

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

### Friday, February 13, 2026

It was the busiest week yet in the Kansas Legislature, as they prepare for “Turnaround” next week. Turnaround is a deadline built into the legislative calendar when most bills must pass their chamber of origin (either the House or Senate) to remain alive for the remainder of the year. If a bill does not pass its chamber of origin, it is considered dead for the year. Of course, there are exceptions to this, so many bills will remain by the end of next week.

This week, committees held hearings and worked on bills so they can be ready for debate in the full House or Senate. Most of next week will be spent on each chamber floor voting on bills.

This is the time of year when we may be asking you to reach out to legislators individually before they take those critical votes.

**CONTACT HOUSE MEMBERS:** **Property Tax Legislation:** [HB 2745](#) HB 2745 proposes a sweeping overhaul of state tax policy and would dramatically alter how cities develop and approve their budgets, including adding a voter approval requirement. It had a hearing this week in [House Taxation](#). The League opposes and has numerous amendments. The committee will work on the bill on Monday. We are asking everyone to contact their [House members](#) with their concerns. Not sure who your legislators are? You can find them [here](#). This is what the bill does:

#### New Section

- a. Election provision: taxing jurisdictions seeking to exceed limit from (b) must set new limit (in dollars) not to exceed and place on November ballot for next year's budget. For instance, municipalities will have to work on this year's budget for the 2027 tax year, plus plan for 2028 and put it on the ballot in November 2026 to exceed the limit for the budget they work on in 2027. Election is good for one year only, cannot attempt multiple years. Failed election forces limit from (b). Should extenuating circumstances arise, any municipality can propose an increase by special election if the November deadline has passed.
- b. Calculation of property tax limit:
  1. three percent flat year over year increase;
  2. adjusted for capture of new construction;
  3. revenue for bond elections approved are not subject to cap; and
  4. State and K12 school districts are not subject to cap.

#### New Section

- a. Establishes Property Tax Relief Fund.

- b. Demand Transfer made of \$60M, with a two percent growth multiplier per year.
- c. State Treasurer calculates apportionment to each county (distributions go to county, no other entities, can adopt interlocal apportionment agreement).
  - 1. 20% equally to each county
  - 2. 40% proportionate to population
  - 3. 40% proportionate to total assessed valuation
- d. Failed election disqualifies PTRF allocation.
- e. Eligible counties receive distribution on or before January 15.
- f. Payments received in error must be returned.

**K.S.A. 2025 Supp. 72-5137**

- Strikes RNR reference from school district statute.

**K.S.A. 2025 Supp. 79-2929**

- Strikes RNR reference from budget form.

**K.S.A. 2025 Supp 79-2988**

- Modifies RNR statute to remove RNR calculation and RNR hearing requirement and converts RNR Notice to Property Tax Estimate notice and modifies form structure and data accordingly.

**K.S.A. 2025 Supp 79-2989**

- Makes cost reimbursement permanent.

Concerns the League Has With the Legislation Include:

*Reduced Local Budget Flexibility:* Cities face unpredictable costs — such as infrastructure repairs, public safety demands, and inflation. Requiring voter approval before revenues can be calculated limits a city's ability to respond quickly and responsibly, potentially delaying investments in core services.

*Unworkable Election Timeline:* The bill would require cities to call an election as early as two years before the budget year at issue. Accurately forecasting needs that far in advance is unrealistic given changing economic conditions, emergencies, and infrastructure failures. Locking in budget approvals so early undermines transparency and sound fiscal planning.

*Unequal Treatment:* The Legislature and school districts are exempt from these requirements. That unequal standard suggests recognition that the restrictions are impractical, yet cities alone would be required to operate under them.

*Risk to Essential Services:* If voters reject a requested increase, cities may be forced to cut services or delay capital projects. The bill replaces locally elected decision-making - already subject to public hearings and notice requirements - with mandatory referenda that may not align with long-term planning or urgent needs.

*Home Rule Concerns:* Kansas law already requires public process before exceeding the revenue neutral rate. This proposal shifts core budget authority from elected city officials to referenda, raising significant concerns about local control.

*Disruption of Existing Revenue Tools:* Making revenue harder to secure may discourage use of bonds, special assessments, or local sales taxes, and could push cities toward less equitable fee-based funding.

*Bonding and Credit Risks:* Cities rely on multi-year capital improvement plans financed through lawful bond issuances and short-term notes. Restricting revenue growth after projects are underway threatens debt repayment, increases default risk, jeopardizes credit ratings, and raises future borrowing costs - ultimately harming infrastructure investment and economic growth.

