

Kansas Legislative Newsletter

June 2025

TOPEKA, KANSAS

House District 4

KANSAS' FUTURE ON A BETTER COURSE

This year the legislature reformed the budget process by creating a new budget committee that met in the fall of 2024 to create the legislature's own budget proposal for 2025. With the new budgeting process, the legislature — not the governor — introduced a budget proposal that set the agenda for analyzing spending, prioritizing essential services while rejecting unnecessary government expansion.

We reinforced our commitment to education by fully funding Kansas schools, including $10 million for special education and additional funds to account for cost-of-living adjustments. These investments ensure that our students get the resources they need without raising taxes on hardworking Kansans.

Beyond education, we took critical steps to prioritize our most vulnerable. This year's budget eliminated 200 additional slots from the Intellectual Developmentally Disabled Waiver Waitlist, providing real help for Kansas families who have been waiting too long for services. We also increased nursing home reimbursement rates for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, ensuring that Kansas seniors can retire in their home communities instead of being forced to move. These are the kinds of targeted, responsible investments that make a real difference in people's lives — without growing government unnecessarily.

At the same time, we upheld our commitment to fiscal responsibility. We proved that Kansas is able to invest in key priorities while keeping spending in check. We also allocated funds in infrastructure projects using remaining ARPA funds, rather than pulling from the State General Fund, preventing unnecessary strain on taxpayers.

We included new policies to eliminate unfilled positions and unnecessary diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs within the state. This budget doubles down on conservative principles, fiscal discipline, responsible investments, and putting Kansans first.

By embracing this responsibility, we set a new standard for fiscal transparency and accountability that puts Kansas's future on a better course.

In Your Service...

Rick James



Representative Rick James

Republican member of the House of Representatives
2025 - Present

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It is an honor and a privilege to represent you at the Capitol!

SESSION WRAP-UP

We had numerous victories this session. We got the state government out of the property tax business, further simplified the income tax code, reformed the budget process, reduced burdensome regulations, removed barriers to homebuilding, enacted protections for children, and gave Kansans the opportunity to elect their Supreme Court justices.

COMMITTEES

Committee Assignments

Federal and State Affairs
Meets Daily – 9:00 a.m. – Room 346-S

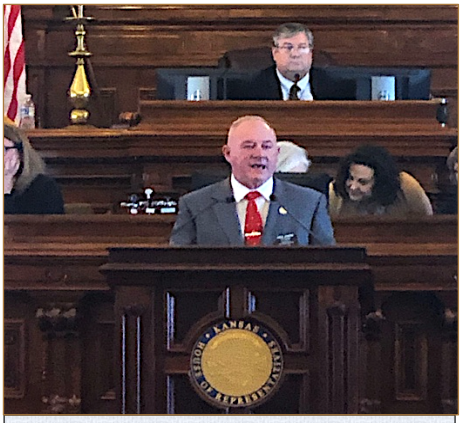
Corrections and Juvenile Justice
Meets Daily – 1:30 p.m. – Room 546-S

Insurance
Meets Mon/Wed – 3:30 p.m. – Room 218-N

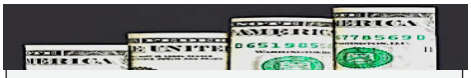
Elections
Meets Tue/Thu – 3:30 p.m. – Room 218-N

As always, I appreciate hearing from you. If you have any questions or concerns on issues before the legislature, please don't hesitate to contact me.

HOUSE FLOOR



I had the privilege of carrying SCR 1602 to the House floor urging the Governor to fully cooperate with the federal enforcement of immigration laws. This resolution passed the House 82 – 35 and the Senate 31 - 9.



STATE BUDGET

SB 125 - A joint House and Senate committee began examining spending proposals in late 2024 and packaged their recommendations in a bill introduced at the start of session. The objective was to bring expenditures more in line with revenue forecasts, which otherwise would be unsustainable in the future. This required restraint because agencies submitted requests for $1.1 billion in new spending.

The budget adjusts all funds total state expenditures to $25.60 billion, including $10.64 billion from the State General Fund (SGF) for FY 2026. This is an all funds decrease of $1.47 billion, or 5.4%, and a SGF decrease of $210.5 million, or 1.9%, below the FY 2025 recommended expenditures.

The budget also maintains a positive SGF ending balance for FY 2026 of $1.3 billion, which is in addition to the $1.75 billion held in the state's Budget Stabilization Fund. It provides funding for infrastructure, nursing homes, maternity centers, and the State's Water Plan, ensuring our roads and bridges are maintained, vulnerable Kansans are cared for, and long-term water management and conservation efforts are addressed.

While revenue growth is expected to slow modestly in future years, our current reserves provide a stable platform to manage through economic changes while honoring the tax relief we've enacted. Passed the House 89 – 36 and Senate 30 – 10.

GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY

HB 2134 – Updates the open meetings and records law, requires public comments to also be streamed or broadcast with the rest of a meeting, limits record request charges to the actual cost to the government entity. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

This year the House Speaker established the 'Select Committee on Government Oversight' that will operate similarly to the Government Oversight on the federal level. This select committee will monitor and ensure the proper functioning, transparency, and accountability of government agencies, programs, and regulations. The committee will hold hearings and investigate potential misconduct, inefficiencies, and work to identify areas for improvement and recommend reforms.

RULES AND REGULATIONS REVOCATION

SB 77 – Requires state agencies to provide notice of revocation of administrative rules and regulations to the public and removes abolished and inactive state agencies from the agency review requirement. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

CONSUMER DOCUMENT FEES

HB 2118 - Provides new protections for Kansas consumers by requiring any private entity that solicits a fee for filing or retrieving certain government documents to provide disclaimers to consumers that the solicitations are not made by or on behalf of a government agency. Passed the House 117 – 2 and Senate 39 – 1.

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Veto is Overridden.

HB 2240 - Prohibits state agencies from seeking or implementing any public assistance program waiver or other federal government authorization from the federal government that expands eligibility for any public assistance program or increases any cost to the state or makes certain changes in services for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities without approval from either the Legislature or the Legislative Coordinating Council. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 87 - 38 and Senate 31 – 9.

INSPECTOR GENERAL

Veto is Overridden.

HB 2217 – Expands the scope of the inspector general to audit and investigate all state cash, food or health assistance programs and grants the inspector general the power to subpoena, administer oaths and execute warrants. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 87 - 38 and Senate 30 – 10.

CONTINUOUS STATE BUDGET

Veto is Overridden.

SB 14 – Allows the previous year's budget to remain in effect if a new budget isn't enacted by July 1. The bill prevents a government shutdown by continuing appropriations. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 85 - 39 and Senate 31 – 9.

MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEE WHISTLEBLOWER

HB 2160 – Establishes the Kansas Municipal Employee Whistleblower Act to provide legal protections for municipal employees who report or disclose unlawful or dangerous conduct. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

The Legislature is adjourned until January 12, 2026

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS



SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

SCR 1611 – Proposes an amendment to the Kansas Constitution to abolish the current method of appointing justices to the Kansas Supreme Court and replace it with direct election of such justices. Passed the House 84 – 40 and Senate 27 – 13.

The current selection system has a commission of five lawyers and four non-lawyers that screen applicants and send three names to the governor who appoints one of them to the supreme court. The resolution gives Kansans the opportunity to directly elect their Supreme Court Justices.

Kansas voters will decide on this Constitutional Amendment of electing Supreme Court Justices on August 4, 2026.

CITIZENS ONLY VOTING

HCR 5004 – Proposes an amendment to the Kansas Constitution 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 in order to vote in the state. Passed the House 90 – 28 and Senate 37 – 3.

Kansas voters will decide on this Constitutional Amendment allowing only U.S. citizens to vote on November 3, 2026.

MEMORIAL DESIGNATIONS

FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS' MEMORIAL

HB 2372 – Designates the existing Fallen Firefighter's Memorial adjacent to the Kansas Museum in Wichita as the official Fallen Firefighters Memorial of the State of Kansas.

REPRESENTATIVE MARVIN S. ROBINSON

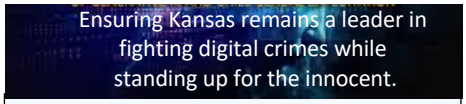
HB 2263 – Designates a portion of K-5 as the Rep Marvin S Robinson Memorial Highway (and redesignate a portion of the Harry Darby Memorial Highway for I-635). Representative Marvin Robinson was committeed to public service, including service in the U.S. Navy, various local boards, efforts to preserve the historical Quindaro site in Wyandotte County, and as a Kansas state legislator in 2023 and 2024.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DATABASE

HB 2304 – Requires certain reporting of local economic development programs, which would be included in the transparency database hosted by the Department of Commerce. Passed the House 88 - 37 and Senate 28 – 12.

STATE OPPORTUNITY CAREERS

SB 166 – Enacts the Fostering Competitive Career Opportunities Act to remove postsecondary degree requirements from state employment considerations. Passed the House 90 - 32 and Senate 39 - 1.



This bill is an important step toward safeguarding personal privacy in the age of AI and creating a legal framework to hold people accountable.

