



***KHA's Capitol Comments***  
**Feb. 4, 2025**

**House Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget Hears from KHA on Department of Commerce Workforce Proposal**

Today, the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget, chaired by Representative Lisa Moser (R-Wheaton), discussed the Kansas Department of Commerce budget and heard from [KHA](#) about adding funds for a grant program to allow health care workers to get upskilled training.

The committee will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 5, to work on the budget for the Kansas Department of Commerce.

**Senate Ways and Means Committee Hears About Contract Nursing**

Today, the Senate Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Senator Rick Billinger (R-Goodland), heard updates from the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services regarding the contract nursing needs at state hospitals. Deputy Secretary Scott Brunner reported that Larned State Hospital spent \$22.7 million on contract staff and projected \$43.8 million through the end of fiscal year 2025. Osawatomie spent \$8.1 million with a projected total of \$16.4 million through the end of FY 2025. The agency highlighted Governor Laura Kelly's budget recommendations to add \$32,650,133 in State General Funds for contract nursing at Larned and \$11 million in State General Funds for Osawatomie.

The vacancy rate for Larned State Hospital for registered nurses is 65.8 percent, licensed mental health technicians is 69.7 percent and mental health and developmental disability providers is 46.6 percent, but the overall vacancy rate has decreased from 45.3 percent to 36 percent.

Staff highlighted that the House Appropriations Committee added a proviso to prohibit Larned State Hospital from using contract nursing.

**House Health Committee Hears about Children's Health**

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), received updates on the status of children's health in Kansas. The committee heard from the following:

- Heather Braum from Kansas Action for Children

The committee heard requests to work on the following legislation:

- Investments in prenatal and maternal health care
- Better access to affordable health insurance coverage
- Need for routine childhood vaccines

Anne Dwyer, JD, MPH, of Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, also gave the committee an overview of Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program coverage for children. Dwyer highlighted that Medicaid covers 30 percent of children and 30 percent of births in Kansas.

On average, the federal government contributes about \$60 to every \$100 Kansas spends, representing our state's most significant source of federal funds. She highlighted that in rural areas of Kansas, 32.3 percent of children are on Medicaid, and 28.7 percent in urban areas.

Dwyer warned of federal threats to Medicaid, including:

- Significant cuts or cost-shifts to federal funds coming to states
- Cuts to eligibility, benefits, or provider and payment rates

The committee also heard from:

- Mariah Chrans, Community Health Council of Wyandotte County, highlighted wrap-around services and what the council does in the Wyandotte County area
- Chris Schunn, Kansas Infant Death and SID Network
- Dr. Dena Hubbard, Kansas Chapter of American Academy of Pediatrics

The committee will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 5, to hold hearings on bills related to Interstate Licensure Compacts for cosmetology, school psychologists and dietitians.

### **The House and Senate Committee of the Whole Works Elections Related Bills**

Today, the House Committee of the Whole on [House Concurrent Resolution 5004](#) would amend the state constitutions to require individuals to be citizens of the United States, at least 18 years of age, and a resident of the voting area in which such person seeks to vote, and in order to vote in this state.

The Senate Committee of the Whole is slated to debate the following:

[Senate Bill 4](#) relates to advance voting ballots and requires ballots to be returned by 7:00 p.m. on the day of the election.

[Senate Bill 6](#) prohibits the use of any form of ranked-choice voting methods in conducting elections.

## **Introduction of Bills**

[Senate Bill 136](#) by Senator Holscher – Concerning campaign finance; limiting contributions to \$5,000 per year to political committees that are made for the purpose of independent expenditures; requiring accounting, reporting and auditing of such contributions

[Senate Bill 145](#) by Senator Shane – Concerning children and minors; relating to law enforcement agencies and the secretary for the Kansas Department for Children and Families; requiring that the secretary immediately notify law enforcement agencies of reports of abuse or neglect; providing for law enforcement agencies to request resources from the secretary for the Kansas Department of Children and Families for investigations

[Senate Bill 150](#) by Committee on Public Health and Welfare – Concerning insurance; relating to health care benefits and health insurance plans and related coverage; prohibiting the denial of coverage for the refilling of prescription topical eye medication

[Senate Bill 151](#) by the Committee on Government Efficiency – Concerning public assistance; relating to medical assistance, requiring the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to request a waiver from the United States Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to end participation in certain expenditure authorities under the KanCare demonstration

[Senate Bill 161](#) by the Committee on Government Efficiency – Concerning public assistance; requiring approval by an act of the legislature prior to any state agency seeking or implementing any public assistance program waiver or other authorization from the federal government that expands eligibility for any public assistance program or increases cost to the state

[House Bill 2184](#) by the Committee on Social Services Budget, requested by Representative King on behalf of LeadingAge Kansas – Concerning health and health care; relating to the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services; providing for the regulation of supplemental nursing services agencies and health care worker platforms thereby; creating the Supplemental Nursing Services Agency and Health Care Worker Platforms Regulation Fund

[House Bill 2195](#) by the Committee on Appropriations, requested by Representative Howe on behalf of the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges – concerning technical colleges; establishing the Kansas Technical College Operating Grant Fund administered by the Kansas Board of Regents

[House Bill 2199](#) by the Committee on Insurance, requested by Representative Butler on behalf of Kendall Schoenrock – Concerning insurance; relating to the Kansas State Employees Health Care Commission; authorizing the commission to provide coverage for certain allergen introduction dietary supplements for infants; requiring submission of an impact report to the legislature if such coverage is provided

[House Bill 2216](#) by the Committee on Health and Human Services, requested by Representative Bryce on behalf of Kansans for Life – Concerning health and health care; relating to abortion; requiring the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to create an informational video describing abortion laws in Kansas and services available for pregnant women experiencing life-threatening or health-threatening medical conditions

[House Bill 2217](#) by the Committee on Health and Human Services, requested by Representative Bryce on behalf of the Attorney General's Office – Concerning the attorney general; relating to the office of the inspector general and the powers, duties and responsibilities thereof; expanding the power of the inspector general to investigate and audit all state cash, food and health assistance programs

[House Bill 2218](#) by the Committee on Health and Human Services, requested by Steve Kearney on behalf of Compass Pathways – Concerning the Uniform Controlled Substances Act; defining psilocybin to exclude the pharmaceutical composition of crystalline polymorph psilocybin; adding crystalline polymorph psilocybin to schedule IV

[House Bill 2219](#), by the Committee on Health and Human Services, requested by Representative Buehler on behalf of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce – Concerning the healing arts; relating to physician assistants; enacting the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact to provide interstate practice privileges

[House Bill 2221](#) by the Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice, requested by Jennifer King on behalf of the Department of Corrections – Concerning state funds; relating to the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Fund; creating the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Fund; transferring money and liabilities of the Kansas Department of Corrections Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Fund to the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Fund; abolishing the Kansas Department of Correction Alcohol and Drug Abuse Treatment Fund

[House Bill 2223](#) by the Committee on Health and Human Services Requested by Representative Buehler on behalf of the Kansas Optometric Association – Concerning health professions and practices; relating to optometry; modifying certain provisions of the optometry law related to scope of practice, definitions and credentialing requirements