

2017 Sioux Falls Area Legislative Coffees



What happens at a Legislative Coffee?

Legislative Coffees are an excellent way to hear from area legislators about issues they will be working on during the legislative session. The Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce is once again partnering with several organizations to sponsor Coffees, free to the public. Dates this year are Saturday, Feb. 4 (Districts 6, 9, 11); Saturday, Feb. 11 (Districts 10, 13, 16, 25); and Saturday, Feb. 25 (Districts 12, 14, 15). All three Coffees will be held at the Ramada Inn and Suites (1301 W. Russell St.) in Sioux Falls from 10 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.—please use the entrance marked “Conference Center”.

The dates for these legislative coffees are deliberate. Feb. 4 follows the day that all bills must be introduced and when committee work is at a high pitch. Feb. 11 precedes “Crossover Day” when all bills need to be out of their house of origin so committee and floor action is at a peak while Feb. 25 immediately follows this important day.

The Legislative Coffees provide a forum where constituents can hear about current bills and communicate with their elected officials—a vital aspect of forming legislation. Legislative Coffees provide a great opportunity to learn more about legislators’ positions and also allow citizens to ask questions and formulate a better understanding of the impact that a prospective law would have upon them. The format features a moderator who will provide pace and organization to the session, as well as take written questions from the audience. Individuals viewing the Coffee by Argus Leader’s live stream have the option to send questions to a member of the League of Women Voters via email at SiouxFallsLWV@gmail.com during the hours of 8:00–10:30 a.m.

At the conclusion of the 2016 session, 236 bills had been passed among 419 introduced. Session was dominated by topics such as teacher pay, the bathroom bill, and tax issues. This year, the proposed repeal and replacement of Initiated Measure 22 is taking center stage though many other issues important to South Dakotans will be vetted through the month of March. Certainly, each lawmaker can’t be an expert on every issue; therefore, it is important to allow for good communication to flow between legislators and the public.

The Chamber’s partners this year include the League of Women Voters, AARP, Minnehaha County Republicans, Democratic Forum, Sioux Falls Education Associations, Minnehaha County Democratic Party, American Association of University Women, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Minnehaha-Lincoln Republican Women, and Americans for Prosperity-South Dakota Chapter.

Legislative Coffees are an integral part of the democratic process as they establish an important link between constituents and lawmakers. These are your legislators and you deserve to know their stance on topics that interest and affect you. We hope you are able to attend these Coffees to become more engaged in the lawmaking process.

The Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce will be live-tweeting from @SFAreaAdvocate using the hashtag #legcoffee. Argus Leader Media will livestream the coffees, which can be viewed at argusleader.com.

2017 Legislative Coffee Sponsors: AARP, American Association of University Women, Americans for Prosperity - South Dakota Chapter, Democratic Forum, League of Women Voters, Minnehaha County Democratic Party, Minnehaha County Republican Party, Minnehaha-Lincoln Republican Women, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Sioux Falls Education Association.