

THE ADVOCATE

A WEEKLY UPDATE
FROM THE KANSAS
LEGISLATURE

ADVOCACY THAT WORKS



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WICHITA REGIONAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

2026 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Intro

Last week, a marathon of floor work was anticipated in both chambers ahead of the Friday deadline for non-exempt bills in either chamber. The Senate did indeed pass a large number of bills, working through 65 on Wednesday and an additional 20 on Thursday before adjourning that evening. The House passed 22 bills on Wednesday, but then abruptly adjourned on Thursday around 2:00 PM after having only passed SCR1603, a new constitutional amendment on property taxes. More on that below. The sudden halt to the week's work was due to internal conflict in the House centered on members who wanted to bring an amendment to any relevant bill to include policy that leadership has thus far sidelined.

This week begins the scramble of conference committee meetings, with typically the Chair, Vice Chair, and Ranking Minority members from their respective committees meeting with their counterparts from across the rotunda to negotiate and resolve differences on bills they have passed. Conference committees are an interesting mechanism of the legislature, where committee chairs truly show their muscle. The six members of the conference committee can greatly alter legislation or even pull the contents of a bill and insert that of another, referred to as a 'gut and go', and only four of the six members have to agree to get the bill out of committee after an Agree to Disagree is completed. Additionally, conference committee reports are not amendable on the floor, so they are often packages meant to give members a reason to vote yes on legislation they may not otherwise support. This week, members will either be on the floor voting on conference committee reports, in conference committees, or simply waiting around for votes. Friday is scheduled for First Adjournment, meaning this is the final full week of the 2026 session. Veto Session is scheduled for April 9th through the 11th.

Sports Authority Bill Advances

The House passed [HB2793](#) 79-41 on Tuesday. The legislation creating a state sports authority to oversee the proposed \$4 billion Kansas City Chiefs stadium and related facilities has now been sent to the Senate. The authority would be governed by an 11-member board, expanded from the original nine, now allowing voting seats for the mayors of Kansas City, KS, and Olathe, contingent on local tax commitments.

The bill outlines governance and operational details, including subjecting the authority to open meetings and open records laws, limiting its scope to the Chiefs project, and funding its executive director through stadium rent. It also grants broad exemptions from state procurement, civil service, and tax laws to streamline construction of the planned 65,000-seat domed stadium in Wyandotte County and a practice facility in Olathe.

Supporters, led by Rep. Sean Tarwater (R-Stillwell), emphasized that the bill does not alter the 2024 incentive package or the underlying deal, arguing it simply ensures legislative oversight of a project that will generate jobs, economic activity, and development in Wyandotte County. He also stressed that state liability is capped and the Chiefs would cover cost overruns.

Opposition from both parties focused on assumed financial risk and lack of proven economic return. Critics called the project a "gamble" with taxpayer dollars, questioned the absence of a cost-benefit analysis, and cited research suggesting stadiums rarely deliver meaningful ROI. Some also criticized the structure as "socializing costs and privatizing profits." The final version of the bill will be hashed out in conference committee, with the stadium projected to open in 2031.

Motor Vehicle Cell Phone Restrictions

The Legislature has approved a targeted distracted driving bill, sending it to Governor Kelly after strong bipartisan votes of 31-9 in the Senate, and 116-7 in the House. [SB366](#) prohibits drivers from using handheld cellphones in school zones when reduced speed limits are in effect and in active construction zones when workers are present, and signs are posted. Violations carry a \$60 fine, but enforcement will begin with warnings on July 1, with fines delayed until July 1, 2027.

The bill represents a scaled-back version of earlier efforts led by AAA, which previously failed due to broader restrictions on teen drivers. Lawmakers ultimately reached a compromise by narrowing the policy to high-risk zones only. Supporters cited significant safety concerns, including over 13,800 distracted-driving crashes in 2024 alone, with dozens of fatalities, as well as thousands of crashes and injuries in construction zones in recent years. The legislation also includes provisions allowing additional flashing safety lights on construction vehicles and equipment to better warn drivers.

23/7 Alcohol Sales Squeaks Out of Senate

The Senate just barely approved [SB393](#), a bill allowing the sale of alcoholic beverages 23 hours a day, seven days a week, during the 2026 World Cup in Kansas City, sending the measure to the House. The policy would run from June 11 to July 19 and apply to bars, restaurants, liquor stores, and grocery stores. It extends the current hours of 6 a.m. to 2 a.m. by three additional hours to 6 a.m. to 5 a.m.

