



KHA's Capitol Comments **January 30, 2024**

House Budget Committees Meet

Yesterday, the House Social Services Budget Committee, chaired by Rep. Les Mason (R-McPherson), heard budgets for the following:

- Kansas Guardianship Program
- Kansas Health Care Stabilization Fund

The committee also held an information briefing regarding the interim committee recommendations for Nursing Facility Reimbursement Rates.

The House Committee on Transportation and Public Safety Budget, chaired by Representative Avery Anderson (R-Newton), heard budgets for the following:

- Emergency Medical Services Board
- Office of the State Fire Marshal

The committees will make budget recommendations on these budgets in the coming days and then those will go to the House Appropriations Committee.

Senate Public Health and Welfare Receives Updates on Foster Care in Kansas

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Sen. Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), received an update from Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Secretary Laura Howard about foster care in the state. The committee will meet again tomorrow, Jan. 31 for a hearing on [Senate Bill 363](#), amending statutes regulating the practice of barbering regarding licensure, examination and fees.

House Committees Hold Hearings on Several Health-Related Bills

Today, the House Federal and State Affairs Committee, chaired by Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), held a hearing on [House Bill 2358](#). This legislation allows mid-level practitioners to provide medical certification to attest to an individual's cause of death and to file a death certificate. The committee discussed a balloon amendment to the bill. The committee heard from the following:

Proponents:

- Pam Scott, executive director of the Kansas Funeral Directors Association
- Doug Smith, Kansas Academy of Physician Assistants
- Melanie Urban, administrator, Pawnee Valley Community Hospital
- Karen Trees, Phoenix Health Care Clinic

There were no neutral or opponent conferees.

The committee expressed an interest in amending the bill to include the ability for advanced practice registered nurses and physician assistants to be able to refer to hospice care. The chair indicated the bill will likely be worked Tuesday, Feb. 6.

The House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Rep. Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 307](#), SB 307 adds for-profit private entity to the definition of "qualified applicant" in the Kansas Fights Addiction Act. The bill, carried over from 2023, when it passed the Senate on a vote of 40-0, had the following proponents in the House Appropriations Committee:

Proponents:

- Travis Lowe, Acadia Health Care

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Rep. Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), held hearings on two bills:

[House Bill 2547](#) authorizes schools to maintain certain emergency medication kits and to administer such medication in emergencies.

Proponents in writing or appearing before the committee included:

- Alexandra Blasi, executive secretary, Kansas Board of Pharmacy
- Leah Filter, Kansas Association of School Boards
- Kimber Kasitz, Kansas School Nurses Association
- Carol Moreland, Kansas State Board of Nursing
- Paul Teran, MD, Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Heather Braum, Kansas Action for Children
- Private Citizens: Darlene Coffey, Lyndsay Cochran, Kimberly Martin and Cindi Tedder.

There were no opponents or neutral conferees.

[House Bill 2578](#) provides that programs and treatments provided by a certified community behavioral health clinic be granted a renewal certification if such programs and treatments have been previously certified or accredited.

Proponents:

- Kyle Kessler, executive director, Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas
- William Warnes, MD, Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas
- Joan Tammany, executive director, COMCARE
- Tim DeWeese, Johnson County Mental Health Center
- Greg Hennen, Four County Mental Health Center

Opponents:

- Sonja Baccus, Community Care Network of Kansas
- Stuart Little, Kansas Behavioral Health Association
- Shane Hudson, CEO, CFK Addiction Treatment
- Lorri Alvarado, DCCCA
- Elizabeth Keever, Heartland Community Health Center
- Matthew Schmidt, Health Ministries Clinic
- Leah Fliter, Kansas Association of School Boards
- Chrysanne Grund, project director, Greeley County Health Services
- Linda Bass, KVC Kansas

Senate Judiciary Committee Hears Updates on Funding for Local Corrections

Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Kellie Warren (R-Leawood), received an update on last session's bill [Senate Bill 228](#). SB 228 requires the Secretary for the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services to reimburse counties for costs when a person in a county jail awaits examination, evaluation or treatment for competency. The committee heard from Ed Klumpp, legislative liaison, Kansas Sherriff's Association, Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police and Kansas Peace Officers Association. Klumpp highlighted major changes including:

- Medical examinations before entering jail: they continue to train officers in this area. He discussed that medical leadership and law enforcement continue to work to improve best practices for information sharing.
- Reimbursement to cities and counties for holding inmates who are awaiting competency evaluations and treatments was discussed. Klumpp highlighted that \$4.3 million was reimbursed since July 1, 2023, and \$1.872 million this year. He also emphasized these costs go away if the state fixes the bed-space problems.
- In jail evaluations were highlighted as a process improvement but utilization rates have not been high at this point.
- Klumpp highlighted wait times for evaluations have gone down but wait times for treatment continue to be long. He shared that if there were no new additions to the wait lists as of today, the wait lists for services would be 11-12 months long.
- An example in Wichita jail was shared with a current inmate who has waited more than two years through the evaluation and treatment process.