KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES
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Kansas Association of Counties Legislative Update
February 21, 2025

Welcome to the 2025 Kansas Legislative Session. This is the first year of the biennium, so bills and resolutions from the 2024 Session **do not** carry over to the 2025 Session. Bill numbers do not carry over, meaning they start over at 1 (Senate) or 2001 (House). It also means that legislation that was "dead" last year is gone and must be reintroduced this year during the legislative session to be debated and considered.

For a review of common legislative terms, legislative districts, committee assignments and other legislative tools, visit https://kansascounties.org/page/AdvocacyOverview.

Summaries of all legislation passed during the 2024 session can be found at www.klrd.gov under the Publications and Research tab by searching the Summary of Legislation and Legislative Highlights. This includes legislation passed during the 2024 Special Session.

What Happened This Week

Turnaround has arrived. A lot of bills have fallen by the wayside, but many have advanced. Let's take a look at what passed, what didn't, and all of the happenings of this week in the legislature.

What Passed

HB 2088, the fast track permitting bill, passed in a heavily amended form. The amendments effectively make the bill only apply to single family residential building permits, which is an improvement over the initial bill. With the bill being amended so heavily, there may be some additional cleanup necessary on the Senate side. Zoning and planning officials, as well as commissioners, should talk to their Senators about this bill as it advances to the Senate. Any expansion beyond the current form would push KAC back to an opposing posture on this bill.

HB 2343, the home based business bill, also passed. This bill is a big concern to KAC, as it would prevent local government from regulating so called "no impact" businesses in any way. While many businesses are "no impact", many that purport to be are not no impact. County zoning and planning officials should be very cautious of this. The bill did not pass with a veto proof majority.

HB 2134, the KORA bill, passed after amendments as well. The amendments represent some limited agreement between the proponents, KAC, LKM and other local government entities. KAC is monitoring this closely, as the agreement is very technical on wording.

HB 2304 would require local government to report economic development incentive program information to the secretary of commerce. KAC is monitoring this legislation closely with concern about whether additional language could make the reporting more onerous, or otherwise limit the ability of counties to use economic development tools.

SB 70, which would establish fees for electronic records under KORA, as well as allow for minor deviations in executive sessions passed in the Senate. Some of the changes included in this bill mirror those in HB 2134. Ultimately, only one of these bills is likely to advance.

HB 2119 would eliminate the Kansas affordable housing tax credit effective July 1, 2025 for any project that is not already in place by then. This could have a negative impact on housing stock in Kansas.

HB 2160, the Whistleblower protections legislation for local government employees, will also advance to the Senate. There is a need to add an administrative process on the Senate side. KAC is working with stakeholders on this.

SB 29 was amended heavily in committee. The bill now focuses on public gatherings and would limit the county health officer to only recommending against public gatherings rather than prohibiting them. Local health officers, as well as county commissioners, should continue to have a dialogue with legislators, particularly if you have legislators on the House Health and Human Services committee, where this bill is likely to be referred.

HB 2172 would establish a water program task force. This is the next step in enacting a statewide water plan. KAC supports this legislation, which would also grant a seat to be appointed by KAC.

What Didn't Pass

SB 119, which would change the fee split between counties and the state for motor vehicle registration is an important bill for all counties. KAC, along with the County Treasurers Association, spoke in strong support of this bill during the hearing. The bill has been blessed, which gives the committee more time to work with it.

HB 2152, which deals with how the idle funds of governmental units are deposited or invested, is still being negotiated. This bill is also blessed, which gives time for it to have continued discussions. The hearing for this bill will continue next week.

Neither SB 37 or HB 2025, which would eliminate the three mile extra territorial jurisdiction area around cities was blessed. KAC has requested an interim to study this issue and find the proper solution for roads, maintenance, utilities, zoning and the residents and businesses that exist in this area. This suggests this issue will be granted an interim to fully explore the issue. County planning and zoning officials, as well as officials from unzoned counties should be prepared to offer information during these interims.

SB 57, which would require cities, counties and the state to pay entities utilizing the public right-of-way to move their facilities for road projects, is still under discussion. It was referred to Ways and Means, so it has been blessed and will likely come back after turnaround.

SCR 1603, the constitutional amendment that would cap valuation increases at no more than 3% in perpetuity is stalled. HCR 5011, which would create a rolling average for residential property is also sitting on the House side. What happens to either of these resolutions is still unclear, but interest in doing something about property taxes remains.

SB 19, which would have limited the authority of the secretary of health and environment, as well as creating a cause of action against employers, did not advance and was not blessed. As a result, it will not move forward this session.

SB 73, which would adjust some dates in the appraisal, budget and taxation calendar, was not advanced, but is an exempt bill coming from the Senate Assessment and Taxation committee, so it could advance later.

What's Coming Next Week

As is often the case immediately after Turnaround, many committees did not release their schedules for next week early. As a result, we many see a number of hearings added to the calendar as next week moves along. Below is what we know so far.

- SB 66, which would require county officials to disclose substantial interests as it relates to wind and solar projects, will be heard in Senate Local Government at 9:30 AM on Wednesday
- SB 223, the sales tax for Russell County, will be heard on Wednesday at 9:30 AM in Senate Assessment and Taxation.
- HB 2376, which deals with cereal malt beverage licensure, will be heard in House Federal and State Affairs on Tuesday at 9:00 AM. This bill represents an agreement between Alcohol Beverage Control, KAC and the League of Municipalities.
- HB 2377, which would make a change to how sales taxes are apportioned, shifting from a mill levy basis to an assessed valuation basis, will be heard in House Tax on Tuesday at 3:30 PM.
- SB 108 would allow any county to enact an earnings tax upon approval by local voters. The bill will be heard at 9:30 AM on Thursday in Senate Assessment and Taxation.
- HB 2152, the banker's bill, will continue its hearing on Wednesday at 9:00 AM in the House Financial Institutions and Insurance committee.

If you have not already done so, SUBSCRIBE to KAC legislative alerts to stay up to date on what is going on.

Additional Resources

For daily information on things happening in the Legislature, follow @KansasCounties and @JayHallKS on Twitter.

You can find information on the Kansas Legislature, such as daily calendars, audio links, and bill text at www.kslegislature.gov.

You can watch or listen to committee proceedings by following the Kansas Legislature on YouTube.