Lawmakers amended the bill to make it locally controlled, requiring cities and counties to opt in to allow extended hours, rather than be automatically included. This change reflects concerns from areas outside the Kansas City region, though Johnson and Wyandotte counties are expected to see the greatest impact. Supporters, including Sen. Adam Thomas (R-Olathe), framed the bill as a one-time economic opportunity, citing an expected 650,000 visitors and the chance to showcase Kansas globally, while maintaining local control. Opponents led by Sen. Marci Francisco (D-Lawrence) raised public safety concerns, particularly about late-night drinking and impaired driving, arguing current alcohol limits exist for a reason and shouldn't be relaxed, even temporarily.

USA Beer Tax Break Heard

Anheuser-Busch is backing Kansas legislation to cut the state's beer excise tax on U.S.-made beer by two-thirds, from 18 cents to 6 cents per gallon, while keeping the higher rate on imported beer. Supporters argue the change would protect domestic brewing and jobs, citing growing competition from Mexican imports and a long-term shift in beer production outside the U.S. They say the tax cut would help American brewers, wholesalers, and Kansas microbreweries reinvest locally and stay competitive, especially compared to Missouri, which recently cut taxes on American beer by 67%.

The proposal could reduce state revenue by roughly \$5 million annually, and lawmakers questioned whether consumers would see any direct price benefit. Anheuser-Busch acknowledged retail prices may not drop directly, framing the bill instead as supporting industry capacity and investment. Opposition came from the Wine Institute, the American Distilled Spirits Alliance, and the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, with arguments centered on fairness and legality, arguing the policy may be unconstitutionally discriminatory, could violate international trade rules, and may trigger retaliatory tariffs from other countries. The bill was heard in House Tax on Monday, with no action taken.

Budget

The Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the House Committee on Appropriations began their budget negotiations last Thursday. The conference committee continued through Friday and is expected to wrap up this week. So far, conferees have reached agreement on several major items, but many differences between the two chambers' budgets remain to be hashed out. They approved up to \$800,000 in funding for the JAG-K program and set Safe and Secure School grants at \$2.5 million. Special education funding was increased by an additional \$6 million, bringing the total to approximately \$617 million. They also agreed to lease Statehouse office space at \$11 per square foot and to use State Racing Fund dollars to purchase security-related equipment for law enforcement at Gilley's, the new Park City historical horse racing facility. Additionally, the committee approved \$218,619 and 6 FTE positions to expand the Office of the Inspector General.

On the human services side, the committee agreed to maintain the existing \$200,000 appropriation to stabilize foster care in Sedgwick County, while opting not to establish the Property Tax Relief Fund that was put forward on the Senate floor. They approved the use of several million dollars in state general fund monies to stop several Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waivers from having waitlists, including \$4.9 million for the Brain Injury Waiver and \$1.8 million for the Community Support Waiver. The conference committee also agreed to designate \$3 million for community-based primary care clinics, \$550,000 for specialty health care clinics, and \$750,000 for CPR and AED grants. In other areas, conferees agreed to provide an additional \$5 million for aviation research at Wichita State University and \$250,000 for the Sunflower Summer program.

Despite this progress, several items remain unresolved. The House introduced a proposal late Friday to reduce Community Mental Health Center funding by 20%, cutting \$11.5 million from the current \$58 million appropriation, which has not yet been agreed upon. A variety of higher education-related items that the conferees have yet to reach an agreement on, including DEI and CRT certification requirements at universities, provisions requiring community colleges to return funding if they raise mill levies, the level of funding for the Blueprint for Literacy and funding for the Kansas State University dairy facility. Other outstanding items include the Moderate-Income Housing grant program, rural opportunity zone funding, allocation of lottery vending machine revenues, student walkout language, and whether to adopt CDC immunization schedules. A broader conversation on state employee raises has also not yet occurred, though House Committee on Appropriations Chairman Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill) indicated he plans to work on that proviso over the weekend.

Tax

Much of the conversation on property tax relief last week was redirected toward [SCR1603](#), a proposal to amend the Kansas Constitution to limit increases in the valuation of real and personal property. Like much of the major property tax legislation this year, the policy was initially brought last year, as [HCR5011](#), which was killed in the Senate when the Conference Committee Report was not adopted on a vote of 26-14. Though the proposal was brought back in a voice vote in 2025, it was killed for a second time on the House floor, when a motion to adopt the Conference Committee Report failed 37-88.

