

THE KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CHAMBER

Kansas Legislative Newsletter

May 2026

House District 4

KEEP MOVING KANSAS FORWARD

With the legislative session now concluded, I want to thank you for the continued trust you place in me to represent our district in the Kansas House of Representatives.

This year's session focused on protecting taxpayers, limiting government growth, and strengthening the foundation of Kansas's economy and communities.

Fiscal responsibility is not a talking point — it is a responsibility we owe to every Kansas family. That is why we remained focused on controlling spending, prioritizing core services, and preventing unnecessary expansion of government programs. Maintaining a balanced and disciplined budget ensures Kansas remains financially stable and prepared for future challenges.

Property tax relief remained a top priority this session, as Kansans continue to feel the strain of rising valuations and increased local government spending. Efforts focused on limiting valuation growth and restoring balance to the system so taxpayers have more control. However, the House and Senate were ultimately unable to reach agreement on a comprehensive solution. Work on meaningful property tax relief will continue next session.

Beyond tax policy, we also focused on strengthening the state's economy, supporting development, promoting responsible stewardship of natural resources, ensuring public assistance benefits go to those who truly qualify, and advancing an education system centered on student success.

Throughout the session, I remained committed to these principles while working to represent the values and priorities of our district.

While not every proposal that was introduced moved forward, the progress we made reflects a shared commitment to fiscal discipline, economic opportunity, and strong communities. This newsletter highlights some of the key outcomes from the session and explains how new laws and policy decisions may impact you and your family.

PLANS FOR RE-ELECTION

It has been an honor serving you this year, and I am grateful for the opportunity to work on behalf of our community.

I am pleased to announce that I will be **seeking re-election** so I can continue advocating for the values and priorities of the 4th District.

Let's keep moving Kansas forward – together!

In your service…

Rick James

COMMITTEES

Committee Leadership

Chair – Veterans and Military
Tue/Thu – 9:00 a.m. – Room 281-N

Committee Assignments

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

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

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

Joint Committee on Kansas Security
On call



Representative Rick James

Republican member of the House of Representatives
2025 - Present

Rick.James@house.ks.gov
Phone: 785 -296-7616
Cell: 913-594-2980
Office: 149-S

It is an honor and a privilege to represent you at the Capitol!
www.rickjamesks.com

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 RESOLUTION 6035



EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF THE GUARD AND RESERVE

I introduced HR 6035 to commend and recognize the patriotic commitment of Kansas employers who support their employees serving in the National Guard and Reserve. Their support ensures that those who serve our country can fulfill their military responsibilities while maintaining their civilian careers. The resolution was adopted by the House without a roll call vote.

CHARLIE KIRK FREE SPEECH DAY

SCR 1615 states the Legislature condemns the assassination of Charlie Kirk and extends heartfelt condolences to his family, and to honor his legacy, the Legislature recognizes October 14, 2026, and every year thereof, as Charlie Kirk Free Speech Day in Kansas. Adopted by House 87 - 35 and Senate 30 – 9.

STATE BUDGET

This year's $10.7 billion SGF budget:

- Reduces State General Fund (SGF) spending by nearly $190 million
- Fully funds our constitutional obligations
- Invests in public safety, mental health, and services for seniors and Kansans with disabilities
- Continues our investment in Special Education
- Maintains a $1.75 billion ending balance and nearly $2 billion in the Rainy-Day Fund

Passed the House 67 – 53 and Senate 23 – 16. The Governor vetoed 42 line-items and 35 line-item vetoes were overridden.

DIGITAL RIGHT TO REPAIR

HB 2700 ceates the Kansas Digital Right to Repair Act to give consumers the legal right to repair and maintain certain digital electronic products. Manufacturers are required to provide access to parts, tools, and repair information for any device sold or leased in Kansas that cots at least $50 and relies on digital electronics to function. Passed the House 123 - 2 and Senate 40 – 0.

BILL OF RIGHTS: FIRST AMENDMENT

FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND SPEECH

HB 2018 creates the crime of interference with the conduct of a religious assembly, provides criminal penalties and a path for a civil cause of action for damages. The crime is defined two ways: forced use and property damage. Passed the House 106 - 14 and Senate 34 - 6.