AI CHILD EXPLOITATION

SB 186 – Criminalizes conduct related to artifically generated depictions of minor children for purpose of sexual expoitation and dissemination of such images. The bill also amends laws related to the availability of probable cause information, issuance of search warrants, setting bond for person charged with certain sex offenses, forfeiture of appearance bonds, and regulation of compensate sureties. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

CHILDCARE

HB 2045 – Establishes the Kansas Office of Early Childhood, updates law regulating child care centers and child care homes, and provides certain definitions, staffing requirements, and requirements for professional development training. Passed the House 99 - 23 and Senate 29 – 11.

PROTECTION ORDER FEE

HB 2182 – Prohibits a sheriff from charging a fee for service of process for proceedings under the Protection from Abuse Act and the Protection from Stalking, Sexual Assault or Human Trafficking Act. Passed the House 118 – 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

DENOUNCING ANTISEMITISM

SB 44 – Declares that antisemitism and antisemitic acts are against the public policy of the state, including but not limited to the purposes of public educational and law enforcement agencies. The bill hopes to help address religious discrimination and antisemitism on campuses and the increase of antisemitism in recent years. Passed the House 102 – 21 and Senate 39 – 1.

SPONSORED RESOLUTIONS

KANSAS AIR NATIONAL GUARD

HR 6008 – Supporting the Kansas Air National Guard's 190th Air Refueling Wing on being a recipient finalist for a KC-46A Pegasus mission and accompanying aircraft.

SUPPORTING TAIWAN

HR 6010 – Strengthening the sister-state ties between the State of Kansas and Taiwan.

ANTIQUE TRACTOR PRESERVATION DAY

HR 6011 – Recognizing August 22 as Antique Tractor Preservation Day.

DENOUNCING SATANIC WORSHIP

HR 6016 – Denouncing the satanic worship ritual that took place on March 28, 2025.

VIETNAM WAR VETERANS

HR 6018 – Recognizing March 29, 2025, as Vietnam War Veterans Day.

PROTECTING WOMEN, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

CHILD PROTECTIVE CUSTODY

HB 2075 – Determines when law enforcement may take a minor child into protective custody for suspected abuse or neglect, adds a procedure for law enforcment to report suspected abuse or neglect for the purpose of initiating an investigation; and amends law concerning permanency hearings for a child in custody. Passed the House 123 - 0 and Senate 38 – 0.



HB 2382 – Requires school districts to include a fetal development presentation as part of the curriculum for any course that addresses human growth, human development, or human sexuality. The bill also authorizes the Board of Education to establish the rates of compensation for board members. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 84 – 40 and Senate 31 – 9

Veto is Overridden.

PREGNANCY DIAGNOSTIC

HB 2307 - Transfers the power to authorize and oversee certain activities regarding Prenatal and Postnatal Diagnosed Conditions Awareness Programs from the Department of Health and Environment to the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

NEWBORN SCREENING HEALTHCARE

SB 126 – Establishes an Advance Universal Newborn Screening Program, provides for the reimbursement of certain treatment services, extends the transfer of funds to the Kansas Newborn Screening Fund, increases state financial assistance to local health departments under certain circumstances, and increases the annual assessment rate on hospital providers. Passed the House 123 – 1 and Senate 40 – 0.



This bill is about being compassionate to pregnant women. It helps mothers facing medical and pregnancy-related expenses that can't be ignored while waiting for a child to be formally recognized. It also benefits Kansans who believe parents share a duty to cover life's essentials from day one.

UNBORN CHILD SUPPORT

HB 2062 – Allows a court to consider child support payments for unborn children from the time of conception, excluding any costs related to an elective abortion, and allows a new child tax exemption for unborn children. The bill also allows courts to consider retirement and pension accounts to help pay for child support. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 87 - 38 and Senate 31– 9.



SB 69 – Bans transgender surgery and the use of puberty blockers for minors. The bill includes important exceptions for pediatric cancer patients, whose treatment can include hormone blockers. It also restricts use of state funds to promote gender transitioning and adds violations against a healthcare provider who performs such treatments. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 85 - 34 and Senate 31 – 9.

MEDICAID SERVICES Veto is Overridden.

SB 2284 – Directs the Department of Administration to adopt written policies governing the negotiated procurement of managed care organizations to provide state medicaid services pursuant to a contract with the Kansas Program of Medical Assistance. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 88 - 37 and Senate 30 – 10.

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SB 79 – Directs the Secretary for Children and Families to request a waiver from Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) rules to allow the state to prohibit the purchase of candy and soft drinks with food assistance funds. Passed the House 65 - 58 and Senate 29 - 11. Vetoed by the Governor.

VETOED



HB 2311 – Prohibits the secretary for Children and Family Services from adopting, and enforcing policies for adoptive placement, custody and appointment of a custodian that may conflict with sincerely held religious or moral beliefs regarding sexual orientation or gender identity. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 87 – 38 and Senate 31 – 9.