**INFORMATION NEEDED:** One of the questions raised during the hearing for HB 2745 was, *"What tough choices have cities had to make to cut or balance their budgets?"* The League would like to be able to provide some of that information to legislators. So please send [Spencer Duncan](#) some of the budget decisions, cuts, and other tough choices you made over the past few years in your city to keep your budgets balanced and taxes lower. The League will compile the information.

**CONTACT SENATORS:** **By-Right Housing Development:** [SB 418](#) creates the By-Right Housing Development Act, aimed at accelerating housing construction by requiring residential developments that meet existing zoning and land use standards be automatically approved without review by local planning commissions or zoning boards. The bill allows third-party review of development documents and inspections if a city doesn't act within 15 days, sets uniform minimum standards for small single-family residential construction (such as allowed building code versions, garage types, and lot sizes), and changes procedures for zoning amendments - including removing protest petition rights when a property owner seeks rezoning to single-family residential. All land within city limits would be treated as zoned for single-family residential use under this Act, and cities would be restricted from applying rules that conflict with these provisions.

The League opposes, as this bill creates numerous issues for cities and encroaches on Constitutional Home Rule and local control. A hearing was held in [Senate Commerce](#). Contact members of the [Senate](#) now and let them know your concerns. The committee could vote on the bill any day next week.

Because SB 418 limits local review authority, cities could lose flexibility in shaping growth and ensuring developments align with local infrastructure, environmental, or comprehensive plan goals. Automatic approvals and third-party reviews may shift regulatory control away from municipal planners to external reviewers, potentially increasing administrative complexity or legal disputes. Restrictions on zoning processes — including eliminating certain public protest petition options — could reduce resident input on local land use decisions and strain city resources if appeals increase. And, mandated minimum building standards may conflict with local codes designed to reflect specific community needs and safety considerations. Many citizens in communities have also indicated that they oppose by-right development in their neighborhoods.

**Electric Fence Regulation Preemption:** [HB 2603](#) would prohibit cities, counties, and other local governments in Kansas from regulating battery-charged security fences, preventing municipalities from adopting local rules or ordinances that govern the design, installation, or use of these types of security fences. The bill aims to create a uniform statewide standard for battery-powered security fence regulation by removing local regulatory authority in this area. The League opposes, as this is an overreach and encroachment on Constitutional Home Rule and local control. A hearing was held in [House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development](#). The bill could be worked on by the committee at any time.

**Road Cost Sharing:** [HB 2571](#) would require cost-sharing agreements between neighboring municipalities for the maintenance of roads they both use. Cities and towns that share responsibility for a roadway would need to agree in advance on how maintenance costs are divided, rather than each jurisdiction independently deciding how to fund or perform upkeep on segments of a shared route. The bill had a hearing in [House Local Government](#) this week. The League offered testimony suggesting amendments to preserve current cost-sharing agreements.

**Neighborhood Revitalization:** [HB 2470](#) would allow cities with populations of 10,000 or less to designate their entire municipal boundaries as a neighborhood revitalization area under the Kansas Neighborhood Revitalization Act. This change would make it easier for municipalities meeting specific criteria to offer property tax rebates and other incentives across the whole city to encourage redevelopment, renovation, and new investment, rather than limiting revitalization incentives to smaller, discrete areas. The League supports and the bill passed out of [House Taxation](#) and has preliminary approval from the House Chamber as of this writing.

**Rent Qualifications Preemption:** [HB 2504](#) and [SB 391](#) would prohibit cities and counties from adopting or enforcing local ordinances that limit a landlord's discretion in choosing tenants based on lawful income sources, credit history, or eviction record. It also prevents local limits on security deposit amounts or automatic rights of first refusal. The League opposes general preemption bills, especially when there is not a statewide issue to address. SB 391 was passed out of committee by [Senate Federal State Affairs](#). It will now go to the full Senate for a vote next week. We encourage you to contact [Senators](#) and express your concerns with this legislation.

**Residential Speed Limit:** [HB 2220](#) would change traffic law to let cities and counties lower residential speed limits to 25 mph without first conducting an engineering and traffic study, simplifying the process for local authorities to reduce speeds in neighborhood streets. It focuses solely on residential districts and keeps current speed-limit procedures for other roads. The bill has passed out of committee and may be voted on by the full chamber as early as next week. The League supports.

**Cities of the Third Class Dissolution:** [HB 2711](#) would modify and update the procedures for dissolving cities of the third class — the smallest incorporated cities. The bill revises the legal and administrative steps required for dissolution and clarifies how assets, liabilities, and governance responsibilities are handled when a city is dissolved. The bill passed out of committee and will likely be voted on by the full House next week.