KIRK RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT

HB 2333 establishes the Kansas Intellectual Rights and Knowledge Act (KIRK), setting restrictions and requirements of public and postsecondary educational institutions regarding participating in non-commercial expressive activities and establishes a cause of action to be brought by either the Attorney General or the individual harmed should a college or university violate the act. This act affirms that campus outdoor areas are open forums for expression by prohibiting discrimination against student organizations based on their beliefs. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 85 – 38 and in the Senate 29 – 11.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

ELECTIONS

DRIVERS LICENSE CITIZENSHIP STATUS

HB 2587 requires citizenship status be listed on driver's licenses and permits any person whose drivers' license lists them as a citizen to obtain a provisional ballot for voting purposes if the person claims to be a citizen. Passed the House 77 - 42 and Senate 27 - 12. Vetoed by Governor.

VETOED

SIGNATURE VERIFICATION CHALLENGES

HB 2569 requires any legal challenge alleging a state election law or a violation of U.S. or Kansas Constitution be filed in the District Court of Shawnee County. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

VETOED

VOTER REGISTRATION WEBSITES

HB 2437 enacts the SAVE Kansas Act, restricting a person registering to vote through a website to using only a website with .gov domain or an approved website by the Secretary of State. Vetoed by Governor. Veto override prevailed in House 84 – 39 and Senate 28 – 11.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

CANDIDATE RESIDENCY

HB 2733 requires candidates and officeholders to reside in the state or district for the duration of their candidacy and term in office. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

VETO SCORE CARD

- 28 bills were vetoed by the Governor
- 20 vetoes were overridden - 8 were sustained

2ND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

FIREARM AGREEMENTS AND SHOTGUNS

HB 2501 provides immunity from civil liability to federal firearms licensees when returning a firearm to its owner at the end of a firearm hold agreement and prevents municipalities from imposing additional rules on these agreements. It removes criminal restrictions on firearm suppressors and shotgun barrel lengths while increasing penalties for certain felonies committed with a suppressor or short-barrel shotgun. The bill also clarifies that participating in a firearm hold agreement does not imply the owner lacks legal capacity or fitness to possess a firearm. Passed the House 99 - 22 and Senate 35 - 4

FIREARM STORAGE TAX CREDITS & MORE

SB 82 makes changes to tax credits for employer expenses for childcare, creates tax credits for retail sales of higher-ethanol blends of fuel, and for purchases of lockable gun and ammunition storage, and discontinue or repeal certain tax credits. The firearm credit is limited for tax years 2026 – 2028 and $250 a person. Passed the House 76 – 45 and Senate 36 – 2.

RESOLUTIONS

APPLICATION FOR CONVENTION OF STATES

SCR 1604 serves as Kansas' application to Congress, under the provisions of Article V of the U.S. Constitution, for the purpose of calling a Convention of the States. The convention would be limited to proposing amendments to the U.S. Constitution that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government, limit the power and jurisdiction of the federal government, and limit the terms of office for members of Congress and federal officials. Adopted by House 80 – 42 and Senate 29 – 11. Presented to Secretary of State.

CONGRESSIONAL TERM LIMITS

HCR 5022 serves as Kansas' application to Congress for a limited national covention for the exclusive purpose of proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States establishing term limits for members of Congress. Adopted by the House 78 – 42 and Senate 30 – 8. Presented to Secretary of State.

ELECTION LAW REFORM

SB 260 establishes when a candidate may withdraw from city, school district and community college elections, prohibits filling a vacancy in the joint candidacy of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, addresses "paid for" or "sponsored by" attributions, campaign expenditures for vendors. Passed the House 98 – 27 and Senate 22 – 18.

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICES MODERNIZATION

SB 325 creates a task force to improve motor vehicle services, restricts how funds are spent, and allows counties (with approval) to raise a transaction fee up to $10 for years 2027 – 2029 while renaming registration fees. Passed the House 109 – 12 and Senate 33 – 7.

GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY

DATA SHARING

HB 2004 requires the Secretary for Children and Families and the Secretary of Health and Environment to provide program data to the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services without conditions. It also mandates information sharing between the Department for Children and Families and the Office of Inspector General during investigations of fraud involving cash, childcare, and food assistance programs. Vetoed by Governor. Veto Overridden in House 85- 38 and Senate 29 - 10.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

ELIGIBILITY VERIFICATION

HB 2731 requires the Secretary of Children and Families and the Health Secretary to verify eligibility using data matching for food or medical assistance programs, allows continuous eligibility for some people, removes certain exemptions and self-attestation, and updates eligibility rules for these programs. The bill also increases 'able-bodied adults' from 49 to 64 years of age, requires their dependents to be under 14 years old, and requires individuals enrolled in an assistance program be verified against a death master file on a quarterly basis. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 84 – 39 and Senate 29 – 10.

Why It Matters

Both HB 2004 and HB 2731 take steps to restore accountability in the State's welfare programs. They ensure that data is shared with federal agencies and state investigators to detect and prevent fraud in cash, childcare, and food assistance programs, saving taxpayers money and ensuring support goes to those that qualify.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

CHIP COVERAGE FOR CHILDREN

SB 271 updates eligibility requirements for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), removes outdated constraints and improves access to health coverage for children who need it the most. Passed the House 125 - 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

GOVERNMENT BENEFIT FOR NON-CITIZENS

SB 254 prohibits individuals who are unlawfully present in the United States from receiving state or local public benefits. The bill also requires courts to verify a non-citizen's immigration status in criminal proceedings and establishes a presumption that individuals unlawfully present pose a flight risk when judges set appearance bonds. Passed the House 78–46 and Senate 22–18. Vetoed by Governor.

VETOED

ICE DETAINER JAILS

HB 2372 strengthens cooperation between local law enforcement and federal immigration authorities by allowing sheriffs to honor immigration detainers and enter into federal 287(g) agreements without county approval. It also creates a new crime for approaching within 25 feet of a first responder, expands legal protections for officers, and provides civil immunity and state-funded legal defense for those acting in good faith Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 85 - 38 and Senate 31 - 9

VETO OVERRIDDEN

CRUSH TRANSNATIONAL REPRESSION

HB 2413 enacts the Crush Transnational Repression in Kansas Act to enhance the criminal penalty and mandates training on recognizing and responding to these activities. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

Why It Matters

Transnational repression involves governments or actors targeting individuals outside their borders to intimate, harass or punish them. This can include threats, surveillance, kidnapping attempts or coercion. This bill safeguards people in Kansas from being targeted by foreign powers or transnational networks and ensures law enforcement is trained to intervene effectively.

LIVESTOCK AND CROP PROTECTIONS
FERAL CAT NEUTERING

HB 2413 also expands Kansas theft laws to include livestock, implements of husbandry, grain, and hay, and allows forfeiture of property used in committing these thefts. The bill also permits a person who catches a feral cat to provide vaccination, spaying, or neutering and returns the cat back to the location where the cat was caught after providing such care. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

FIBER BROADBAND

HB 2647 establishes a statewide conduit system to support fiber-optic broadband expansion and creates the Kansas Broadband Revolving Fund to finance construction and maintenance. It authorizes fees for entities installing or using the conduit and requires annual reports to the Governor and legislative committees. The legislation also clarifies the state does not intend for KDOT to compete with private providers in delivering broadband infrastructure or services. Passed the House 120 - 1 and Senate 40 - 0.

SCHOOL CHOICE TAX CREDITS

SB 361 allows Kansas to participate in the federal tax credit for individual contributions to scholarship granting organizations (SGOs). Kansas taxpayers get a tax break for donating to organizations that provide private school scholarships to students. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 85 – 38 and Senate 29 – 10.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

CHAIRED COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE



I had the honor of being selected – on two separate occasions – to chair the full body of 125 legislators. This recognition is especially meaningful, as it is the first time in many years that a first-term Kansas legislator has been entrusted with this responsibility. I greatly valued and enjoyed the experience.

FALLEN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

HB 445 requires the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Kansas Bureau of Investigations to provide support and assistance for fallen law enforcement officers' funerals as well as to their families. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 40 - 0.

EXPANDING VETERAN SUPPORT

HB 2626 expands veterans' preference in government and private sector hiring to include current members of the Kansas National Guard and military spouses, creates a memorial kiosk in the Kansas State Capitol honoring Kansans killed in action, establishes a Kansas Military Affairs Commission, and enacts the Safeguarding American Veteran Empowerment Act (SAVE) to limit compensation fees charged to veterans for assisting them with veterans' benefit claims. Passed the House 85 – 38 and Senate 33 – 7. Vetoed by Governor.

VETOED

VETERANS IDENTIFICATION
HONORING VETERANS
PURPLE HEART DAY

HB 2274 permits the issuance of non-driver identification cards to homeless veterans and designates Kansas as a Purple Heart State and August 7th of each year as Purple Heart Day. Passed the House 121 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS CHAIR



Before the start of the legislative session, I was appointed to chair the Veterans and Military Affairs Committee. It was a distinct honor – especially as it marks the first time in many years that a first-term Kansas legislator has been selected to lead a committee.

AMBASSADOR



AMBASSADOR ALEXANDER TAH-RAY YUI

On March 26, we were honored to welcome Taiwan Ambassador Yui to the House floor, where he spoke about the deep ties and shared values that unite our two homes. It is a rare privilege for a foreign ambassador to address the chamber, underscoring the importance of our agricultural trade partnership.