SB 250 - Right to Try Act provides hope for Kansans who are suffering from life-threatening or debilitation diseases to try new break through treatments. The bill permits a manufacturer to make an individualized investigative treatment available to a requesting patient. Passed the House 119 - 3 and Senate 40 – 0.

WORKFORCE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

REGULATORY SANDBOX Veto is Overridden.

HB 2291 – Creates the Regulatory Relief Division within the office of the Attorney General and establishes the General Regulatory Sandbox Program to waive or suspend rules and regulations for program participants. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 88 – 37 and Senate 30 – 10.



REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETISTS

SB 67 – Authorizes registered nurse anesthetists to prescribe, procure and administer drugs consistent with the registered nurse anesthetist's education and qualifications. The bill prohibits registered nurse anesthetists to perform an abortion or prescribe drugs to induce an abortion. Passed the House 118 – 5 and Senate 36 - 4.

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

HB 2039 – Adds "maternity center" to the definition of health care provider for purposes of the Health Care Provider Insurance Availability Act, amends definitions in the Kansas Credentialing Act, and makes changes to Emergency Medical Services statutes. Passed the House 125 - 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

ATHLETIC TRAINER

SB 175 - Updates the definition of athletic trainer to allow those licensed in another state or foreign country to practice in Kansas. Passed the House 121 - 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

RURAL EMERGENCY HOSPITALS

HB 2249 – Requires the Secretary for Aging and Disability Services to grant physical environment waivers for certain rural emergency hospitals to provide skilled nursing care. Passed House 123 – 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

RESTRICTIVE CONTRACT COVENANTS

SB 241 – Provides that restrictive covenants in certain contracts are enforceable and not considered a restraint of trade in certain circumstances. Passed the House 101 - 17 and Senate 38 – 0.

KANSAS HUNTING & FISHING LICENSE

HB 2028 – Revives the senior combination hunting and fishing passes to residents of this state and removes the expiration date for Kansas kids' lifetime combination hunting and fishing licenses. The bill prohibits non-residents from hunting migratory waterfowl during certain times and places and increases fees for habitat stamps. Passed the House 65 – 59 and Senate 40 – 0.

VETOED



HORSE RACING

SB 21 – Amends the Kansas Parimutuel Racing Act, removing location restrictions, to allow live horse racing across the state and alters distributions of moneys. Passed the House 90 - 35 Senate 37 – 3.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

HB 2342 - Authorizes a state and national criminal history record check on an applicant or employee in a sensitive position within the Department of Commerce and on employees who have access to federal tax information in the Department of Labor. Passed House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

GUARANTEED INCOME PROGRAM

HB 2101 – Prohibits municipalities from adopting and implementing a guaranteed income program. Passed the House 86 - 37 and Senate 29 - 11.

MOTORCYCLE INSTRUCTORS

HB 2031 – Permits driving school instructors to possess a motorcycle driver's license from a state other than Kansas. Passed the House 121 - 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

HB 2069 – Enacts compacts for school psychologists, dietitians, cosmetologists, and physician assistants to enable interstate practice privileges. Passed the House 122 – 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

COSMETOLOGY ARTIST PERMITS

HB 2338 – Authorizes the Board of Cosmetology to issue temporary location and temporary guest artist permits. Passed the House 121 – 2 and Senate 38 – 2.

MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS

HB 2280 - Allows the spouses of military members who are not on active duty to be eligible for the waiving of fees for occupational licensure. Passed the House 124 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

FIREWORKS

SB 199 – Permits year-round fireworks sales under certain conditions and makes changes to law related to the sale of fireworks. Passed the House 68 - 53 and Senate 28 - 12.

MILK PROCESSORS

HB 2254 – Ensures Kansas milk producers are financially protected by requiring milk processors to hold payments in trust for producers until full payment is received. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

POULTRY DISEASE

SB 89 - Authorizes the Animal Health Commissioner to adopt rules and regulations to administer the Poultry Disease Control Act and fees for the National Poultry Improvement Plan. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

WATER PROGRAM TASK FORCE

HB 2172 – Creates the water program task force to create a long-term investment program for water with a dedicated revenue source. Passed the House 118 - 8 and Senate 40 – 0.

WATER PERMITS

HB 2085 - Extends the expiration of permits issued under the Water Pollution Control Permit System from five to 10 years. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.



My intern, Alejandro Hernandez, is a senior at UMKC and was such a help while he worked with me for a few weeks during session.

TRANSMISSION LINE SITING

HB 2040 – Extends the time in which the state corporation commission makes a final order on a transmission line siting application. Passed the House 123 – 2 and Senate 39 - 1 .

UTILITY POLE ATTACHMENTS

HB 2109 - Exempts public utilities from civil liability relating to the attachment, access, operation, maintenance or removal of law enforcement equipment on any utility pole owned or operated by the public utility. Passed the House 78 - 44 and Senate 29 – 9.

