



KHA's Capitol Comments
February 5, 2024

Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee Deliberates on Mental and Intellectual Disability Hospitals

Today, the Senate Ways and Means Subcommittee, chaired by Senator Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick), worked on the final budgets for state mental and intellectual disability hospitals. The committee made no changes to the governor's budgets; however, they suggested in future years for the Senate Ways and Means and House Appropriations to tour the state hospitals and institutions.

House Joint Committee Continues Discussions on Unemployment Compensation

Today, the House and Senate Commerce Committees met jointly to continue the committee discussions on unemployment compensation. The committee is continuing hearings on [House Bill 2570](#), related to changes in unemployment compensation. Kansas Department of Labor Secretary Amber Schultz gave an overview of the provisions in the bill that the department supports including:

- Benefit year starting on Sunday
- Changing benefit charge notice to quarterly instead of annually
- Removing language stating an employer is not charged if benefits are under \$100
- State Unemployment Tax Act Amendments
 - Eliminating mid-year combination of tax rates when a business acquires another business
- Extending the voluntary contribution deadline from 30 days to 90 days
- Removing all instances of 2008 recession-response language from the 2011 Senate Bill 77
- Changing the threshold for online filing opt-out from 50 employees to 25

Secretary Schultz also provided an overview of provisions of the legislation that the department has concerns with including:

- Ghosting provision – Establishing procedures to allow employers to report applicants for failing to attend a job application without notice
 - Believing the agency already adequately fulfills the requirements of work-search audits
 - If the committee keeps the provision, it requests an implementation of Jan 1, 2026, to give enough time to set up the process
- Board of Review Qualifications
 - The provision is restrictive and wouldn't allow the agency to select the best candidate
- Changing the timing of creating and publishing the contribution rate tables
 - Doesn't allow the agency time to accomplish the task
- Eliminating state benefits if federal benefits issued are equal or more
 - This places a costly burden on the state
 - The problem should be fixed federally
- Current and Additional Reporting
 - Alternatively proposes only releasing this raw data to chairs of Commerce Committees
- Temporary Unemployment Parameters
 - Creates an overly complicated system
 - Proposes an eight-week period and removing the term "benefit year" from parameters
- Changing of "or" to "and" for MRP exemptions
 - Requires all parameters to be satisfied, won't work as intended

The committee will meet again separately tomorrow.

House Health and Human Services Meets for Bill Introductions

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), finalized bill introductions for the 2024 session. The committee saw bill introductions on the following topics:

- Authorizing pharmacists to administer medications related to HIV exposure
- Expedited partner therapy for some sexually transmitted diseases
- Healthcare for minors
- Abortion reporting

The committee will meet again tomorrow to hold hearings on [House Bill 2548](#), enacting the No Patient Left Alone Act to require facilities to allow in-person visitation to certain patients at hospitals, adult care homes and hospice facilities and [House Bill 2637](#), expanding eligibility to facilities to become rural emergency hospitals. The committee is also slated to take final action on bills as well.

Introduction of Bills

[House Bill 2683](#) – Concerning property taxation; relating to certifications and tax statements; modifying deadlines for mailing tax statements to taxpayers and certification of levies to the director of property valuation to earlier than current deadlines; providing for the county clerk's use of the previous year's budget when a taxing subdivision fails to timely file its budget – By Committee on Taxation, Requested by Representative Blew

[House Bill 2686](#) – Concerning health professions and practices; relating to prescribers; requiring prescribers to discuss risks and alternatives to certain addictive controlled substances with patients before prescribing such substances – By Representative V. Miller

[House Bill 2689](#) – Concerning insurance; relating to health insurance plans; requiring no cost-sharing requirement imposed on insureds for diagnostic and supplemental breast examinations for breast cancer – By Representatives Featherston, L. Williams, Ballard, Borjon, Carlin, Concannon, Curtis, Haswood, Hougland, Hoyer, Martinez, McDonald, Melton, Meyer, Neighbor, Oropeza, Pickert, Poskin, S. Ruiz, Sawyer Clayton, Wasinger and Winn