

# PRESS RELEASE



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### For further information, contact:

Jason Hancock, Director  
SD Legislative Research Council  
500 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3251

May 22, 2019

### **Legislature's Executive Board Lauds Staff for Successful 2019 Session**

**PIERRE** – South Dakota's Legislative Research Council (LRC) may have the smallest legislative staff in the nation at 27 full-time employees but when it comes to getting the job done, they turn in some big numbers.

For the recent 2019 Legislative Session, LRC staff handled 902 draft requests for bills, commemorations, and resolutions. Of those requests, 584 were introduced and acted upon by legislators. LRC staff analyzed 36 agency budgets and supported the legislature in setting the state's \$4.86 billion FY20 budget through 190 individual motions; they also staffed 376 committee meetings during the 40-day session.

Rep. Steven G. Haugaard, chair of the Executive Board of the SD Legislature, says the staff's expertise and organization are essential to legislators, especially when the pace picks up during session.

"Each division provides lawmakers with the information and insight we need to make better decisions for our state. When bill lists and schedules get longer, having that support enables us to be more effective," Haugaard said.

Part-time employees are hired annually to assist during the legislative session. In 2019, 35 temporary staff members were added including House and Senate front desk and chamber staff, a Legislative Page advisor, documents clerk, office assistant, text editor, and secretaries who staff the legislative committees. Sen. Brock Greenfield, vice chair of the Executive Board, says their service helps to promote South Dakota's "citizen legislature".

"Many of these part-time session staffers are former professional people who've lived and worked in our state for many years and have an interest in its future, just like the people we represent in our districts. Working alongside them in Pierre is a good reminder of why we're here and who we're really serving," said Greenfield.

According to Senate Minority Leader Troy Heinert, the LRC staff's professionalism and discretion extends to both sides of the aisle.

"Even though we may not always agree, both parties know the importance of working together to make positive changes in our state. Having a non-partisan staff supporting us ensures a level playing field in terms of information and guidance and allows both sides to come to the table prepared to discuss and take action," Heinert said.

LRC Director Jason Hancock notes whether it is on the front lines drafting bills and analyzing budgets or behind the scenes providing technology support, processing payroll, writing the daily journals, or coordinating room and committee schedules, LRC staffers are critical to the legislature's success.

"It takes a dedicated staff working together, often during long and hectic days, to keep the gears greased and the motor running. We're fortunate to have that kind of staff in the LRC," he said.

Information about the Legislature and employment opportunities with the Legislative Research Council are available on the [LRC website](#).