FIRE DAMAGE RECOVERY

HB 2107 – Provides for a process for Kansans to recover economic damages from wildfires caused by electric public utilities. Passed the House 109 - 16 and Senate 36 - 2.

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION

HB 2061 – Amends the definition of a critical infrastructure facility to include telecommunications and broadband infrastructure, extending legal protections to help ensure their security and limit service outages for Kansans. Passed the House 110 - 12 and Senate 40 – 0.

ROOFTOP SOLAR

HB 2149 – Creates consumer protections for Kansas businesses and residents that are interested in installing rooftop solar, provides certainty to the solar industry and utilities, and will ultimately allow Kansans the opportunity for more energy independence. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

SB 36 - Increases the cap on moneys disbursed to conservation districts and provides an increased matching basis of 2 – 1 or state moneys based on amounts allocated by the board of county commissioners for districts. Passed the House 119 – 2 and Senate 39 – 0.

WATER FLEX ACCOUNTS

SB 58 – Modifies the requirements and allocations for multi-year flex accounts and flexibilities to maximize the efficiency of water usage and conservation. Passed the House 119 – 2 and Senate 40 – 0.



The Fort Scott High School Theater students performed in the rotunda and afterwards stopped by to say "hello".



Two Prairie View High School graduates who are now freshman attending K-State were at the Capitol for FFA day. It was great seeing these students!

<< Visitors at the Capitol >>



REAL ESTATE COVENANTS

SB 194 – Voids a restrictive covenant that limits the use of real property and includes discriminatory provisions. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

With the passage of this bill, Wichita State University will be able to build a $5 million internet exchange point, the first in Kansas.

HOUSING FAST-TRACK PERMITS

HB 2088 – Enacts the Fast Track Permits Act, which will establish standards to ensure the timely review of permits for building single-family residences, helping lower costs for developers and homeowners alike by limiting delays in the permit application process. Passed the House 83 - 40 and Senate 30 – 10.

LAND SURVEYORS

HB 2168 - Extends the amount of time required for certain reports to be filed by public land surveys from 30 to 90 days, aligning Kansas with industry standards. Passed the House 115 - 7 and Senate 40 – 0.

HOUSING TAX CREDITS

HB 2289 - Makes changes to the Kansas Affordable Housing Tax Credit and Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit Programs by allowing the investor tax credit to be claimed the year in which the investment for the credit was made and provides for the incremental discontinuation of the Kansas Affordable Housing Tax Credit Program. Passed House 98 - 23 and Senate 33 – 7.

GOVERNMENT BANKING

HB 2152 - Aims to redirects Kansas tax dollars back into the state's economy by modernizing investment policies for local and state governments encouraging deposit in Kansas banks rather than out-of-state- investments. The bill introduces a Single Bank Collateral Pool Program, increases oversight and safety measures for public funds, and provides flexibility in setting bank CD program rates to boost local lending and economic growth. Passed the House 117 – 5 and Senate 40 – 0.

LOCAL SALES TAX

HB 2275 – Specifies that a sales tax exemption certificate is not required for the sales tax exemption of custom meat processing services. Passed the House 117 - 5 and Senate 40 – 0.



INCOME TAX RATE REDUCTION

SB 269 – Provides for reduction in state income and privilege tax rates contingent upon exceeding tax receipt revenues. The bill gradually moves the state to a single tax rate of 4.0 percent. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 87 - 37 and Senate 30 - 10. Veto is Overridden.

INCOME AND PROPERTY PRO-TAXPAYER

HB 2231 – Modifies Kansas income and personal property tax. Passed the House 118 – 4 and Senate 40 – 0.

Income Tax Exemption

Head-of-household and 100-percent disabled military veterans filers are allowed an additional personal exemption of $2,320 beginning in tax year 2024.

Homestead Property Tax Refund

For purpose of the refund option, provides a refund of the amount of tax in excess of the base year amount under the Homestead Property Tax Refund Act. The definition of income, as of tax year 2025, is the adjusted gross income of the taxpayer. This change excludes social security from the amount of household income to allow more seniors to be eligible.

Recreational Vehicles Property Tax

Exempts watercraft, marine equipment, off-road vehicles, golf carts, motorized bicycles, personal assistive motorized devices, and certain trailers from property tax.

Single Factor Apportionment

Requires corporation income of multistate corporations, current using a three-factor formula of sales, property and payroll factors, to be apportioned using only the sales factor beginning in tax year 2027. The bill also provides a trigger for reduction to the corporation income tax rate.

DATA CENTERS

SB 98 – Provides a sales tax exemption to certain firms making eligible investments of at least $250 million in a qualified data center. The cost of electricity would be excluded from the exemption and the firm must adhere to practices that will conserve, reuse, and replace water. Passed the House 85 - 37 and Senate 26 – 8.