RESOLUTION
TIES WITH TAIWAN

HR 6042 strengthening the sister-state ties between the State of Kansas and Taiwan. Adoped without roll call.

VISITORS AT THE CAPITOL



Visit from Don Epps,
Pleasanton Superintendent



Visitor from East Central Kansas
Area Agency on Aging



Visitor from East Kansas
Area Agency on Aging

UTILITIES

NATURAL GAS RATES

HB 2435 allows natural gas utilities to recover more infrastructure and safety upgrade costs through the Gas System Reliability Surcharge. It raises the monthly residential surcharge cap from $0.80 to $1.35, and increases the allowable fixed-charge adjustment—aimed at supporting pipeline safety and system expansion. Passed the House 115 – 7 and Senate 28 – 12.

ELECTRIC PUBLIC UTILITIES

SB 348 exempts any electric public utility that is a not-for-profit wholly owned subsidiary of an electric cooperative public utility from the jurisdiction of the Kansas Corporation Commission and authorizes the investigation of any changes to the electric rates, joint rates, tolls, charges and exaction, and classifications and schedules of rates affecting an exempt electric public utility following a petition filed by customers. Passed the House 119 – 0 and Senate 38 – 0.

LARGE ELECTRIC ENERGY USERS

SB 92 extends the sunset of one more year for the exclusion of certain large-load facilities, such as factories and data centers, from parallel generation service requirements and from utilities' historic peak demand calculations. Passed the House 114 – 10 and Senate 39 - 0.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS

SB 380 requires retail electric suppliers to offer fair, reasonable, and non-discriminatory rates and services to all charging stations and certain costs cannot be included in the rate base of the retail electric supplier, with certain exclusions. Passed the House 125 – 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

PRISON MADE HOUSING

HB 2595 creates a pilot program at Hutchinson Correctional Facility allowing for prison-made manufactured or modular homes, with nonprofits paying property taxes on retained units and private companies charged standard regional rates for rent and wages. Passed the House 111 – 10 and Senate 36 – 3.

PROTECTING LANDLORD RIGHTS

SB 391 prevents cities and counties from imposing rules that limit how landlords screen tenants or manage their properties. The bill prohibits local ordinances that restrict consideration of income, credit, rental or criminal history, security deposits, or participation in voluntary housing programs. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 85 - 38 and Senate 31 – 8.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

RENTAL EVICTIONS

HB 2357 amends law related to eviction proceedings for rental agreements to require expungement of certain court records and allows a landlord to object to an expungement request. Passed House 118 – 3 and Senate 36 – 4.

VISIT FROM PEOPLES TELECOMMUNICATIONS



SECURITY FENCES

HB 2603 prohibits regulation of battery-charged security fences by municipalities. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 85 – 38 and Senate 30 -9.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

BY-RIGHT HOUSING

SB 418 creates a faster, streamlined approval process for qualifying housing projects. Passed the House 117 – 5 and Senate 35 – 4.

REMOVAL OF SQUATTERS

HB 2378 creates a procedure for property owners to request law enforcement remove unauthorized persons from a dwelling unit through submission of an affidavit. Passed the House 114 – 8 and Senate 39 – 1.

TRANSPORTATION

RAILROAD HALL OF FAME

SB 353 establishes the Kansas Railroad Hall of Fame designating the Great Plains Transportation Museum as the official site in Wichita. Passed the House 123 - 0 and Senate 38 - 1.

HANDSFREE DRIVING ZONES

SB 366 prohibits the use of a mobile phone while operating a vehicle in school or construction zones. Passed the House 87 – 37 and Senate 30 – 9.

VEHICLE LICENSE RESTRICTIONS

HB 2467 prohibits past convictions for failure to comply with a traffic citation that are more than five years old from being considered by courts or the Division of Vehicles to suspend or restrict driver's licenses. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 37 – 3.

MOTORSPORTS PROTECTIONS

HB 2416 provides protections for racing facilities by limiting nuisance actions brought by property owners in surrounding neighborhoods, provided the facility obtained all necessary permits and vested rights prior to surrounding development. Passed the House 122 – 0 and Senate 38 – 2.

TRANSIENT GUEST TAX – WORLD CUP ALCOHOL SALES: HB 2481 authorizes the sale of alcoholic beverages 23 hours a day, 7 days a week, for the duration of the FIFA 2026 World Cup, and between May 15 and July 25, 2026, prohibits any city or county from limiting the number of permits for the operation of short-term rentals. Passed the House 86 – 39 and Senate 23 – 17.