**TIF Investments:** [HB 2737](#) would enact the “Taxpayer Agreement Act,” creating an alternative method for financing municipal economic development projects. Cities could enter into taxpayer agreements with property owners or developers in designated redevelopment or tax increment financing (TIF) districts. These agreements would allow for voluntary, binding payment obligations that can support financing or securing project costs — including through liens, payments in lieu of taxes, or bonds that are not a direct obligation of the city. The new structure is intended to provide cities with more flexibility and options to finance redevelopment projects. The League provided neutral testimony, and the bill has not yet been worked on by the [House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee](#).

**Sprinkler Systems:** [HB 2739](#) would prohibit requiring fire sprinkler systems in certain residential buildings. Multi-family dwellings with four attached units or fewer would not be required to install fire sprinkler systems, and cities and counties could not mandate them through building codes. The bill also clarifies definitions related to residential structures and apartment buildings under the fire code. This bill is in response to current concerns with conflicts with the state fire marshal and enforcement of state law. It had a hearing in [House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development](#).

**Undocumented & Public Benefits:** [SB 254](#) passed the Senate 30-9 and House 86-36. It proposes changes to how state and local government agencies administer public benefits with a focus on immigration status and eligibility. Key provisions impacting cities are that no person *unlawfully present* in the United States is eligible for any state or local public benefit, except those required by federal law. Applicants aged 18 and older need to show proof of lawful presence when applying for benefits, and local agencies must verify immigration status through the federal systematic verification program. The League opposes as written and will ask for an amendment in conference committee clarifying cities will not be out of compliance when providing immediate need services such as food, warming center allowances, and similar services.

**Right of Way Reimbursement:** [HB 2544](#) establishes the Relocation Reimbursement Assistance Fund to help communications service providers cover costs when a municipality requires them to relocate infrastructure in the public right-of-way. The bill directs the State Treasurer to administer the fund and sets up a process for providers to apply for reimbursement of relocation costs. Starting July 1, 2027, the bill also mandates an annual \$2 million transfer from certain insurance premium tax revenues into the fund to support these payments. The bill does not create a new local fee. The bill passed out of the [House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications](#), and heads to the full House for consideration.

**Multiple Occupancy Private Space Restrictions:** [House Substitute for SB 244](#) establishes new statewide requirements governing the designation and use of multiple-occupancy private spaces - such as restrooms, locker rooms, changing rooms, and showers - in public buildings. The bill requires governing bodies of public entities to designate these spaces for use by only one biological sex, with limited exceptions. This bill was passed by the House 87-36 and Senate 30-9. It now goes to the governor, who is likely to veto, with an override attempt also expected. For cities, this legislation has direct operational and fiscal impacts, including the need to review and redesignate facilities in municipal buildings, update signage

and policies, train staff on compliance and exceptions, and manage the risk of fines, enforcement actions, or civil liability if city facilities are found to be out of compliance.

**Earnings Tax:** [HB 2385](#) would allow cities and counties to put an earnings tax on the ballot for voters to consider and, if approved, levy a tax of up to 1% on the wages of nonresidents who work within the city or county. The proposal would require the question to be resubmitted to voters every 10 years, including certain credits and, and require employers to withhold and remit the tax if enacted. Revenue from the tax would be pledged for infrastructure (for cities) or general purposes (for counties), with at least half credited to reducing property tax burdens. The League is neutral on the bill, as an earnings tax would help cities reduce property taxes, however our position is clear that it is up to local elected officials and their citizens to determine how these dollars are spent. A hearing was held in [House Taxation](#).

**FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Form Based Codes:** [HB 2701](#) would change local zoning regulations by allowing cities and counties to adopt non-uniform zoning rules within the same zoning district for different kinds of buildings or land uses. Under current law, zoning districts generally must apply the same standards across all uses; this bill would explicitly permit variation in regulations for different classes of structures or uses within a district, changing how local governments manage land use and development. No hearing date has been set. The League is requesting feedback on this bill from our members as we determine the best approach to this legislation.

**County Sales Tax Authority:** [HB 2712](#) would expand local sales tax authority by allowing cities and counties to propose new or increased retailers' sales taxes to voters for a variety of local purposes, including infrastructure and public services, and by setting clearer rules for how these dedicated tax revenues can be used and how long special purpose taxes may remain in effect (limiting them to 10 years). The bill updates existing city and countywide retailers' sales tax laws to provide more flexibility in dedicating revenue for local projects while requiring voter approval before the taxes can take effect.

**KORA Protections:** [HB 2460](#) amends the Kansas Open Records Act (KORA) to expand protections for certain public officials by allowing them to request that identifying information -such as home addresses and related property information - be restricted from publicly searchable websites. The bill applies to legislators, statewide elected officials, members of the State Board of Education, and local elected municipal officials, and makes related technical updates to current disclosure exemptions. The bill passed out of committee and could receive a vote by the full chamber next week

**Animal Shelters:** [SB 344](#) provides animal shelters the option to release animals from custody following a holding period to foster homes that could provide care to sick, injured, or neonate animals needing treatment or care the shelter cannot provide. Additionally, the bill would require that photographs of animals not held at a shelter be displayed at the shelter and the shelter's website. The bill passed the Senate 40-0 this week. The League supports.

**Liquor Tax:** [HB 2630](#) authorizes counties and cities to levy an additional local tax on the gross receipts from alcoholic liquor and cereal malt beverage sales (up to two percent) if voters in that jurisdiction approve the tax at a local election. Revenue from this additional

tax would be used exclusively to reduce property tax levies. The bill is in the [House Committee on Taxation](#), and no hearing has yet been scheduled.

***If you have any questions or comments on any of these issues, or others, contact Spencer Duncan, Government Affairs Director, at 785-354-9565 or [sduncan@lkm.org](mailto:sduncan@lkm.org).***

**Contingency Fee Contracts for Legal Services:** [HB 2593](#) would require municipal governments to submit contingency-fee legal service contracts to the attorney general's office for review and approval. The bill was heard on Tuesday, February 10 in [House Judiciary](#). The League opposes the bill and has requested amendments to clarify the justifications allowing the attorney general to invalidate a contract for legal services and to provide a mechanism for judicial review of the attorney general's determination.

**Limitations on Suits for Public Nuisance:** [SB 462](#) places limitations on civil actions for public nuisance. It limits what would be considered a public nuisance, requires a showing of "special injury" for the claim to be valid, would give the attorney general's office the responsibility of filing the action on behalf of government entities if the harm is not wholly contained within the jurisdiction of one city, and would prevent cities from receiving monetary damages in a public nuisance claim. The bill was heard in [Senate Judiciary](#) on Tuesday, February 10. The League opposed the bill and continues to track it.

**Right of Way Parity:** [HB 2586](#) would require telecommunications providers that provide broadband services to pay franchise fees to municipal governments for those broadband services. While better than the status quo, the legislation has some holes in it, and the League was neutral on the bill suggesting ways to close those loopholes. The League remains engaged with stakeholders but does not expect that anything will move this session.

**Competency Evaluations in Municipal Court:** [SB 481](#) establishes a procedure for ordering and determining competency in municipal court. The League introduced this bill and will testify in support. We hope that the bill will be worked before turnaround.

**Annexation:** [SB 124](#) was heard in [Senate Local Government](#) on Tuesday, February 3. The bill would effectively eliminate unilateral annexation. The League and a number of cities opposed the bill. It seems that this bill may be headed for an interim in the legislative offseason to study the issue.

**Consequential Damages in Public Construction Contracts:** [SB 335](#) passed out of [Senate Commerce](#) this week and will go to a vote of the full Senate. The bill would require that all public construction contracts include a mutual waiver of consequential damages. The League is opposed to the bill as an unnecessary limit on the freedom to contract.

***If you have any questions or comments on any of these issues, contact John Goodyear, General Counsel, at 785-354-9565 or [jgoodyear@lkm.org](mailto:jgoodyear@lkm.org).***

**Water Grant Program:** [SB 317](#) would establish rules, regulations, and additional criteria for the water projects grant fund and the water technical assistance fund. The bill was amended and passed out of the [Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources](#).

**Water Funding:** [HB 2558](#) would increase funding for the Technical Assistance Fund Grants from \$5 M to \$15.5 M and increase funding for the Water Projects Fund Grants from \$12 M

to \$22.5 M annually for the next three years. The bill also extends the sunset until 2031. The bill passed out of the [House Water Committee](#).

**Flashing Lights in Construction Zones:** [HB 2522](#) would permit highway construction and maintenance vehicles to be equipped with flashing amber, white, and green lights in road construction zones and flashing blue and white lights under certain conditions. The bill was amended in committee and passed out of the [House Transportation Committee](#). The amendment only allows blue flashing lights on a stationary trailer and bans the lights on a vehicle.

*If you have any questions or comments on any of these issues, contact Wendi Stark, Legislative Liaison, at 785-354-9565 or [wstark@lkm.org](mailto:wstark@lkm.org).*

**Mail Ballot Elections:** [HB 2503](#) repeals the mail ballot election act. This bill would eliminate mail ballot elections at all levels. The League opposes, as mail ballot elections have proven effective for cities, and it takes away an avenue for members to engage constituents in certain local elections. The bill was passed out by the [House Committee on Elections](#).

**CONTACT HOUSE MEMBERS:** **Even-Year Elections:** [HB 2452](#) reschedules elections for cities, school districts, community colleges, and other local “municipalities” to be held in even-numbered years instead of current odd-year timing, and standardizes the terms of municipal elected officials at two or four years. It establishes the first elections under the new schedule for August and November 2028 and adjusts existing terms, so they align with the new cycle, by reducing current terms by one year. It makes it legal for someone running for two offices to be on the same ballot (i.e. running for legislature and city council). The League opposes and is asking you to contact House Members immediately to express your concerns. The bill passed the [House Elections Committee](#) and is headed to the full House for a vote. A vote is likely next week, so we are asking cities to contact House members as soon as possible. You can find House members [here](#). To find your specific legislator, visit [this site](#).

*If you have any questions or comments on any of these issues, contact Sage Pourmirza, at 785-354-9565 or [spourmirza@lkm.org](mailto:spourmirza@lkm.org).*

**FEEDBACK REQUESTED:** **Hazardous Waste Fees:** A hearing was held on Tuesday, February 10 in the [Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee](#) on [SB 407](#), which would allow the Kansas Department of Health and Environment to promulgate regulations that would increase fees for hazardous waste permitting and monitoring as set out in the department's economic impact statement. The [fee increase](#) is being attributed to a budget shortfall at KDHE, which administers the program. The [economic impact statement detailing the fees](#) was not made public before the meeting. The League is continuing to monitor the bill's possible effects on municipal hazardous waste disposal costs. Please contact [Anne Marie Yatsula](#) if your city would be affected by this bill. The Committee may work the bill on Monday, February 16.

**Golf Carts:** [SB 367](#) would give cities the authority to pass ordinances that would allow people to drive golf carts on sidewalks, so long as they are at least 16 years old and have a valid Class C driver's license. On Tuesday, February 10, the Senate voted to reject the amendment that narrowed the scope of the bill (limiting golf cart use to driving to and from a golf course) and passed the original bill; it was introduced into the House as of Thursday, February 12.

**Municipal Specialty Courts:** A hearing on [HB 2655](#) was held on Wednesday, February 11 in the [House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee](#). HB 2655 would authorize the chief judges of municipal courts to establish specialty court programs and would provide for expungement of convictions and related arrest records when a person has completed a specialty court program. The League submitted proponent testimony; there were no opponents. On Thursday, February 12, the committee adopted two amendments. The first amendment would allow municipal courts to accept poverty affidavits in lieu of a filing fee for expungements of municipal court arrests, convictions, diversions, and specialty court completion. The second would prohibit a fee from being assessed for an expungement when a charge was dismissed, there was no probable cause for the arrest, or the petitioner was found not guilty in court proceedings; this change would match the statutes pertaining to district courts. The committee recommended the amended bill favorably for passage.

**Rural Attorneys:** A hearing was held on [HB 2595](#) in the [House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee](#) on Thursday, February 12. HB 2595 would create and fund a rural legal training program at Kansas's two law schools that would provide funds to support students seeking to practice in rural Kansas. The bill would require students receiving funds to practice in rural Kansas for 12 consecutive months for each school year of funds received while in law school. The League submitted proponent testimony. The committee plans to work the bill on Monday, February 16, possibly in conjunction with last year's bill [HB 2174](#).

**AI Task Force:** A hearing was held on [HB 2592](#) on Monday, February 9 in the [House Legislative Modernization Committee](#). The League submitted proponent testimony and is seeking an amendment to include a city representative on the task force.

**Driver's License Suspensions:** [HB 2467](#) would prohibit municipal courts and the division of vehicles from considering convictions or sanctions for failure to comply with a traffic citation that are more than five years old in determining whether to restore driving privileges and would automatically make drivers eligible for privilege reinstatement after five years under certain circumstances. This bill is an additional change to the recently updated [statute](#) on failure to comply with a traffic citation. As of Tuesday, February 10, the bill passed in the House and was received by the Senate.

*If you have any questions or comments on any of these issues, contact Anne Marie Yatsula, at 785-354-9565 or [ayatsula@lkm.org](mailto:ayatsula@lkm.org).*