



***KHA's Capitol Comments***  
**February 27, 2025**

**Senate Public Health and Welfare Hears Bill**

Senate Public Health and Welfare, chaired by Senator Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), held a very short meeting to hear on [House Bill 2027](#). The legislation reorganizes subsections of the public assistance statutes. The only conferee on the bill was the legislative revisor's staff, who explained the intent and process of reorganizing the statutes.

The committee will meet again next week.

**House Appropriations Updates on 2026 World Cup and More**

Today, the House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), received an update on the 2026 World Cup. Lindsay Douglas, director of integrated operations, highlighted that Kansas and Missouri have provided much assistance, with Kansas contributing \$27 million out of \$111 million in public funds. Roughly half of the world's population will watch. It is anticipated to be the largest event FIFA has hosted. Kansas City will be getting six matches, including a quarterfinal match. Douglas emphasized that this will increase tourism and traffic into many other surrounding communities, with likely 650,000 visitors, and approximately 54 percent likely to be international visitors between the ages of 30 and 49. The committee asked about local law enforcement and for other communities to host local watch parties.

The committee also heard about a Make My Move project from Ben Ledo, vice president of Enterprise Sales. The services are a marketing program, and he requests \$3 million in appropriations to work with communities across the state.

The committee also held hearings on the following legislation:

[House Bill 2237](#) authorizes hiring, recruitment and retention bonuses in state agencies' employee award and recognition program, increases the limitation on such award or bonus to \$10,000, eliminates the secretary of administration's authority to adopt rules and regulations and requires such secretary to submit an annual report to certain legislative committees concerning such awards and bonuses.

[Senate Bill 125](#) authorizes the payment of certain claims against the state.

The committee will meet again next week.

### **Senate Ways and Means Continues Work on Higher Education Budget**

Today, the Senate Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Senator Rick Billinger (R-Goodland), continued work on the House budget bill contained in [House Bill 2007](#).

Yesterday, the committee removed all the funds related to those items paid for by ARPA interest, including removing the \$1 million for the health care upskilling and training program.

Today, the committee continued discussions on the higher education budget items. The committee heard from the following:

- Blake Flanders, CEO of Kansas Board of Regents, highlighted the need to fully fund programs, a state employee pay investment, cybersecurity, and a continuation of the Kansas Blueprint for Literacy.
- Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek with Washburn University highlighted some differences with a municipal university and appropriations requests.
- Greg Nichols, Salina Area Technical College, highlighted partnerships with the K-12 partners and appropriations requests
- Matt Lindsey, president of the Kansas Independent College Association, highlighted enrollment increases, community college partnerships and economic impacts, emphasizing a need to apply consistent rules on need-aid scholarships and ensure availability to public or private colleges via the Comprehensive Grant.
- Heather Morgan, executive director of the Kansas Community College Association, highlighted business and industry needs in non-credited training options and services available to students.

The Senate made two adjustments to the House budget bill:

- Eliminated diversity, equity and inclusion programs in the executive branch
- Requirement of full-time state employees returning to the office

The committee will meet again next week to continue work on the budget bill.

### **House Commerce Committee Hears Childcare Bill**

Today, the House Commerce Committee, chaired by Representative Sean Tarwater (R-Stillwell), held a hearing on [House Bill 2294](#). The legislation reduces certain license fees and training requirements for staff of child care centers, creates a process for daycare facility licensees to apply for a temporary waiver of certain statutory requirements, authorizes the secretary to develop and operate pilot programs to increase child care facility availability or capacity, transfers certain child care programs to the Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services and separates licensing duties between the secretary for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the executive director of Kansas Early Childhood Developmental Services. The committee members heard from the following proponent conferees:

- Senator Tory Blew (R-Great Bend)
- Zack Vincent, Governor's Office
- Jason Watkins, Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce
- William Wilk, Kansas Chamber of Commerce
- Christy Smith, ChildCare Aware of Kansas
- John Wilson, Kansas Action for Children
- Wendy Doyle, UnitedWe
- Joyce Glasscock, Kansas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs
- Jennifer Brunning, Kansas Alliance of YMCAs
- Melissa Rooker, Kansas Children's Cabinet

The committee heard from one opponent, Tiffany Manis, Family Childcare Providers. The committee will meet again next week.

### **Senate Federal and State Affairs Hears Immigration Bill**

The Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee, chaired by Senator Michael Thompson (R-Leawood), held a hearing on [Senate Bill 254](#). The legislation prohibits aliens who are unlawfully present in the United States from receiving any state or local public benefit in accordance with applicable federal law.

The committee heard from the following conferees:

#### Proponents:

- Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach suggested that Nebraska and Oklahoma have passed similar legislation. The committee questioned holding employers accountable and interactions with federal law.

#### Opponents:

- Sister Therese Bangert
- Stuart Swetlund, Kansas Interfaith Action
- Mike Taylor, Kansas County Commissioners
- Roshenelle Amby, ACLU
- Tim Graham, KNEA
- Forrest Emkee, Private Citizen
- Justin Gust, El Centro
- Aljandro Lopez, New Frontiers
- Dr. Sliva, High School Teacher

The committee saw a conferee get up to testify after the time was up, and the microphone was cut off. The committee room was cleared as the conferees in the room were asking for more time to testify.

## **House Health and Human Service Committee Hears Updates on 988 and MHIT**

House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), heard an update on the 988 services in Kansas, presented by Drew Atkins of the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services. Atkins highlighted the following:

- What is 988? It was formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.
- Who currently answers 988 Calls? Headquarters Kansas, COMCARE of Sedgwick County, Johnson County Mental Health Center, Wyandot Behavioral Health Network and HealthSource Integrated Solutions
- The history of funding and enactment
- Geo-fencing capabilities that went live in the fall of 2024
- In May 2024, monthly contacts exceeded half a million, up one-third from May 2023
- Test Usage increased 1,135 percent in the previous 12 months
- Chats increased 141 percent in the last 12 months
- Calls increased 46 percent over the last 12 months
- Contacts by county
- The 988 Coordinating Council Oversight

The committee also heard from the chief administrative officer with HealthSource and received a presentation from Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Commissioner Drew Adkins about the Mental Health Intervention Team Program in schools that serve more than 130 schools.

The committee will meet again next week.

### **KHA Bill Tracker**

The [KHA Bill Tracker](#) keeps you up-to-date on current legislation. KHA will update and share this document daily while the legislators are in session.

### **Introduction of Bills**

[Senate Bill 278](#) by the Committee on Assessment and Taxation – Concerning sales taxation; relating to exemptions; providing an exemption for certain purchases and sales by care to share cancer support group of Bourbon county, Kansas, Inc.

[Senate Bill 280](#) by the Committee on Assessment and Taxation – Concerning property tax; relating to levies; requiring elector approval for any taxing entity to increase its total amount of property tax to be levied by more than the annual rate of inflation

[House Bill 2390](#) by the Committee on Taxation, requested by Representative Turner on behalf of Representative Averkamp – Concerning sales and compensating use tax; relating to city and countywide retailers' sales tax; providing countywide retailers' sales tax authority for Jackson County for the purpose of supporting hospital services in the county

[House Bill 2392](#) by the Committee on Appropriations, requested by Representative Wasinger  
– Concerning nursing workforce development; relating to nursing schools; setting maximum education levels for instructors at nursing schools as a requirement for state approval