ROAD TO PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

It's common knowledge that property taxes are burdening Kansans across our state. Most of these funds go to local entities – cities, counties, and school districts – rather than the state. As lawmakers, we were divided among ourselves over the best way to combat soaring property taxes. Some favored cuts and limits to the statewide mill levy that fund public schools, while others wanted to limit annual property valuation increases.

To address concerns, we began last year by increasing the amount of residential property value exempted from the statewide 20-mill school finance levy. Effective this year, the first $75,000 of appraised value on a home is exempt from this levy, providing relief to homeowners in every community across the state. We also stopped the use of inflated sales data from IRS 1031 exchanges when valuing property for taxation – ensuring that property valuations reflect true market value, not artificially high exchange prices.

Following that success, the Legislature continued its commitment for tax relief this year and discontinued the 1.5 mill levy for state owned facilities. Unfortunately, there was not enough work done before session to deliver more meaningful relief.

Work will continue next year on several different approaches for property tax relief.



SOMETIMES THE WORLD NEEDS A COWBOY

We're going to take what we can today and fight for the rest tomorrow. – Ronald Reagan

PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

SB 35 – Beginning in tax year 2026, discontinues the state 1.5 mill tax levy that funds maintenance and renovations of some state buildings and provides for their financing with transfers from the State General Fund. Passed the House 96 - 26 and Senate 40 – 0.

PROPERTY TAX NOTICES

HB 2125 – Reauthorizes the statewide school finance 20-mill levy for another 2 years, modifies deadlines for municipal budgeting and the form for revenue neutral rate notices, continues the state reimbursement of printing and postage, and prohibits filing fees at the State Board of Tax Appeals when the same prior appeal remains pending. Passed House 122 - 0 and Senate 39 – 1.



Hundreds showed up for the March for Life on January 29th. I was proud to stand for life.

NONHIGHWAY VEHICLE TITLES

SB 97 - Requires vehicle dealers to apply for a dealer inventory-only title for certain used nonhighway vehicles. Passed the House 116 - 7 and Senate 40 – 0.

ANNUAL LICENSE FEES

HB 2122 – Increases the annual license fees of electric and hybrid vehicles, ensuring that electric vehicle drivers pay their fair share to maintain Kansas highways. Passed the House 102 – 22 and Senate 40 – 0.

IGNITION INTERLOCK PROGRAM

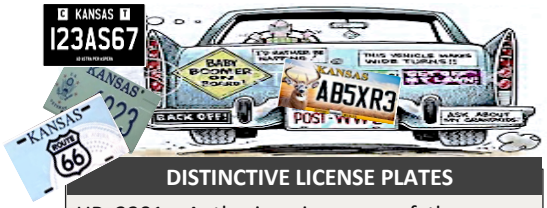
HB 2222 - Requires ignition interlock device manufacturers to pay fees to the state for the administration of the Ignition Interlock Program. Passed the House 123 - 0 and Senate 38 – 2.

UNLAWFUL PASSING OF A VEHICLE

SB 8 - Requires drivers to move over when passing stationary vehicles flashing hazard warning lights. Passed the House 119 – 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

ONLINE INSURANCE VERIFICATION

SB 42 – Enacts a web-based online insurance verification system for the real-time verification of motor vehicle insurance for law enforcement. Passed the House 124 - 1 and Senate 39 – 1.



DISTINCTIVE LICENSE PLATES

HB 2201– Authorizes issuance of three new license plates as of January 1, 2026: FFA, Route 66, and Blackout distinctive license plates. The bill also amends certain requirements for the issuance of specialized license plates to military veterans, and amends law regarding exhausted license plates and decals. Passed the House 110 – 12 and Senate 39 – 1.

HUNTER NATION LICENSE PLATE (1st Try)

SB 18 – Authorizes issuance of the Hunter Nation license plate that can be used for political fundraising. Passed the House 83 – 39 and Senate 28 – 10. Vetoed by the Governor.

VETOED

HUNTER NATION LICENSE PLATE (2nd Try)

HB 2335 – Authorizes issuance of the Hunter Nation distinctive license plate designating the funds to the Hunter Nation Foundation. Passed the House 98 - 24 and Senate 39 – 1.

VETO SESSION RECORD

This year set a new record as we overrode 14 of 19 policy bills and 15 of 30 line-item budget vetoes. The Governor also allowed eight bills to become law without her signature, including verification of voter lists with DMV license data, reorganization of the Public Assistance Program statutes, and naming a highway after deceased Rep. Marvin Robinson.

