



KHA's Capitol Comments **April 2, 2024**

Meeting on Contract Nursing Begins Work

Yesterday, saw the first of a three-day sub-committee discussion, made up of House Appropriations members including Chairman Les Mason (R-McPherson), Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), Barbara Ballard (D-Lawrence), Susan Concannon (R-Beloit) and Henry Helgerson (D-Wichita). The committee members heard from the following:

- Worldwide Travel Staffing about the state of travel nursing
- Scott Brunner, Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services gave an overview of contract nursing usage at state hospitals
- William Turner, Kansas Commission on Veteran's Affairs
- Rachel Monger, LeadingAge Kansas
- Linda MowBray, Kansas Healthcare Association and Kansas Center for Assisted Living
- LaMonte Rothrock, Cedars Retirement Community
- Jaron Caffery, Kansas Hospital Association
- Jonna Jenkins, Hutchinson Regional Medical Center

Today, the committee discussed liability and the difference in pay and benefits.

On Wednesday, the committee is slated to discuss workforce and pipeline challenges, with discussion and recommendations to be listed on Thursday.

Bills Make Their Way to the Governor

As the House and Senate Conference Committees continue to meet, there are several bills that have received motions to concur on changes made in the second chamber that will send those bills to the governor's desk. Among those seeing motions to concur, includes:

[House Bill 2690](#) establishes the state 911 Board; abolishes the 911 Coordinating Council; transfers the powers, duties and functions of the 911 Coordinating Council to the state 911 Board; authorizes the board to appoint an executive director and other employees to carry out the powers, duties and functions of the board; abolishes the 911 Operations Fund, the 911 state Grant Fund and the 911 State Fund and establishes the state 911 Operations Fund. The motion to concur with the Senate's changes passed the House on a vote of [114-5](#).

[Senate Substitute for House Bill 2436](#) relates to unlawful coercion to obtain an abortion, provides penalties therefor; and enhances penalties for offenses committed with intent. The motion to concur with the Senate's changes passed on a vote of [82-37](#).

Conference Committees Agree Upon Items

Health

Today, the House and Senate Health conference committee met and agreed to the following provisions. The committee added the following to House Bill 2784:

Amended contents of [House Bill 2784](#) (CCRC), [House Bill 2751](#) (Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services), [House Bill 2578](#) (CCBHC), [House Bill 2777](#) (State Fire Marshal) without the Senate amendment.

The committee also agreed to House Bill 2547 to include:

The original contents of [House Bill 2547](#) (schools administer emergency meds), the Senate offered to restore immunity protections. [House Bill 2596](#) (adding controlled substances).

The committee agreed to Senate Bill 287 to include:

[Substitute for Senate Bill 219](#) (REH), [House Bill 2579](#) (EMS administering over-the-counter medication) and [Senate Bill 352](#) (enacting the No Patient Left Alone Act) the House version, without reference to end of life care (listed on page one).

Insurance

Today, the Senate Financial Institutions and Insurance Conference committee met with the House Insurance Committee to discuss bills among them. The committee agreed to include Senate Bill 553, as amended with prior authorization electronic language going into effect on Jan. 1, 2028, into a package contained in Senate Bill 356. Senate Bill 356 now includes [Senate Bill 356](#), [Senate Bill 338](#), [Senate Bill 339](#), [House Bill 2663](#) and [Senate Bill 553](#).

The conference committee also agreed to [Senate Bill 423](#), including [House Bill 2530](#), [House Bill 2715](#) and [House Bill 2834](#) changes the oversight of the State Employee Health Plan to the Kansas Insurance Department with an agreement that a portion of the bill go into effect in 2026.

Workforce

Today, the education conference committees met and agreed to add the provisions of [House Bill 2645](#) (Nurse Service Scholarship Program) into [Senate Bill 438](#), along with other packaged bills. That conference committee report will be signed by conference committee conferees and go across the chamber floors.

Budget

The budget conference committee members continue to work through differences between the chamber positions but have agreed to the following:

- Added \$250,000 State General Funds from the Post Secondary Grant for the Fort Hays State University Telehealth Certification enhancement
- Added \$750,000 SGF for the Professional Workforce Development Grant for FHSU
- Deleted 1.0 FTE from the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts for the licensing program
- Added funding and credit monitoring, as well as information technology security upgrades related to the Kansas Judicial Branch security breach
- Added funding for a joint House and Senate bus tour to provide a better understanding of state mental health hospitals
- Added language stating federally qualified health care centers cannot use patient information for the purpose other than direct mental, medical or behavioral health services, transit services or billing
- Added funding to increase operational support for the Self Advocate Coalition of Kansas for fiscal year 2025
- Removed funds for contract nursing expenditures for state hospitals and added language stating this is something legislators will continue to discuss at Omnibus

The committee continues to negotiate on the following items:

- Added funding for Medicaid outpatient codes for hospitals: House position is \$45.2 million, and Senate position is \$78.7 million in FY 2026, and \$157.4 million in FY 2026
- Added funding to increase provider Medicaid rates: House position is 15.0 percent, Senate is 8 percent. The Senate has offered something in between to included a \$30 million investment.
- Funding for dental coverage to Medicaid: The Senate has offered to review at Omnibus
- Added \$4.2 million for Medicaid rates for pediatric primary care
- Added a 15 percent increase in Medicaid Rates for obstetrics and gynaecology services
- Added in add-on to nursing facilities Medicaid rates: House position is \$20 per day add on, Senate position is \$10 per day add on
- Language to require oversight and registration of supplemental nursing staff agencies for FY 2025 and requires such agencies to submit a quarterly report to KDADS on the rates charged by the agencies to facilities in Kansas
- Added language to study involuntary discharge and transfers from adult care homes
- Added \$3.8 million to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate for Applied Behavioral Analysis to \$65 per hour in FY 2025
- Added \$2.0 million for rural emergency hospitals that do not qualify
- Added \$10 million for hospitals that have adult behavioral health beds
- Added \$5 million for primary health projects for community-based grants (safety-net clinics)
- Added \$600,000 for a maternal fetal medicine grant program in a Kansas City county with a certain population

- Added language requiring the Kansas Department of Health and Environment study required billing codes and costs of providing remote non-stress tests and ultrasounds to pregnant women on the Medicaid program
- Added language to increase the hospital provider assessment to no lower than 5 percent and no higher than 6 percent
- Added funding for substance use disorder treatment for uninsured individuals in FY 2024, with a report required in 2025
- Added \$5.8 million for waitlist to the Physical Disability waiver
- Added \$17.3 million to add 250 individuals from the waitlist to the Intellectual and Developmental Disability waiver
- Added \$48.3 million for the Frail Elderly waiver
- Added funding to increase the specialized medical care rate for the I/DD and Technology Assisted waivers in FY 2025
- Added funds for substance use disorder treatment for non-Medicaid eligible populations
- Added funds for increased rates for the Brain Injury, Physical Disability, Autism, Frail Elderly and Technology Assisted waivers
- Added bonds for a nursing center at Emporia State University
- Added funding for Family Residency programs (include Smoky Hill Family Residency, Ascension Via Christi and Wesley Family Medicine programs)
- Added language to require the Kansas State Board of Healing Arts to reduce licensure fees by 15 percent
- Added diagnostic and supplementary breast examinations for state employees as a covered benefit that prohibits cost-sharing
- Added funding for housing and retail development in Northwest Kansas through a revolving loan fund
- Added funding for pilot program to recruit home based childcare providers
- Added funding for Community Mental Health Centers to become Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics