

THE ADVOCATE

A WEEKLY UPDATE
FROM THE KANSAS
LEGISLATURE

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Intro

The 2025 legislative session officially concluded at 5:00 p.m. on Friday when the House adjourned sine die. The Senate again adjourned earlier than the House, concluding business around 4:00 p.m. Governor Laura Kelly vetoed a total of 18 bills and issued over 30 line-item vetoes in the state budget this year. Republican lawmakers successfully overrode 14 of the 18 vetoed bills, including 12 in a single day on Thursday. In an unusual move, the Senate voted 30-10 to override all budget line-item vetoes in a single bundled vote, breaking with the legislature's tradition of addressing them individually. This action shifted the burden to the House, which initially attempted to override 15 of the line items in a bundle. That effort failed 82-42, with many members objecting to the bundling approach on principle. However, after extended discussions and negotiations overnight, House leadership brought the bundled override back for a second vote, which passed 88-34.

Several conference committee reports were also finalized and sent to the Governor last week. However, since the Legislature has now adjourned, it will not have an opportunity to return and override any additional vetoes she may issue. Despite the shortened session, lawmakers passed a comparable number of bills to previous years. Still, many substantial and complex policy proposals failed to advance due to time constraints. While some legislators voiced concern over the limited timeframe, leadership has expressed satisfaction with the outcome and intends to maintain the 90-day calendar plan already set for the 2026 session. The Legislature is scheduled to reconvene on January 12, 2026.

Property Tax Relief Stagnates

Despite multiple attempts to reach an agreement on more meaningful property tax relief, the Legislature adjourned without passing a new plan. The Tax Conference Committee agreed to a revised ASTRA plan, which would have provided a \$60 million fund distributed to counties that maintained a budget either at the revenue-neutral rate or between revenue-neutral and a 3% threshold plus new construction. The payout would have scaled from a 50% distribution at the 3% threshold to 100% at revenue neutral; however, the conference committee report contained in [SB82](#) passed the House with lackluster support at 74-48 and was subsequently not taken up by the Senate. The House Tax Committee also met briefly to insert the constitutional amendment for a rolling average cap for property valuations into [SCR 1603](#), but as the measure was about to receive a vote on the floor, word reached the chamber that the Senate had adjourned, and the resolution was not taken up and the House adjourned shortly after. Governor Kelly did sign [SB35](#) this year, which eliminates the state's 1.5 mill property tax levy that funds maintenance and renovations of some state buildings. That bill would save the owner of a \$150,000 home \$25.88 and the owner of a \$230,000 home \$39.68.

Housing Tax Credit Compromise

A compromise cutting state spending on Affordable Housing Tax Credits passed with bipartisan support. [CCR HB2289](#) discontinues the Kansas Affordable Housing Tax Credit match for qualified developments receiving a 4 percent federal low-income housing credit subsequent to the 2025 Qualified Allocation Plan. The bill would also limit the match for qualified developments receiving a 9 percent federal credit to \$8.8 million annually beginning in 2026 and discontinue the match subsequent to the 2028 Qualified Allocation Plan. The total amount of credits awarded for either match amount would be limited to \$25.0 million for the 2025 plan year. The CCR passed the Senate 33-7 and the House 98-23 and heads to the Governor's desk.

Governor's Child Care Bill Passed

After a year of effort, the Legislature has approved the creation of the Office of Early Childhood, a new agency designed to streamline and oversee the state's early childhood programs and funding. [CCR HB2045](#) had strong bipartisan support, passing 30-10 in the Senate and 99-23 in the House, after extensive negotiations between Governor Kelly and GOP leaders. The bill, which emerged from recommendations made by the 2023 Early Childhood Task Force, now heads to the Governor's desk. Key elements of the bill include the appointment of a Senate-confirmed director and the establishment of a child care ombudsman to address complaints and recommend improvements. While some lawmakers expressed concerns about the financial implications and expansion of government, others emphasized the bill's potential to open up thousands of child care slots and reduce workforce barriers.

Data Center Tax Incentives Passed

CCR SB98 provides tax incentives for new data centers and narrowly made a comeback in the final days of the session, ultimately passing the House 85-37 and the Senate 26-8. The legislation offers state and local sales tax exemptions to data centers that invest at least \$250 million and create a minimum of 20 jobs. Originally sidelined in March due to limited support, the bill gained momentum after lobbying efforts from Lt. Governor David Toland and Evergy. To win over skeptical lawmakers, the bill was amended to include various guardrails, such as job creation requirements, water conservation mandates, a 20-year cap on tax exemptions, and a ban on discounted electric rates for data centers.

Proponents argued the bill positions Kansas as business-friendly and competitive in attracting tech investment, while opponents, including the Sierra Club, raised concerns about environmental impacts and the high cost per job created. Data centers, though capital-intensive, typically create few permanent jobs, prompting criticism over the value of the incentives. Still, the Kansas Department of Commerce reports 14 data center projects in its pipeline with over \$15 billion in potential investment and more than 500 jobs.

Budget Veto Overrides in SB125

- Portion of Sec. 46 (a): Pregnancy Compassion Awareness Program
- Sec. 46(c) and Sec. 47: State Treasurer – Duplicative Talent Attraction Program
- Sec. 63(x): Department of Administration Press Office Lease Costs
- Sec. 72 (b) and Sec. 73 (f): Lottery – Legislative Interference in Sports Gaming
- Portion of Sec. 76(a): Commerce – Purple UAS
- Portion of Sec. 76(b): Commerce – Arts Commission Restrictions
- Portion of Sec. 83(a): Kansas Department of Health and Environment – Disease Control
- Sec. 89(aa): Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services- Lapsed Funding for CCBHC's
- Portion of Sec. 92(a): Kansas Department for Children and Families – Interpreter Services
- Sec. 118(h) and Sec. 118(i): Kansas Board of Regents – Scholarship Lapses
- Portion of Sec. 121(a): Corrections – O'Connell Children's Shelter Sec. 135(a): State 911 Board – Mapping Grant Program
- Sec. 177(b): Kansas State University Veterinary Medical Center
- Sec. 187(h) and Sec. 188: Kansas Highway Patrol – Jabara Airport Hanger

Budget Vetoes Sustained in SB125

- Sec. 35 (a): Legislature Artificial Intelligence Project
- Sec. 40(d) and Sec. 41(g): Attorney General KEY Fund Transfer
- Sec. 62(d) and Sec. 63(w): Administration – Docking State Office Building
- Portion of Sec. 83(a): Kansas Department of Health and Environment – Cerebral Palsy Research Portion of Sec. 83(a): Kansas Department of Health and Environment – Dental Services
- Sec. 84(e) and Sec. 85(o): Kansas Department of Health and Environment – 12-month Medicaid continuous eligibility
- Portion of Sec. 99(a): Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services – SPARK Funding Continuation
- Sec. 90: Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services – Larned Contract Staffing
- Sec. 96(n): Education – Online Curriculum

- Sec. 96(p): Education – SparkWheel
- Sec. 96(s): Education – Conditioning CPI-U Funding Increases Sec. 108(c): K-State Extension
- Portion of Sec. 116(a): Wichita State University- Dentistry Feasibility Study Portion of Sec. 129(a): Kansas Bureau of Investigation-DNA Analysis
- Sec. 153, Sec. 156, and Sec. 158: State Finance Council – ARPA Funds Portion of Sec. 159(a): State Finance Council – 2027 Grant Reductions Sec. 159(b): State Finance Council – State Highway Fund
- Sec. 177(b): K-State Bonding Authority

Veto Overrides

SB269: Provides for reduction in state income and privilege tax rates contingent upon the balance of the Budget Stabilization Fund and growth in the State General Fund (SGF) receipts from income and privilege taxes in excess of the FY 2024 amount, adjusted for inflation.

SB5: Prohibits using federal funds for elections and election-related activities unless approved by Congress or the Legislature.

SB14: Allows the previous fiscal year’s budget to remain in effect if a new budget isn’t enacted by July 1.

SB29: Prevents county and local health officials from banning public gatherings for the control of infectious or contagious disease.

HB2033: Adds nonprofit organizations accredited by the International Multisensory Structured Language Education Council (IMSLEC) to school districts’ list of programs eligible for at-risk funding.

HB2062: Provides child support orders for unborn children from the date of conception and an income tax exemption.

HB2217: Expands the scope of the inspector general to audit and investigate all state cash, food or health assistance programs through subpoenas and search warrants.

HB2240: Prohibits agencies from implementing public assistance program waivers or other federal authorizations to expand eligibility for any public assistance program or would increase any cost to Kansas without legislative approval.

HB2284: Directs the Department of Administration to establish written policies for negotiated procurement of managed care organizations for the KanCare program.

HB2291: Establishes a general regulatory sandbox program to waive or suspend rules and regulations for participating businesses.

HB2311: Prohibits the Department for Children and Families secretary from enforcing child welfare policies that conflict with foster and adoptive parents’ religious and moral beliefs on sexual orientation or gender identity.

HB2382: 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.

Sustained Vetoes

HB2028: Would amend law concerning the resident senior combination hunting and fishing pass and the Kansas kids combination lifetime hunting and fishing license (license). The bill would also prohibit non-residents from hunting migratory waterfowl during certain times and in certain places, require the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP) to present certain data in a report to the Legislature, and change the fees for migratory waterfowl habitat stamps.

HB2228: Requiring that a political subdivision hold an open meeting to discuss a contingency fee contract for legal services before approving such contract and requiring the attorney general to approve such contracts.

SB18: Providing for the hunter nation distinctive license plate. The payments for license plates were redirected to the Hunter Nation Foundation, which addresses the Governor's concerns and passed in CCR HB2335.

SB79: Directing the secretary for children and families to request a waiver from supplemental nutrition assistance program rules that would allow the state to prohibit the purchase of candy and soft drinks with food assistance.

Additional Passed Legislation

SB24: Would expand the eligibility requirements for postsecondary education institutions to participate in the Kansas Promise Scholarship Program and increase the maximum amount that could be appropriated to the program. Passed the House 76-48 and the Senate 40-0.

HB2125: Would reauthorize the statewide school finance mill levy, modify certain dates related to municipal budgeting, modify the form required for revenue neutral rate notices and continue the state reimbursement of printing and postage costs associated with such notices, and prohibit filing fees at the State Board of Tax Appeals when prior appeals remain pending. Passed the Senate 39-1 and the House 122-0.

HB2275: Would authorize the submission of local sales taxes to voters in Finney, Jackson, Pawnee, and Seward counties; modify the apportionment of countywide sales taxes; and specify that a sales tax exemption certificate is not required for the sales tax exemption for certain custom meat processing services. Passed the Senate 40-0 and the House 117-5.

SB237: Would amend the Scrap Metal Theft Reduction Act (Act). The bill would authorize Kansas law enforcement officers to conduct investigations of violations of the Act. The bill would require, upon an investigation's conclusion, 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 the Senate 38-2.

SB204: Would require the sealing of certain records relating to case information, warrants, and subpoenas in certain criminal and juvenile cases; require the sealing of certain records relating to case information, warrants, and subpoenas in certain criminal and juvenile cases; and amend 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 the Senate 40-0.

SB186: Would amend criminal procedure laws related to the availability of probable cause information, issuance of search warrants, setting bond for persons charged with certain sex offenses, forfeiture of appearance bonds, and the regulation of compensated sureties. The bill also would revise the Kansas Criminal Code definition of certain sex crimes to include conduct related to artificially generated visual depictions and define related terms. Passed the House 124- 0 and the Senate 40-0.

SB156: Would increase the reimbursement limit for inmate claims paid by the Secretary of Corrections (Secretary) from \$500 to \$750. For claims exceeding \$750, the bill would require an inmate to provide notice to the Secretary of the nature, time, date, and place of the claim. Failure to provide such notice would not prevent the claim from being considered by the Joint Committee on Special Claims Against the State (Joint Committee). Passed the House 120-4 and the Senate 40-0.

HB2231: Would modify Kansas income tax personal exemption provisions, redefine “income” for a refund option within the Homestead Property Tax Refund Act, amend the apportionment of income of multistate corporations and make associated changes, and exempt certain personal property from taxation. Passed the Senate 40-0 and the House 118-4.

Helpful Links to Monitor the Action

Listen live to committee hearings or playback past hearings.

Watch the House and Senate floor debates via YouTube.

Find the daily calendars.

Search for a bill.

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