EDUCATION

STUDENT LOANS AND FEES

SB 50 – Establishes uniform interest rate provisions for Service Scholarship Programs administered by the Kansas Board of Regents. The bill also sunsets the Low-Income Family Postsecondary Savings Accounts Incentive (KIDS) on January 1, 2028. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

SCHOOLS' GRADUATION RATES

SB 45 – Establishes a statutory calculation, for purposes of accreditation, of the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for each school district and any schools within the district, including virtual. Passed the House 117 - 5 and Senate 40 – 0.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

SB 78 – Requires postsecondary educational institutions to regularly review and update accreditation policies. Passed the House 86 - 36 and Senate 38 – 2.

AT-RISK EDUCATION PROGRAMS Veto is Overridden.

HB 2033 – Amends law to add non-profit organizations accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council to the list of approved at-risk education funds. These non-profit organizations service students with reading and learning disabilities Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 89 – 32 and Senate 31 – 9.

PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SB 114 - Authorizes nonpublic and virtual school students to participate in ancillary public-school activities. Passed the House 84 - 38 and Senate 32 – 8.

NATIONAL GUARD TUITION ASSISTANCE

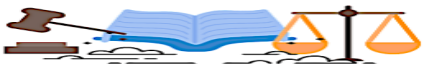
HB 2185 – Expands the Kansas National Guard Educational Assistance Act to include dependents of national guard members and the Kansas National Guard Educational Master's for Enhanced Readiness and Global Excellence (EMERGE) to include other advanced degrees. Passed the House 112 – 6 and Senate 39 – 1

MILITARY STUDENT ENROLLMENT

HB 2102 – Allows the advance enrollment of a military student whose parent or guardian will be stationed in this state. Passed the House 121 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

TECHNICAL COLLEGES

HB 2195 – Establishes the Kansas Technical College Operating Grant Fund administered by the state Board of Regents. Passed the House 121 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.



SHERIFFS OFFICIAL ACTS

HB 2155 - Specifies that sheriffs have liability for official acts related to the custody of jails. Passed the House 84 – 40 and Senate 30 – 9.

KANSAS HIGHWAY PATROL MAJORS

HB 2261 - Resolves ambiguity surrounding the classification of Kansas Highway Patrol majors. Passed the House 118- 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

LIFESAVING CARE

SB 193 - Removes administrative barriers for law enforcement agencies to provide lifesaving care to Kansans during an opioid overdose. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

STATE 911 BOARD

HB 2110 – Facilitates the State 911 Board's transition to a state agency by establishing necessary budget funds and providing flexibility to ensure the agency can provide sufficient grant funding to public safety partners. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

CORRECTIONS AND JUVENILES

CORRECTIONS CAREER CAMPUS PROJECT

HB 2215 – Modifies the definition of public-private partnership to increase the allowable cost-share for certain Department of Corrections projects, providing the ability for the Career Campus Project to move forward. Passed the House 118 – 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

MILITARY JUVENILE COURTS

HB 2242 – Authorizes the governor to accept requests of concurrent jurisdiction from the federal government in certain circumstances, allowing juvenile incidents that occur on Federal Military Installations to be adjudicated with state resources and in state juvenile courts which are better equipped to address such matters than federal courts. Passed the House 102 – 16 and Senate 31 – 9.

SEALED RECORDS AND DISTRICT COURTS

SB 204 – Requires the sealing of certain records relating to case information, warrants, and subpoenas in certain criminal and juvenile cases; and amends law concerning the selection of attorney members of County Law Library (CLL) Boards of Trustees and fees that may be used for enhancing and facilitating the functions of the district court in the county. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

PROMISE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

SB 24 – Expands the eligibility requirements for postsecondary education institutions to participate in the Kansas Promise Scholarship Program and increases the maximum amount that could be appropriated to the program. Passed the House 76 - 48 and Senate 40 – 0.

VETOED



VOTER REGISTRATIONS AND WORKERS

HB 2016 – Amends various provisions of election law concerning the maintenance of voter registration rolls, qualifications for poll workers and election board judges or clerks, and the solicitation of advance voting ballot applications. Passed the House 97 – 26 and Senate 40 - 0.

NONCITIZEN DRIVERS' LICENSES

HB 2020 – Requires a quarterly report from the Director of the Division of Vehicles listing the names, addresses and alien registration numbers of all permanent and temporary drivers licenses issued to noncitizens during such month and to remove those names from the voter registration rolls. Passed the House 83 – 35 and Senate 32 – 8.

FALSE REPRESENTATION OF AN OFFICIAL

HB 2056 – Requiring specific intent as an element of the crime of false representation of an election official and requires testing of certain voting equipment before an election. Passed the House 88 - 37 and Senate 34 – 6.

ADVANCE MAIL BALLOTS Veto is Overridden.

SB 4 – As of January 1, 2026, the bill requires advance voting ballots to be returned by 7:00 pm on Election Day, eliminating the current three-day grace period. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 84 – 41 and Senate 30 – 10.