This year, however, is proving to be a different story for [SCR1603](#). Last Thursday, the legislation was moved from General Orders to Emergency Final Action, subject to amendment and debate on the House Floor. The proposal was carried by the House Taxation Committee Vice Chairman, Representative Carl Turner (R-Leawood), who has been acting chair in the absence of Representative Adam Smith (R-Weskan), who was away last week on a preplanned absence. In lieu of movement on other property tax relief plans, members of the House framed the motion as an important step in achieving effective tax relief. The legislation was amended by Representative Blake Carpenter (R- Derby) to include a property tax freeze for qualifying seniors. The amendment, which was brought before the House Committee on Taxation on Wednesday in an unusual preview of a floor amendment, was questioned by several representatives because it does not define a qualifying senior. Both on the floor and in committee, the subject of a definition was left open to be determined by a “broader conversation” of a future legislature. On the House Floor, this involved Representative B. Carpenter (R- Derby) theatrically referring Representative Henry Helgerson (D- Wichita) to Black’s Law Dictionary and reading off the definition of a senior.

Nevertheless, the amendment and the underlying bill passed, despite warnings by opposing members of the House that this is yet another tax shift that will relieve seniors while placing a heavy burden on younger Kansans. In the end, the push for property tax relief won out, but not without many different perspectives being voiced. One representative, Will Carpenter (R- El Dorado), initially voted no on the bill but later changed his vote to yes. In his explanation, he warned that House members should seriously consider the gravity of making changes to the Kansas constitution: “It’s forever. I don’t care what you say... the Kansas constitution is permanent.”

The final vote count was 84-40 in the House. Now, the next step for the proposal is to go to conference committee, following the Senate’s refusal to concur with the House’s amendments.

As far as other property tax developments, the committees met for what is likely to be their last or some of their last meetings early last week. While the House held an informational session last Wednesday, the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation worked through their last bills, not the least of which being the House property tax bill, [HB2745](#), which would establish a protest petition required by the electors to give a city permission to raise property taxes and end the revenue neutral rate. The bill has seen extensive amendments over its journey through the House and the Senate, only to be passed over following the House’s failure to pass [SCR1616](#), the Senate’s proposed constitutional amendment to cap property valuations at 3%.

Senate Assessment and Taxation Chairwoman Caryn Tyson (R- Parker) said she had been told “no further action is wanted” on the bill, then proceeded to strip the contents of [HB2396](#), a conference committee report from 2025 on revenue limits, and replace it with [HB2745](#). The new bill, [Senate Sub for HB2396](#), would also remove the protest petition element of the House’s bill, changing back to an August election. This proposal was a part of the original bill that caused strong opposition from stakeholders, principally those representing municipalities. In accordance with this change, city budgets would have to be submitted by approximately June 15th.

Though unrelated to the major property tax proposals, the Senate Committee also failed to pass out [HB2083](#), a property tax exemption for new energy storage systems. Senator Ethan Corson (D- Fairway) called it “poor legislation,” and said he doubted that anyone on the committee really understood the bill, which Chairwoman Caryn Tyson (R-Parker) took as an insult and prompted Senator Tim Shallenburger (R-Baxter Springs) to confess that he didn’t understand it, though he was trying to. Though the committee did not pass out the bill and may not meet again this session, the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee members are hardly the only legislators frustrated. As we near the end of the session, proposals are being hastily pushed out, and even well-thought-out plans are frequently subjected to last-minute changes. These frustrations will likely carry over into the final full week of the session, where legislation will be negotiated, finalized, and sent off to the Governor for a verdict prior to the veto session in April.

Other significant bills from last week:

[SB329](#) - Requiring the county appraiser to submit a single property appraisal report at the valuation appeal hearing before the regular division of the state board of tax appeals. Passed the Senate 38-2 and heads to the House.

[HB2769](#) - Requiring members of governing bodies of subordinate service taxing areas to be residents of such taxing areas. Passed Senate 33-7. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the Governor’s desk.

[HB2602](#) - Establishing requirements for a portable benefit plan for independent contractors, determining types of contributions to such plans and providing a subtraction modification for Kansas income tax purposes. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2440](#) - Excluding owners of oil leases from having to file request for exemption with the board of tax appeals for property tax exemptions. Passed the Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2644](#) - Requiring 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 Senate 36-4. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2466](#) - Extending the sunset for the angel investor tax credit to 2031. Passed the Senate 34-6. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

Health & Safety

There was a lot of action in the Health and Safety realm last week, especially in the Senate, where the Committee on Public Health and Welfare and the Committee on Judiciary rushed to finish their work before the non-exempt committee deadline on Tuesday. Public Health and Welfare passed out [HB2528](#), the state Board of Nursing reform bill that was written in response to an interim committee, in which it was discovered that dozens of nurses had been hit with severe punishments for committing clerical errors when renewing their licenses, while nurses accused of stealing drugs and other misconduct were not investigated. The committee also passed out the controversial [SB522](#), providing protections for students and employees who abstain from vaccination or other medical procedures, though it was not worked on the Senate floor during the week, effectively killing the bill for the year unless it is packaged in a conference committee report.

