



KHA's Capitol Comments

Feb. 5, 2025

Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee Works Laycaregiver Bill and Hears Bill

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee held final action on [Senate Bill 3](#), the legislation that gives the Kansas Department of Health and Environment audit authority on hospital compliance. The committee saw no motion to take action on Senate Bill 3, so the bill will not proceed.

The committee also held a hearing on [Senate Bill 19](#). This bill prohibits discrimination against individuals who refuse medical care, creates a civil cause of action based on such discrimination and revokes the authority of the secretary of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to quarantine individuals and impose associated penalties.

The committee heard from proponent conferees:

- Lindsay Burning, Citizen
- Kathy Brown, Citizen
- Melissa Campbell, Citizen
- Garry Morgan, Citizen
- Connie Newcome, Citizen
- Ashley Prescott, Citizen
- Jacob Satler, Citizen

The committee heard from opponent conferees, including:

- Randy Bowman, Kansas Association of Local Health Departments
- Heather Braum, Kansas Action for Children
- Jason Gum, Citizen
- Kimberly Martin, Kansas School Nurses Association
- Rebecca Reddy, Pediatrician
- Reverend Annie Ricker, United Methodist Pastor
- William Wilk, Kansas Chamber of Commerce

Senate Financial Institutions and Insurance Hears Updates from Pharmacists

Today, the Senate Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee, chaired by Senator Brenda Dietrich (R-Topeka), heard from Sloane Freeman, an independent pharmacy owner in South Central Kansas. Freeman discussed the pharmacists' roles in overall patient care and the connection of the local pharmacy to community support.

Tessa Schnelle, a hospital pharmacist who serves both a health system and a rural hospital, gave an overview of how the pharmacy industry has evolved over the last decade. She reported that 52 pharmacies have had to close and Kansas pharmacies are at higher risk than other states nationally. She highlighted pharmacy deserts and their connection to other health care shortage areas.

The committee asked what could be done to entice pharmacists in rural Kansas.

The committee also worked [Senate Bill 23](#), which requires agents and insurers to respond to inquiries from the insurance commissioner within 14 calendar days and authorizes certain rebate pilot programs to exceed one year in duration.

House Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget Includes Funds for Health Care Training Grants

Today, the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget Committee, chaired by Representative Lisa Moser (R-Wheaton), met to finalize the Kansas Department of Commerce budget. The committee included in their recommendations \$1 million for a grant program for hospitals and long-term care to do upskill training for staff needing specialized skills. The budget, including this grant program, will go to the full appropriations committee for further review.

Senate Government Efficiency Hears Bills

Today, the Senate Government Efficiency Committee, chaired by Senator Renee Erickson (R-Wichita), heard the following bills:

- [Senate Bill 85](#) directs the Kansas Department for Children and Families secretary to review and compare data for public assistance program eligibility.
- Proponents: Steven Green with Opportunity Solutions Project
- Opponents: Karen Seibert with Kansa Harvesters, Carla Whiteside Hicks with DCF

House Health and Human Services Hears Bills on Compact Licenses

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), held hearings on the following bills:

- [House Bill 2068](#) – the Cosmetology Compact

Proponents included:

- Michelle Richart, Department of Defense
- Keith Marshall, the Adjutant General's Department
- William Wilk, Kansas Chamber of Commerce
- Connor Norse, West Virginia University
- [House Bill 2069](#) – the School Psychologist Licensure Compact

Proponents included:

- Michelle Richart, Department of Defense
- Keith Marshall, the Adjutant Generals Department
- William Wilk, Kansas Chamber of Commerce
- Amy Drinnon, Kansas Association of School Psychologists
- Alyson Baloga, Citizen
- [House Bill 2070](#), the Dietician Licensure Compact

Proponents included:

- [The Kansas Hospital Association](#)
- Michelle Richart, Department of Defense
- William Wilk, Kansas Chamber of Commerce
- Stephanie Waggoner, Citizen

The committee recommended that all bills be passed favorably. The bills will now go to the full House of Representatives for review.

The committee will meet on Thursday, Feb. 6, for presentations on the Medicaid inspector general, and the Community Mental Health System.

Senate Education Committee Hears from Kansas Board of Regents

Today, the Senate Education Committee heard a presentation from the Kansas Board of Regents CEO on the six state universities and KBOR core functions. He highlighted the decline in college attendance rates and the looming enrollment cliff related to the decrease in the birth rate.

Kansas Senate Debates Property Taxes and Budget Legislation

Late this afternoon, the Kansas Senate is slated to debate [Senate Concurrent Resolution 1603](#), which would amend section 1, article 11 of the constitution of Kansas, limiting valuation increases for real property and personal property classified as mobile homes used for residential purposes.

The Senate also is slated to debate [Senate Bill 14](#), which would provide for a continuous budget until amended, lapsed, or eliminated by the legislature.

Following debate, the Senate will take final action votes on these bills either late Wednesday or Thursday.