ELECTED OFFICE VACANCIES

SB 105 – 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 until an election can be held. Passed the House 84 - 36 and Senate 31 - 9.

CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS

HB 2054 - Doubles the limits on campaign contributions for each primary and general election and eliminates limits on contributions in certain circumstances. Passed the House 72 - 52 and Senate 26 – 14.

LEGISLATOR REIMBURSEMENTS

HB 2060 – Amends law to allow legislators to accept reimbursement for expenses related to travel and Executive Branch employees to accept tickets or access to entertainment or sporting events or activities. Passed the House 75 – 47 and Senate 35 – 5.

U.S. ELECTION FUNDS Veto is Overridden.

SB 5 – Prohibits the use of funds provided by the United States government for the conduct of elections and election-related activities unless approved by the legislature. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in the House 87 - 35 and Senate 31 - 9.

RANKED-CHOICE VOTING

SB 6 – Prohibits the use of ranked-choice voting methods for conducting elections. Passed the House 86 - 37 and Senate 30 - 10.



PAGE FOR A DAY

I had the honor of welcoming Ellie Webb who served as my page for a day, along with her grandparents Dave and Wendy Webb. Ellie did a fantastic job, and it was a fun day of learning.





KANSAS MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND DRONES

SB 9 – Establishes protections to ensure the security of Kansas military installations by limiting the ability of foreign adversaries to acquire land in proximity to those installations. The bill also ensures drone technology used in Kansas does not originate from a foreign adversary. Passed the House 98 – 24 and Senate 38 – 1.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE PLATFORMS

HB 2313 – Prohibits the use of the artificial intelligence platform DeepSeek and other artificial intelligence platforms controlled by a country of concern on state-owned devices and on any state network and the use of genetic sequencers or operational software used for genetic analysis that is produced by a foreign adversary. Passed the House 87 – 38 and Senate 37 – 3.

FOREIGN NATIONALS

HB 2106 – Bans contributions from foreign nationals for the support of defeat of a proposed amendment to the Kansas Constitution. Passed the House 94 – 25 and Senate 39 – 0.

CLASS ACTION LAWSUITS

HB 2228 – Requires any political subdivision to hold an open meeting before approving a contingent fee contract for legal services and requires such contract to be approved by the Attorney General before becoming effective. Passed the House 73 - 52 and Senate 28 - 12. Vetoed by the Governor.

VETOED

SPECIAL ELECTIONS

HB 2022 – Clarifies that a special election shall not be held within 45 days before or after a general or primary election. Passed the House 88 - 35 and Senate 29 -11.

MODERNIZES ELECTION LAW

HB 2206 – Renames the Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission to the Kansas Public Disclosure Commission and modernizes election law around political committees, cooperation and consent, unused campaign funds, and other topics. Passed the House 87 - 31 and Senate 40 – 0.

THIRD PARTY LITIGATION

SB 54 – Requires the disclosure of third-party litigation funding agreements. Passed the House 87 - 31 and Senate 40 – 0.



RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE

SB 29 - Protects Kansan's First Amendment right to assemble by removing the authority of the county or joint board of health or local health officer to prohibit public gatherings when necessary for the control of infectious or contagious diseases. Public health officials could still recommend against public gatherings but would not be able to prohibit them. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed: House 86 – 38 and Senate 31 – 9. Veto is Overridden.



CONCEAL CARRY

HB 2052 – Streamlines the process for an individual with a provisional concealed carry license to request a standard license and addresses requirements that specifically identify off-duty law enforcement officers that are conceal carrying. Passed the House 105 – 17 and Senate 34 - 6.

FORFEITED FIREARMS

SB 137 – Authorizes the sale or transfer of forfeited firearms under the Kansas Standard Asset Seizure and Forfeiture Act to a licensed firearm dealer. Passed the House 90 - 28 and Senate 39 – 1

WEIGHTS, MEASURES, AND CREP ACREAGE

HB 2255 – Modernizes the weights and measures responsibilities carried out by the Department of Agriculture, expands authority to electric charging stations, and investigations of retailers who withhold access to cheaper versions of products from their online ordering apps. The program is responsible for price verification checks and protections for consumers. The bill also increases the CREP acreage cap. Passed the House 116 – 8 and Senate 40 – 0.

SCRAP METAL THEFT REDUCTION ACT

SB 237 – Authorizes law enforcement officers to conduct investigations of violations and requires investigative reports to be submitted to the Attorney General, regardless of whether any local action was taken as a result of the investigation. Passed the House 121 - 3 and Senate 38 – 2.

Kansas Legislative Newsletter

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Rick James

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La Cygne, KS 66040

Conservative Republican

Pro – Life

Pro – Family

Pro – Business

Pro – 2nd Amendment