Life

PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS

HB 2635 protects Pregnancy Resource Centers from discrimination by any state or local government entity based on their refusal to perform or refer for abortions. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto overridden in House 87 – 35 and Senate 30 – 9.

WOMEN'S RIGHT -TO-KNOW CLAIMS

HB 2727 updates informed consent enforcement and makes it easier for women to pursue statutory damages when required information is withheld. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 87 – 36 and Senate 31 – 9.

WOMEN'S RIGHT-TO-KNOW FORMS

HB 2729 updates Woman's Right-to-Know law by requiring a standardized statewide informed consent forms developed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden House 87 – 36 and Senate 31 – 9.

VETOES OVERRIDDEN

CONSUMER PRESCRIPTION PROTECTION

SB 20 establishes new regulations for Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs), setting audit and reporting standards. Key points:

- Forces PBMs to pass discounts on to patients
- Preserves patient choice
- Bans PBMs hidden tax on patients, know as spread pricing
- Increases transparency on PBMs deceptive practices
- Makes PBMs treat local pharmacies the same as their own corporate pharmacies

Why It Matters

Independent pharmacies have long faced unfair reimbursement from PBMs, with large chains often receiving better rates. SB 20 increases transparency in how PBMs set reimbursement and negotiate drug prices to help ensure fair treatment for local pharmacies and better savings for consumers.

JUVENILES WITH FIREARMS

HB 2329 increases the cumulative detention limit for juvenile offenders and criminal penalties for juvenile offenders who use a firearm in the commission of an offense or who are repeat offenders, provides for increased placement of offenders in non-foster home beds in youth residential facilities, authorizes the secretary to make expenditures from the Evidence-Based Programs Account of the state general fund moneys to contract for such beds. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto overridden in House 89 – 34 and Senate 29 – 10.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

PROTECTING KANSANS

STATE BOARD OF NURSING

HB 2528 limits the authority of the State Board of Nursing by voiding disciplinary actions related to non-practice violations and narrows the definition of unprofessional conduct to actions directly connected to nursing practice. It allows nurses to renew licenses late with established fees, prohibits retaliatory action by the board for certain lawful conduct, and creates a civil cause of action for violations. The measure also requires Senate confirmation of board members and directs the board to issue refunds for any overpayments or duplicate payments. Passed the House 87 – 38 and Senate 32 – 9.

Why It Matters

The State Board of Nursing's past policies created unnecessary hardship for nurses. After repeated concerns went unaddressed, the Legislature stepped in to enact common-sense reforms and ensure the board operates with fairness, transparency, and accountability.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES & KRATOM

HB 2365 modifies certain substances in schedules I, III, and IV of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act and changes the criminal code of fentanyl-related controlled substances, and adds Kratom and Delt-8 THC to schedule I of the act. Passed House 76 – 49 and Senate 34 – 5.

EMERGENCY MEDICATION PROTECTION

HB 2250 shields individuals who administer emergency opioid antagonists from criminal and civil liability, provides civil protection for first responders, and allows licensed psychiatric hospitals and schools to maintain emergency medication kits. The bill also authorizes pharmacists to distribute epinephrine kits to schools and permits expedited partner therapy (EPT) for treating STDs. Passed House 124 - 1 and Senate 40 – 0.

FOSTER YOUTH RECORDS

HB 2320 allows children in the custody of the Secretary of the Department for Children and Families to attend school in any district, requires timely transfer of student records, and mandates a transportation plan if the child stays in the school of origin. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

FOSTER HOMES

HB 2524 permit the Secretary for Children and Families to license family foster homes when certain persons reside in such home and creates an appeal process for family foster homes when licenses are not granted. Passed the House 122 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

SEXUAL EXTORTION

HB 2537 increases penalties for the crime of sexual extortion when an offender is 18 years of age or older and the victim is less than 18 years of age or a dependent adult, creates the crimes of aggravated sexual extortion causing great bodily harm or death. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 39 – 1.



Visit from Doreen Thomas with Security First in Mound City.

PROTECTING PRIVATE SPACES

SB 244 strenghtens protections for private spaces in public buildings by ensuring that multiple-occupancy areas, such as restroom and locker rooms, are designated for use by only one sex. Vetoed by Governor. Veto overridden in House 84 - 37 and Senate 31 - 9.