The Senate Committee on Judiciary held a litany of hearings the first two days of the week, matching their pace from last week, hearing three bills a day and passing out more. Bills the committee passed out in the last days of meetings include [HB2527](#), prohibiting work release for convicted sex offenders, [HB2521](#), putting child placement agencies under the tort claims act, [HB2537](#), increasing penalties for sexual extortion, and [HB2601](#), establishing a child abuse and neglect registry.

The House floor was chaotic during the week. It began with confusion around an amendment to [HB2368](#), providing for the licensure of anesthesiologist assistants, resulting in it being sent back to the committee, killing it for the year. Additionally, on Wednesday, Rep. Allen Reavis (R-Atchison) attempted to bring up an amendment that had not been turned in, which led to a variety of bills being passed over, and then a quick motion to adjourn passed on Thursday.

Below are major health and safety bills that saw action on the floor last week:

[HB2528](#) - Requiring all state board of nursing actions related to nonpractice violations be void, allowing for late license renewal for professional, practical and advanced practice registered nurses, setting fees for late license renewal, limiting unprofessional conduct to acts related to the practice of nursing, prohibiting the board from taking retaliatory action against a licensee based on certain lawful actions and creating a civil cause of action for violation thereof, requiring that board members be subject to senate confirmation and requiring the board to issue refunds for overpayment or duplicate payment. Passed Senate 34-6. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2509](#) - Adding advanced practice registered nurse to the definition of healthcare provider for purposes of the healthcare provider insurance availability act. Passed Senate 37-3. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2368](#) - Providing for the licensure of anesthesiologist assistants. The bill was sent back to committee.

[HB2564](#) - Providing for the election of alternative payment methods by a dental provider and allowing such payment method to remain in force for the duration of a contract with a dental benefit plan. Passed Senate 34-6. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2639 - Changing the name of juvenile crisis intervention centers to juvenile stabilization centers, modifying the intake criteria and treatment provided at such centers and transferring moneys from the evidence-based programs account of the state general fund for use at such centers. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2521 - Expanding the Kansas tort claims act to include child placement agencies that contract with the secretary for children and families. Passed Senate 31-9. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2537 - Increasing the 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, creating the crimes of aggravated sexual extortion causing great bodily harm and aggravated sexual extortion causing death and requiring the attorney general to prepare and provide educational materials and information concerning such crimes. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the Governor's desk.

HB2613 - Providing for the crime victims compensation board to establish fees chargeable for conducting examinations of persons who may be victims of sexual assault and authorizing the board to adopt rules and regulations to administer such fees and to use moneys in the crime victims compensation fund for the payment of such fees. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

SB487 - Requiring the Kansas bureau of investigation to implement a statewide offender registration system for agencies who register offenders under the offender registration act, providing for a petition to determine that an offender is indigent and authorizing a notice to appear to be issued for a violation of the act involving nonpayment of a fee. Passed House 124-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

SB408 - Excluding a child engaging in age-appropriate independent activities from the definition of a child in need of care in the revised Kansas code for care of children, requiring the secretary for children and families to enter into a memorandum of understanding with military organizations and create a referral process for children in need of care cases involving children of military personnel to provide families with services that a military family advocacy program offers, authorizing a challenge to a voluntary acknowledgment of paternity as soon as practicable after discovery of fraud, duress or mistake of fact and specifying that certain genetic testing results shall constitute a change of circumstances that warrants a court finding of material mistake of fact. Passed House 124-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2467 - Prohibiting past convictions or sanctions for failure to comply with a traffic citation that are more than five years old from being considered by courts and the division of vehicles in determining suspended or restricted driving privileges and eliminating certain notice requirements for the division of vehicles. Passed Senate 37-3. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the governor's desk.

