



KHA's Capitol Comments
February 11, 2025

Senate Public Health and Welfare Hears Rural Emergency Hospital Bill and Others

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Senator Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 82](#). The legislation waives physical environment standards for hospitals transitioning to Rural Emergency Hospitals. [KHA testified](#) in support as did LeadingAge Kansas and Mercy Hospital, Inc., Moundridge. The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services testified as neutral to the bill.

The committee also heard [Senate Bill 88](#); which requires state long-term care ombudsman and regional ombudsman to receive training in memory care.

Next, the committee worked the following bills:

[Senate Bill 29](#). The committee created a substitute bill that deals with public gatherings related to local health officers. They may recommend but not prohibit. The committee recommended the substitute bill as amended, and it will now go to the full Senate for further review.

Lastly, the committee took final action on [Senate Bill 126](#), which enacts the Physician Assistant Licensure Compact to provide interstate practice privileges for physician assistants. The committee made technical amendments and recommended the bill favorably for passage.

The committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, Feb. 12.

House Appropriations Committee Works on House Budgets

Today, the House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), worked through the last of the agency budgets, including the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.

The committee made the following adjustments:

- Motion to reduce the funds for IDD waivers from 500 slots to 320 slots
- Establish an interim committee to look at contract nursing
- Decrease in dental Medicaid from \$16.9 million to \$4 million
- Decrease in Brain Injury Waiver cognitive therapy from \$25 million to \$20 million
- Reducing funds for telehealth section from KDADS budget for Hazel Health

The committee will continue meeting throughout the week.

Senate Government Efficiency Hears Bill Regarding Medicaid Waivers

Today, the Senate Government Efficiency Committee, chaired by Senator Renee Erickson (R-Wichita), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 161](#). The bill would require legislative approval prior to any state agency seeking or implementing a public assistance program waiver or other authorization from the federal government that expands eligibility for any public assistance program or increases costs to the state.

Proponents:

- Brian Sickma, Opportunity Solutions Project
- Jerry Michaud, Developmental Services in Northwest Kansas
- Matt Fletcher, executive director of Interhab

Proponents highlighted they need to have more involvement in the process of provider input and requested an amendment.

Opponents:

- April Homan, Alliance for a Healthy Kansas
- Heather Braum, Kansas Action for Children
- Sean Gatewood, KanCare Advocates Network
- Mike Burgess, Kansas Disability Rights Center of Kansas
- Karen Seybert, Kansas Harvesters

The committee also heard from Christine Osterlund, state Medicaid director and Karla Whiteside-Hicks from the Kansas Department for Children and Families. The committee is scheduled to meet on Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Senate Judiciary Hears Bills Expanding Hearsay Exemptions for Medical Care Professionals

Today, the Senate Judiciary Committee, chaired by Senator Kellie Warren (R-Leawood), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 127](#), which expands the hearsay exception for statements made to all health care providers.

Proponents:

- Aaron Breitenbach, Kansas County District Attorney Association

Breitenbach testified that many other health care professionals who provide patient-centered care that should be included as a physician currently is.

Opponents:

- Houston Bales, Kansas State Board of Indigents' Defense

The committee is slated to meet on Wednesday, Feb. 12.

Senate Federal and State Affairs Works Governor Appointment Bill

Today, the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee worked on [Senate Bill 105](#). The legislation requires the governor to appoint a person to fill vacancies in the offices of United States senator, state treasurer and commissioner of insurance from a list of names approved by the legislature. The committee amended the bill in the following ways:

- Requires approval by the Kansas secretary of state
- Added a severability clause
- If the vacancy is after May of an even number year, the election would not occur until two years following
- Language prohibiting any member of the appointment committee from being on the list
- The Legislative Committee must have someone from each Congressional district
- The governor would have three calendar days to make the appointment after a list of recommendations is given

The bill passed out favorably and will now go to the Senate floor.

House Health and Human Services Hear/Work Bills

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) held a hearing and worked [House Bill 2170](#). The legislation designates the first full week of February as Kansas Burn Awareness Week. The committee heard from Dr. Julia Slater with the Burnett Burn Center as a proponent. There were no other conferees. The committee worked the bill, and it now goes to the full House for review.

Next, the committee held a hearing on [House Bill 2218](#). The legislation amends the definition of "psilocybin" in the Uniform Controlled Substances Act to exclude the pharmaceutical composition of crystalline polymorph psilocybin and add crystalline polymorph psilocybin to Schedule IV of the Uniformed Controlled Substance Act.

Proponent conferees included:

- Tess Bettler, Compass Pathways

Opposition:

- James Davis, Private Citizen.

The committee last heard [House Bill 2159](#), which creates the Emergency Opioid Antagonists Assistance Grant Fund to provide emergency opioid antagonists to law enforcement agencies and removes law enforcement from the Kansas Board of Pharmacy.

Proponents:

- Ed Klumpp, Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police
- Jennifer Ebert, Private Citizen
- Amber Saale, Private Citizen
- Ashley Richey, Private Citizen

Neutral Testimony:

- Kansas Board of Pharmacy

The committee also worked [House Bill 2039](#), which amends the definitions in the Kansas Credentialing Act to state certain entities providing physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language pathology are not home health agencies.

House Passes Bills Ahead of Incoming Weather

Today, the full Kansas House reviewed and took action on the following bills ahead of the incoming weather:

- [House Bill 2027](#) concerns public assistance and reorganizes subsections of the public assistance statute. The bill passed on a vote of [88-35](#).
- [House Bill 2085](#) relates to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and extends the expiration of permits issued under the water pollution control permit system from five to ten years. The bill passed on a vote of 123-0.
- [House Bill 2092](#) concerns labor and employment; relates to professional employer organizations; provides that registrations of such organizations with the secretary of state shall expire on Oct. 15 following issuance; providing an exception therefrom for registrations issued on or after Jan. 1, 2025, that shall expire on Oct. 15, 2026; making the time for filing annual audits by such organizations coincide with the time of renewing of registrations; limits the means of providing surety by a professional employer organization with insufficient working capital to the provision of a bond and eliminating the market value measure of the sufficiency of such bond. The bill passed on a vote of 123-0.

These bills will now go to the Kansas Senate for further review. Most legislative committees are making plans to meet on a limited or remote basis with incoming weather reports.