Key points include:

- Clarifies definition of gender in state law and updates the Help Not Harm Act, Motor Vehicle Drivers' License Act, Women's bill of Rights, and Uniform Vital Statistics Act.
- Ensures birth certificates and driver's licenses accurately reflect biological sex
- Restores the legislative intent of 2023 SB180 (Women's Bill of Rights) to provide clarity and ensure that medical treatment and privacy protections are appropriately based on sex.

FREE RANGE CHILDREN & PATERNITY TESTS

SB 408 excludes children engaging in age-appropriate independent activities (such as riding a bicycle around the block) from the definition of "child in need of care" and clarifies that allowing such activities does not constitute child endangerment. The bill also allows challenges to a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity when fraud, duress, or factual mistakes are discovered, treats genetic test results as evidence of such mistake, and permits recovery of damages in exceptional cases. The bill also Passed House 124 - 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

Why It Matters

This bill protects parental rights while ensuring laws are applied with common sense, so families are not penalized for allowing reasonal and age appropriate independence for their children. The bill also strenghtens fairness in the legal system by giving individuals a clear path to correct paternity decisions – whether accidential or intentional -- helping ensure accurate outcomes and greater trust in the courts.

FINANCIAL AID REPAYMENT

HB 2485 authorizes the State Board of Regents to negotiate and settle repayment obligations under any scholarship, grant, or financial aid program and prohibits additional payments to students who owe repayment under these programs. Passed the House 123 – 1 and Senate 39 – 0.

SCHOOLS

ATTORNEY TRAINING FOR RURAL KANSAS

This act provides incentives for licensed attorneys or individuals pursing a law degree at the University of Kansas (KU) or Washburn University to practice law in rural Kansas.

HB 2595 creates the Attorney Training Program for Rural Kansas Act to encourage law students and lawyers to work in rural Kansas. It provides stipends to law students who meet certain requirements and commit to practicing in rural area and offers loan forgiveness to lawyers who meet requirements and practice in rural communities. Passed the House 119 - 3 and Senate 36 – 4.

CELL PHONES USE IN SCHOOLS

HB 2299 requires school districts and accredited nonpublic school to adopt policies and procedures governing the use of personal electronic communication devices and social media platforms during the school day. The bill also provides indemnity for lost or damaged devices, exempts virtual schools, and includes provisions related to nonpublic school accreditation and the rights of certain accredited nonpublic schools. Passed the House 116 – 8 and Senate 32 – 4.

Why It Matters

Cell phones have become a frequent distraction in classrooms, making it harder for students to stay focused and for teachers to maintain an effective learning environment. Establishing clear policies for phone use during the school day helps reduce distractions, encourages student engagement, and supports educators in keeping the focus on instruction and learning.

SCHOOL RECESS

HB 2763 establishes minimum requirements for recess in public schools and include such time in school term calculations beginning in the 2027–2028 school year and directs the State Board of Education (State Board) to establish a Kansas State Physical Fitness Test. Passed the House 74 – 47 and Senate 29 – 10.

STUDENT SAFETY AND SHOOTER DRILLS

HB 2534 requires school districts to develop fentanyl abuse education programs and to maintain a stock supply of naloxone, creates the Student Safe at School Act (Act) regarding the conduct of active shooter drills and simulations in public and accredited nonpublic schools, amend the definition of "crisis drill" for purposes of rules and regulations promulgated by the State Fire Marshal, and amends school district at-risk accountability plans. Passed the House 123 – 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACTIVITIES

SB 382 allows nonaccredited private elementary or secondary school students to participate in the Kansas State High School Activities Assoc. Passed the House 83 – 40 and Senate 37 – 3.

WORKFORCE - HEALTH - WELFARE

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE

SB 30 requires adoption of new occupational licenses and material changes to existing licenses by certain state Executive Branch agencies to be approved by the Legislature. Vetoed by Governor. Veto override prevailed in House 88 – 35 and Senate 30 - 9.

Why It Matters

Occupational licensure compacts offer a practical pathway to a more accessible and efficient health care system and makes it easier for qualified providers to practice across state lines. As a result, compacts improve workforce mobility, help address provider shortages in rural and underserved communities. This reform helps prevent unnecessary or overly burdensome licensing requirements that limit job opportunities and slow workforce growth.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE COMPACTS

HB 2533 allows Therapists, Therapy Assistants, Respiratory Care, Esthetics, and Athletic Trainers to practice across state lines through interstate licensure compacts. Passed the House 125 – 0 and Senate 38 – 2.