HB2587 - Authorizing a licensed private psychiatric hospital to maintain a stock supply of emergency medication kits for pharmaceutical emergencies. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2762 - Modifying the crime of unlawful sexual relations to describe who is a person in a position of authority for a school. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2594 - Modifying the elements of the crime of blackmail related to threatened dissemination of any image, video or other recording of another identifiable person who is nude or engaged in sexual activity by changing the connection to breach of privacy and describing the content of the image, video or other recording. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2527 - Prohibiting certain sex offenders from entering onto school property or attending school activities, prohibiting courts from assigning a defendant to work release if the defendant is required to register as a sex offender for certain crimes and prohibiting the secretary of corrections from granting an inmate leave from confinement except for specified purposes if the inmate is required to register as a sex offender for certain crimes or is serving a sentence for certain crimes that require registration as a sex offender. Passed Senate 38-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

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HB2524 - Permitting the secretary for children and families to license family foster homes when certain persons reside in such home and creating an appeal process for family foster homes when licenses are not granted. Passed Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the Governor's desk.

HB2444 - Providing that jail credit when consecutive sentences are imposed shall not apply to more than one case, creating special sentencing rules when a felony is committed by certain offenders while on probation, parole or post-release supervision for a prior felony and requiring secured minimum bonds for certain defendants who commit a new felony while on probation, parole, post-release supervision or bond for a prior felony unless the court makes certain findings. Passed Senate 35-5. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2320 - Authorizing children in the custody of the secretary of the department for children and families to attend school in any school district, requiring records for such students to be timely transferred between school districts and requiring a transportation plan if the child remains in the school of origin. Passed the Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the Governor's desk.

Economic Development

Only the Senate Commerce Committee met last week, advancing a range of legislation focused on economic development tools, workforce policy, housing costs, and regulatory frameworks, while also continuing discussion on longer-term structural initiatives.

The Committee passed Sub for HB 2346, establishing a new sports tourism grant program that would provide matching funds to communities seeking to attract and host sporting events. Administered by the Department of Commerce and funded through the Economic Development Initiatives Fund or the State General Fund, the program is intended to drive regional tourism, increase local spending, and strengthen Kansas' competitiveness in attracting large-scale events. The Senate passed the bill 28-12 on Thursday. The House passed the bill 95-21 earlier this session, and the bill will likely head to conference committee to work out the differences.

In addition, the Committee passed HB2700, the Kansas Right to Repair Act, which would require manufacturers to provide access to parts, tools, and documentation needed to repair digital electronic equipment. The measure is expected to reduce costs for businesses and consumers, while continuing to raise broader policy considerations for manufacturers. It passed the Senate 40-0 and heads back to the House to concur or send it to conference.

The Committee also advanced several additional measures with economic and workforce implications. HB2596 was amended to establish a three-year pilot program allowing the Department of Corrections to partner with private entities on the production of modular or manufactured housing, with private partners responsible for startup and operational costs and passed the Senate 36-4 and heads back to the House. Lawmakers on the committee also passed HB2588, establishing statewide electrician licensing standards, reflecting union efforts to create more uniform workforce credentialing while balancing training requirements and industry needs. It was not worked on the Senate floor. HB2481 was approved to broaden the definition of lodging subject to tax collection, impacting short-term rental markets, and passed the Senate 33-7, and heads back to the House to concur or go to conference. HB2357 was advanced with technical changes to eviction and expungement processes to allow continued negotiations as the bill moves forward. It passed 33-7 on Thursday in the Senate and awaits a motion to concur or non-concur in the House.

Other significant bills from last week:

HB2798 - Substitute for HB 2798 by Committee on Higher Education Budget - Granting authority to state educational institutions regarding transactions involving contracts, easements and the procurement of goods and services, exempting the state educational institutions from statutes governing such transactions and authorizing legislators to request copies of certain documents. Passed the House 111-12 and heads to the Senate.

SB334 - Facilitating nursing workforce development by providing education levels for instructors at nursing schools as a requirement for state approval. Passed the House 81-43. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the Governor's desk.

SB260 - House Substitute for SB260 by Committee on Federal and State Affairs - Establishing the born to invest act and requiring the office of vital statistics to provide data to the office of the state treasurer for distribution of informational materials regarding certain government-administered savings accounts. Passed the House 110-14. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2464 - Extending the number of years that new credits may be issued or earned for contributions to graduates of aerospace and aviation-related educational programs and employers of program graduates. Passed the Senate 39-1. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

SB524 - Requiring banks to enter into a written agreement with the state treasurer to be a depository of public moneys, increasing the market value of securities necessary to secure the deposit of public moneys, providing procedures for when a depository fails to follow the requirements of the state treasurer, modifying certain definitions, authorizing the state treasurer to assess a fee to operate the public moneys pooled method, creating the public moneys fee fund and providing exceptions to the public moneys pooled method if accounts are subject to conflicting federal law. Passed the Senate 40-0 and heads to the House.

