dangerous diseases that threaten public health and exempt them from getting treatment for these diseases. It also gave an employee or patrons to a business the ability to sue the employer or business owner for treble damages if they refused to serve or admit them, asked them to leave their business or any other “disciplinary action.” HB 1223 goes against private business rights, as well as, threatens public health and safety.

HB 1223 was defeated on the House floor (34-36).

SB 52 - Authorize the expansion of the South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery, to make an appropriation therefor, and to declare an emergency.

SB 52 appropriated State and Federal dollars for the expansion of the South Dakota State Veterans Cemetery. The State Veterans Cemetery is a jewel of Sioux Falls and provides an incredible place for our service members, and their spouses, to be remembered by families and citizens. The expansion of this property will continue to allow more South Dakota service members to be forever honored and remembered in their home state.

SB 52 passed the Senate (35-0) and House (70-0) and was signed by Governor Rhoden.

SB 177 - Provide a sales and use tax refund for goods and services related to data center operations.

SB 177, if passed, would have been a major incentive for more data centers to invest in and locate to South Dakota. Data centers provide significant benefits to our state with jobs, property taxes and constant revenue to utility companies. This emerging industry could be the next major player in South Dakota commerce and industry and any effort to entice them to do business here would be positive.

SB 177 was defeated in the Senate (17-18).