ADVANCED PRNs

HB 2509 adds advanced practice registered nurse to the definition of healthcare provider for purposes of the healthcare provider insurance availability act. It also permits licensed physical therapists to perform certain capillary blood tests. Passed House 92 – 33 and Senate 37 – 2.

NURSING CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS

HB 2478 requires advanced practice registered nurses and registered nurse anesthetists to submit to a criminal history check upon application for a nursing license. Passed the Houe 117 – 4 and Senate 38 – 1.

RURAL HEALTH GRANT TRANSPARENCY

HB 2555 requires transparency on grant awards from the Rural Health Transformation Program that was passed in the One Big Beautiful Bill and sent nearly $1 billion to Kansas. The federal funding assists the state to expand access to care, support rural health providers, and modernize health systems. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 00.

CIVICS EDUCATION AND GRADUATION

HB 2412 requires the State Board of Education to develop curriculum on the negative impacts of communist, fascist, and socialist regimes, with school districts providing instruction to students in non-elementary grades. The bill also mandates that students entering ninth grade at accredited public, private, or parochial high schools pass an American civics exam as a condition for graduation. Passed the House 80 – 43 and Senate 23 – 14.

COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS

HB 2482 allows the State Board of Educations to choose any provider for college entrance and career readiness exams. Passed House 118 – 2 and Senate 39 – 1.



Visit from Emille, a Physical Therapy Student at Wichita State.

BORN TO INVEST SAVINGS ACCOUNT

SB 232 establishes the Born to Invest Act, permitting the State Treasurer to provide information to Kansas families about government saving accounts for children when they are born using the data from the Office of Vital Statistics. Passed the House 108 – 17 and Senate 39 – 0.

CHILD PLACEMENT TORT CLAIMS

HB 2521 expands the definition of "governmental entity" to include child placement agencies that have an active contract with the Secretary for Children and Families at the time an incident occurs, limiting liability and providing clearer rules for handling lawsuits under the Kansas Tort Claims Act. Vetoed by Governor. Veto override prevailed in House 87 – 36 and

VETO OVERRIDDEN

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT REGISTRY

HB 2601 establishes a registry for child abuse and neglect to be maintained by the Secretary for Children and Families and provides for registration and expungement process that include administrative hearings and opportunities for subsequent appeals. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 39 – 0.

GUARDIANS FOR ADULTS WITH ALZHEIMERS

HB 2536 prohibits a court to appoint a person as a guardian for an adult diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or a similar neurological condition until the person completes an approved training program. The bill authorizes the court to waive the training if it is in the best interest of the adult diagnosed with the condition. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 39 – 1.

FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION PROTECTION

HB 2591 places guardrails on cryptocurrency ATMs, allows financial institutions to delay a suspicious transaction, contacts a customer's designated contact when financial exploitation is suspected, and subjects earned wage access providers to state data-security requirements. Passed the House 124 – 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

Why It Matters

Cryptocurrency kiosks are a growing tool for scams. This legislation adds consumer protections, including fraud warnings and 72-hour holds, on certain transactions to help prevent financial exploitation.



Property taxes didn't skyrocket by accident; they rose because of out-of-control local spending. The legislature worked to tackle the root cause with spending guardrails so taxpayers aren't on the hook for bigger budgets every year.

Last year, Kansans saved $81 million when we cut the state out of property taxes. This session we made multiple attempts to reduce property taxes, focusing on limiting local government spending and providing relief to taxpayers. An initial bill (HB 2745) aimed to cap budget growth and increase taxpayer input but was vetoed and not overridden.

A second effort (HB 2043) also includes a protest petition to limit excessive growth, revises the revenue neutral rate notices and allows for inflation adjustments—though its fate now depends on the Governor's decision (as of the drafting of this newsletter).

We also pursued several constitutional amendments to cap or stabilize property valuations, but none achieved the required support. Despite setbacks, efforts to deliver meaningful property tax reform remain ongoing and a top priority next year.

Veto override requires 2/3 majority vote
House requires 84 votes
Senate requires 27 votes

HEALTHCARE SHARING MINISTRIES
SB 368 allows taxpayers who participate in approved health care sharing ministries to take a deduction for their eligible contributions and health care shares received, putting more money back in taxpayers' pocket. Vetoed by the Governor. Veto override prevailed in House 87 – 37 and Senate 30 – 9.

VETO OVERRIDDEN

INVESTOR TAX CREDITS
HB 2464 extends several tax credit programs through 2031, including the Angel Investor Tax Credit, aerospace and aviation workforce credits, and credits supporting the Eisenhower Foundation and Friends of Cedar Crest. The bill also reserves at least 25% of Angel Investor credits each year for businesses in counties with populations under 50,000, if sufficient applications are received by October 1. Passed the House 98 – 26 and Senate 33 – 7.

