



KHA's Capitol Comments
February 1, 2024

House Health and Human Services Committee Revisits EMS Bill

Today, the House Health and Human Service, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita) held bill introductions on the following topics:

- Age of consent for health care treatment
- Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Licensure Remedies
- Establishing a fund with the Kansas Department for Children and Families
- Prohibiting the use of body cameras during inspections
- License Plates for In God and Pro-Life fees to go to abortion alternative programs

[House Bill 2579](#) was brought back up for further amendments to strike the one amendment made yesterday in committee, reverting back to its original language. The committee held a discussion and voted to pass the bill favorably in its original form. The bill now goes to the House floor.

House Welfare Reform Committee Hears Bill

Today, the House Welfare Reform committee, chaired by Rep. Francis Averkamp (R-St. Marys) held a hearing on [House Bill 2627](#).

Neutral conferees included:

- Erin Melton, Kansas Action for Children
- Donna Grinther, Institute for Policy and Social Research
- Kari Rinker, American Heart Association

Those in Opposition included:

- Rabbi Moti Rieber, Kansas Inter-Faith Action

The committee did not have any proponent testimony. The committee also received a briefing on free and reduced lunch eligibility verification. The committee meets next week.

House Insurance Committee Hears Updates on Pharmacies

Yesterday, the House Insurance Committee, chaired by Rep. Bill Sutton (R-Gardner) saw bill introductions, including one on prior authorization reform.

Jared Holroyd, executive director of the Kansas Pharmacists Association, gave a presentation about the number of pharmacies that have closed and how actions by pharmacy benefit managers have continued to have negative consequences. Holroyd emphasized that white bagging has had serious consequences for patients.

The committee heard from pharmacists including:

- Nate Rockers, Pharmacy Owner in Paola and Louisburg – highlighted PBM Challenges
- Tessa Schnelle, Kansas Pharmacists Association, employed by The University of Kansas Health System – emphasized the white bagging impacts on patients

The committee also heard bills including [House Bill 2478](#). HB 2478 adds "maternity center" to the definition of "healthcare provider" for purposes of the Healthcare Provider Insurance Availability Act. This was included as a budget proviso but would be codified in the state statute. The legislation was recommended favorably for passage, and the bill now goes to the full House. The only conferee appearing before the committee was Clark Shultz, executive director of the Health Care Stabilization Fund. Rep. Pat Proctor (R-Leavenworth) supported the committee, as did conferee Kendra Wyatt, CEO of New Birth Company.

The committee also held a hearing on [House Bill 2533](#). HB 2533 requires per diem amounts, expenses and funding for examinations to be reasonable and establishes a tiered fee structure for examinations of insurance companies and societies based on gross premiums. The proponents appearing before the committee included:

- Eric Turk with the Kansas Insurance Department
- Marlee Carpenter, Kansas Association of Property and Casualty Insurance

The committee meets next week.

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Meets

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Sen. Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), saw bill introductions on the following topics:

- Updating current Optometric Scope of Practice to reflect current education and training
- Expanding the power of the inspector general to investigate and audit all state cash, food and health assistance programs
- Require the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to adopt rules and regulations establishing an anaphylactic policy for schools and daycare facilities, setting procedures to both prevent anaphylaxis and during an anaphylactic medical emergency
- Establish a Kansas Alzheimer's Disease Advisory Council
- Concerning community grants
- Relating to hair removal by the process of sugaring
- Relating to institutional licensing for doctors at state hospitals

The committee also held a hearing on [Senate Bill 103](#). The legislation updates certain provisions of the Kansas Dental Practices Act relating to dentist information requested by patients, in-person practice requirements in the dental office using the licensee's name, unprofessional conduct and patient complaints.

Proponents included:

- Mike O'Neal, Association of Dental Support Organizations
- Daniel Thomas, DDS
- Heath Hall, vice president of government affairs, Heartland Dental
- William Wilk, sr. director of government affairs, Kansas Chamber

Opponents included:

- Kevin Robertson, executive director, Kansas Dental Association
- Charley Twietmeyer, DDS
- Pete Ziegler, DDS
- Jarrett Romine, DDS

The committee meets next week.

Senate Local Government Committee Hears Bill on Ambulance Service

Today, the Senate Local Government Committee, chaired by Senator Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 384](#). The legislation allows ambulances in rural communities to operate with only the minimum personnel required by state law.

Proponents, written and verbal:

- Spencer Duncan, Kansas League of Municipalities, specified they want two people in the ambulance and have an amendment to clarify
- Dave Garnas, administrator, North Central Kansas Medical Center
- Amy Lange, City of Concordia
- Randy Liese, Kansa Legislative Policy Group

Opponents:

- Joseph House, Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services
- Shane Pearson, Kansas Firefighters Association
- Jeff Boss, Mid-America Regional Council Emergency Rescue
- David Adams, Kansas Emergency Medical Services

Neutral conferees providing written testimony:

- Kari Rinker, American Heart Association

The committee meets next week.

Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee Meets to Discuss Mental Health and IDD

Today the Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee on Human Services received updates on the budgets for State Mental Health Hospitals and the Intellectual Disability Institutions. The committee, chaired by Senator Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick), heard from Kansas Legislative Research Staff on the governor's budget recommendations, as well as from the agency on state hospitals. The committee heard updates on each state hospital and facility's availability, staffing numbers and wait times. The committee will meet again next week to deliberate.

Joint House and Senate Commerce Committee Meets to Finalize Workers Comp Changes

Today, the Joint Senate and House Commerce Committees, chaired by Senator Renee Erickson (R-Wichita), held an informational hearing on workers compensation, outlined in [Senate Bill 430](#).

Under SB 430, the cap on benefits would include a permanent total disability cap increase from \$300,000 to \$500,000. For partial disability an increase from \$155,000 to \$400,000. For temporary total disability from \$130,000 to \$225,000, for temporary partial disability from \$130,000 to \$225,000. For functional impairment only \$75,000 to \$100,000. The bill changes hearing timelines from 20 days to 30 days. Changes to future minimum treatment provisions are included, as well as changes to reductions in benefits based on retirement, social security and corresponding with no offset for social security.

Proponents included:

- Tony Anderson, Kansas Chamber, Kansas National Federation of Independent Business – Anderson discussed how the bill was developed. They began meeting with labor and industry attorneys. They have worked together to negotiate on the topic.
- Jeff Cooper, Cooper Law Office

Conferees urged the committees to make no changes. There was no opponent or neutral testimony. The committee indicated the bill would go before the Senate.