Local Government

HB2571 - Senate Substitute for HB 2571 by Committee on Local Government, Transparency and Ethics - Increasing the cost threshold for when a county shall use the public bidding process in awarding a construction contract. Passed Senate 36-3. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

SB418 - Enacting the by-right housing development act to provide a streamlined permit approval process for by-right housing developments, allowing third-party review of new residential construction development documents and inspection of improvements, requiring political subdivisions to allow certain building provisions for certain single-family residences of a certain size, excluding owner initiated rezoning to a single-family residential district from protest petition provisions and providing for all land within the corporate limits of a city that is zoned for any type of residential use to be considered zoned for single-family residential use. Passed House 97-27. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

SB462 - Prohibiting certain public nuisance claims, requiring special injury for certain public nuisance actions and providing an accrual period for the statute of limitations in public nuisance actions. Passed the House 84-40. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2739 - Providing that fire sprinkler systems shall not be required in this state for multi-family dwellings of four attached units or fewer, prohibiting municipal fire sprinkler requirements for multi-family dwellings of four or fewer attached living units and defining apartment buildings for purposes of the fire code. Passed Senate 39-1. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

HB2111 - Senate Substitute for HB 2111 by Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources - Exempting certain registered agritourism operations from local code and regulation enforcement. Passed Senate 26-14. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

Utilities

Neither utility committee met last week, but House Transportation did hold a hearing on [SB439](#) on Tuesday. The bill, which originated in the Senate Utilities committee and passed the Senate 33-5, would establish a statewide framework governing how utilities access railroad right-of-way for infrastructure projects.

Proponents, including Patrick Vogelsber with Kansas Gas Service and pipeline companies, argued the current system is inconsistent and often results in delays, high fees, and unpredictable approval processes. They emphasized that the bill would create clear timelines, standardized fees, and a more reliable process, while still allowing railroads to deny access for safety or operational reasons. Opponents, primarily representing railroad companies, raised significant concerns regarding private property rights, safety risks, and potential constitutional issues. They argued the bill imposes unnecessary regulation on privately owned infrastructure and could interfere with railroad operations. The railroads maintained that existing processes are functional and that delays are often due to incomplete applications from utilities.

Ultimately, committee members acknowledged the legitimacy of concerns on both sides. Chairman of the House Utilities Committee Rep. Leo Delperdang (R-Wichita) notably urged stakeholders to reach a negotiated solution in the interim, signaling that the Legislature is prepared to intervene if an agreement is not reached.

[HB2647](#) - Authorizing the Kansas department of transportation to establish a statewide conduit system for fiber optic transmissions of broadband connections. Passed the Senate 40-0. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to conference.

[SB380](#) - Requiring retail electric suppliers to provide nondiscriminatory rates and services to entities that provide electric vehicle charging services and prohibiting any costs and expenses associated with a retail electric supplier's electric vehicle charging stations from being recovered in electric rates. Passed the House 122-2. The bill has now passed both chambers and awaits a motion to concur or send to conference.

[HB2435](#) - Substitute for HB 2435 by Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications - Authorizing natural gas public utilities to recover certain growth-related investments in the gas system reliability surcharge, increasing the cap on the amount that the monthly fixed charge may be increased for residential customers and reducing the time for the state corporation commission to act on gas system reliability surcharge filings. Passed the Senate 28-12. The bill has now passed both chambers and heads to the governor's desk.

Porter Resigns as VP of Government Relations & Military Affairs

Toni Porter has resigned from the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce, where she served as Vice President of Government Relations and Military Affairs. During her tenure, Toni played a key role in advancing the Chamber's advocacy efforts and strengthening relationships with McConnell Air Force Base and the region's military community.

She has accepted a new opportunity with Jobs for America's Graduates - Kansas (JAG-K) as Vice President of Marketing & Development. In this role, she will lead communications, development, employer engagement and external relations for the statewide nonprofit, which helps Kansas students build the skills needed for postsecondary and workforce success.

The Chamber's advocacy work continues without interruption. Watkins Public Strategies remains actively engaged in representing the Chamber and its members at the Kansas Statehouse, providing daily presence and advocacy during the legislative session.

The Week Ahead

Standing committees will not meet this week.

Helpful Links to Monitor the Action

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