THE LEGISLATURE IS ADJOURNED UNTIL JANUARY 11, 2027

TAXATION

PROPERTY TAX PROTEST PETITION #1
HB 2745 caps local property tax growth at 3% per year with adjustments for new construction, changes in property use, expiring abatements, and voter-approved bonds. The bill introduced a citizen protest petition process, allowing residents to challenge budgets that exceed the limit. The bill revised the revenue neutral rate notice to incorporate changes associated with the protest petition process. Passed the House 63 – 59 and Senate 22 – 18. Vetoed by Governor.

VETOED

PROPERTY TAX PROTEST PETITION #2
Similar to HB 2745, this bill is a last-minute attempt at another property tax bill to give communities a stronger voice in holding local governments accountable and to limit excessive property tax growth.

HB 2043 strengthens taxpayer protections by permitting residents to file a protest petition when a local taxing jurisdiction proposes a budget that increases property tax revenues beyond the prior year's level, adjusted for inflation using the Midwest Consumer Price Index (capped at 3% annually). Passed the House 87 – 35 and Senate 27 – 13.

MILITARY MEMBERS TAX RELIEF
HB 2044 enacts a subtraction modification for certain compensation received by active-duty members of the armed forces and specifies that taxpayers would not lose eligibility for certain residential property tax relief programs due to their residential values increasing above the eligibility threshold when they have previously received refunds pursuant to the programs. Passed the House 116 – 4 and Senate 40 – 0.



PRIMARY ELECTION - AUGUST 4TH, 2026

ELECTING SUPREME COURT JUSTICES
In the August primary, voters will have the chance to vote for a ballot initiative that amends the state constitution to abolish the current method of appointing justices to the Kansas Supreme Court and replace it with the direct election of such justices.

GENERAL ELECTION - NOVEMBER 3RD, 2026

CITIZENS ONLY VOTING
In the general election, voters will vote on 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.

LOCAL TAXPAYER AGREEMENTS
HB 2737 creates a new option for funding local economic development projects as an alternative to traditional tax increment financing (TIF). Instead of relying solely on future property tax increases, this approach allows municipalities to enter into agreements directly with taxpayers to support development efforts. Passed the House 121 – 3 and Senate 34 – 6.

Why It Matters
This approach gives communities more control over how economic development projects are funded to reduce reliance on automatic property tax increases.

VALUATION APPEAL PROTECTIONS
HB 2644 requires a county appraiser to adjust the value of residential and commercial property upon final determination or obtain a fee simple appraisal if the appraised value exceeds 5% increase over three years. Passed the House 119 - 0 and Senate 36 – 4.

SPORTS TOURISM GRANT PROGRAM
HB 2346 establishes the Kansas Sports Tourism Grant Program to provide dollar-for-dollar matching grants to support and enhance sports tourism events held in Kansas. Passed the House 105 – 16 and Senate 26 – 13. Vetoed by Governor.

VETOED

KC CHIEFS STADIUM FINANCING
HB 2466 creates the Kansas Sports Facilities Authority to finance the construction of a sports facility and related infrastructure for the Kansas City Chiefs; makes changes to the STAR Bonds Financing Act and extends its sunset to July 1, 2031 Passed the House 78 – 44 and Senate 30 – 10.

EXTENDING KEY TAX CREDITS
HB 2464 extends tax credits through 2031, for the Angel Investor Tax Credit, incentives tied to aerospace and aviation education programs, contributions to the Eisenhower Foundation and Friends of Cedar Crest. It ensures at least 25% of Angel Investor tax credits go to support businesses in smaller, rural counties—helping drive investment and economic growth in communities with populations under 50,000. Passed the House 98 – 26 and Senate 33 – 7.

LEGAL TENDER INCOME TAX CREDIT
HB 2515 allows an income tax credit for gains from the sale of certain forms of gold and silver. Passed the House 76 – 44 and Senate 29 – 11.

OIL LEASE EXEMPTIONS
HB 2440 excludes owners of oil leases from having to file for an exemption with BOTA for property tax exemptions. Passed the House 119 - 0 and Senate 40 – 0.

Kansas Legislative Newsletter

Representative
Rick James

19863 Valley Road.
La Cygne, KS 66040

Conservative Republican

Pro – Life

Pro – Family

Pro – Business

Pro – 2nd Amendment



REPRESENTATIVE RICK JAMES

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www.rickjamesks.com