



***KHA's Capitol Comments***  
**March 6, 2024**

**Senate Ways and Means Adds More Funding for Hospital OP Medicaid Reimbursement Rates**

Today, the Senate Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Sen. Rick Billinger (R-Goodland), continued work to assemble the budget bill. The committee saw a motion by Sen. J.R. Claeys (R-Salina), seconded by Sen. President Ty Masterson (R-Andover), to add the following amounts to hospital outpatient Medicaid codes:

\$78.8 million, \$30m FY 2025

\$147.4 million, \$60 m FY 2026

Sen. Masterson gave comments to suggest reimbursements will have a great impact on rural hospitals that are phased in and are fiscally responsible. The committee meets again tomorrow.

**Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Hears Foster Care Bill**

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Sen. Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), held a hearing on [House Bill 2536](#). The legislation establishes the SOUL family legal permanency option for children 16 years of age or older.

The committee meets tomorrow to hold a hearing on [House Bill 2629](#). House Bill 2629 requires the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to provide a death certificate for a child to the state Child Death Review Board, increases the number of board members, allows for compensation and provides for the disclosure of certain records to certain persons for securing grants.

**House Health and Human Services Committee Meets to Work Visitation Bill**

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), took up [Senate Bill 352](#), the patient visitation bill previously passed by the Senate. The committee deleted the contents of SB 352 and inserted the contents of [House Bill 2548](#), the visitation bill brought by Representative John Eplee (R-Atchison). The committee passed the bill as amended.

## **House Appropriations Committee Hears Medicaid Updates**

Today, the House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Troy Waymaster (R-Russell), received an update on the Fetal-Maternal Monitoring Program and remote ultrasound access to care. The committee heard from the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services about the Community Support Waiver from Michele Heydon, commissioner for Long-Term Services and Support.

The committee also heard from Christine Osterlund, Kansas Medicaid director and deputy secretary. Osterlund gave an overview of the public health emergency unwinding, highlighting the overview and timelines and stating renewal volumes fluctuated. The first four months were the highest volumes of the 12-month unwinding period. Osterlund said as of Jan. 31, 499,096 individuals were sent a renewal notice, 250,701 individuals were approved and 58,402 individuals were discontinued. Twenty-four thousand two hundred twenty-five individuals in the reinstatement window did not submit a review timely but have 90 days to submit a review and have eligibility backdated. Osterlund shared metrics on calls received. She indicated they anticipate that approximately 110,000 individuals may likely lose coverage, but suggested that later in March, they may have more firm estimates. The agency shared there have been process improvements including:

- Ex Parte improvements increase the number of reviews through automation
- Usage of automated outreach via text and calls rather than mail
- Use of portal by members
- HCBS training on the renewal process for providers
- The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services granted the Kansas Department of Health and Environment approval to implement several E-14 waivers, allowing more assistance to members with unwinding

The committee meets tomorrow to continue work on the bills before them.

## Medicaid Expansion Rally Held



Today, the Alliance for a Healthy Kansas held a rally on the second floor of the Kansas Statehouse to urge policymakers to pass Medicaid expansion. The rally featured comments by Gov. Laura Kelly who outlined her 2024 Medicaid expansion bill and cited broad support of Medicaid expansion across the state by individuals and small businesses. Also addressing the group was Dena Hubbard, MD, policy chair of the Kansas Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Emersen Frazier, director of health equity and policy at Stormont Vail Health and Charles McKinzie, pastor at Winfield Grace United Methodist Church.

## Senate Education Committee Holds Hearing on Nurse Educator Program

Today, the Senate Education Committee, chaired by Sen. Molly Baumgardner (R-Louisburg), held a hearing on [House Bill 2645](#). The legislation amends the Nurse Service Scholarship Program to remove limits on the amount of awards and number of scholarships, removes the sponsorship requirement, modifies the interest rate terms for repayment obligations and abolishes the Nursing Service Scholarship Review Committee. The Kansas Hospital Association provided [testimony](#) in support.

## House Takes Final Action on Bills

Today, the House of Representatives took final action on the following bills:

- [House Bill 2648](#) – Concerns administrative rules and regulations; requirements for adoption of rules and regulations; provides that agency adjudications shall not be used to establish policies that are rules governing future private conduct that have the force of law; relates to economic impact statements; requires legislative ratification for certain rules and regulations; requires the director of the budget to review an agency's determination of implementation and compliance costs and disapprove proposed rules and regulations with incomplete or inaccurate economic impact statements. [Passed 82-36](#).
- [Senate Bill 195](#) – Concerns the children's cabinet; authorizes the cabinet to establish a nonprofit corporation to raise funds to benefit the Dolly Parton's Imagination Library Book Gifting Program. Passed 118-0.
- [Senate Bill 307](#) – Concerns the Kansas Fights Addiction Act; adds for-profit private entities to the definition of "qualified applicant" authorizing members of the Kansas Fights Addiction Grant Review Board to be paid subsistence allowances, mileage and other expenses when attending meetings of the board after Jan. 8, 2024. [Passed 91-27](#).

The House also debated [House Bill 2749](#). The legislation requires medical care facilities and providers to report the reasons for each abortion performed at such facility or by such provider to the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. The final vote on the bill will be tomorrow.