



HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS



2023 Legislature Week 8

March 3, 2023

Volume 9 Issue 7

Kansas Receives An Economic Development Award from Site Selection magazine. The publication has awarded its annual Governor's Cup for over three decades to the state that attracted the most capital investment. In 2019, Kansas was ranked 20th, the following year 10th, then in 2021, and now again in 2022 Kansas ranks 1st in the nation for compelling more private business investment per capita than any other state. The major projects that made us winners this year were Panasonic Energy's \$4 billion investment, creating 4,000 jobs in De Soto; Scorpion Biologics', \$650 million investment, creating 500 new jobs in Manhattan; Heartland Coca-Cola Bottling Company's \$326 million investment in Olathe; Pratt Industries' \$128 million investment, creating 78 new jobs in Park City; Goodyear Tire's \$125 million investment, creating 40 new jobs in Topeka.

Kansas Tax Collections For February were \$549.8 million, almost \$37 million more than had been estimated, and \$47 million more than on the same date last year. Individual income tax collections were \$211 million, while corporate income tax collections were \$15 million. Tax revenues have exceeded estimates for 30 of the last 31 months.

The State Senate Passed Public Health Legislation that would strip the Department of Health and Environment not only of its authority to establish rules and regulations to mitigate the spread of infectious or contagious diseases, but the agency would actually no longer be allowed to designate and report any disease as "infectious" or "contagious" publicly without first receiving legislative approval. The bill would also limit the authority of the local health officer to issue an order: to an individual who may have been exposed to an infectious or contagious disease to seek evaluation and treatment; to a person or group of people who may have been exposed to an infectious or contagious disease to go into and remain in isolation or quarantine; to an individual who may have been exposed to an infectious or contagious disease and has refused medical examination, treatment, or testing to go to isolation or quarantine. Governor Kelly vetoed a similar bill last year and is expected to do so again if/when this legislation hits her desk.

Kansas Senator Jerry Moran has cosponsored the Agriculture Safeguards and Security Act to prevent China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea from acquiring American farmland to stifle any attempts those countries might make to disrupt or manipulate our nation's food supply chains - in which Kansas plays a major part - by taking possession of farms, ranches or any other aspect of the agriculture industry. The legislation would add the Secretary of Agriculture as a member of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to advise on the risk of foreign purchases and to consider agriculture needs when making determinations affecting U.S. national security.

Kansas' Shortage of Mental Health Providers has motivated the legislature to pass, with overwhelming bipartisan support, bills that will help fulfill that urgent need. One enables graduates of online social work programs to be licensed and employed in Kansas, while another simplifies the process of accepting out-of-state licenses. Kansas was recently ranked the worst provider of mental health care in the nation.

Wind Farm Development in Harvey County has been put on a six-month moratorium as the commissioners conduct a citizen advisory survey regarding the issue, with special attention on their impact on the State's bald eagle population. This move comes after the public became aware that NextEra Energy, which had been approved to develop a wind farm in the western part of the county, has to date paid \$8 million in fines and restitution for the 150 bald eagles its turbines have already killed across eight other states.

Weather Experts Warn Of Above-Average Wildfire Risk for western Kansas this spring when storms will bring strong winds and warmer temperatures to the area where farmers were forced to abandon drought-stricken fields of dead crops last fall will provide more than enough fuel to start and keep fires going. The peak wildfire period in Kansas normally lasts from March through early May but is expected to extend well past that this year.

Kansas' Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program's emergency allotment that was enacted during the Covid-19 pandemic is coming to an end for recipients this month. Anti-hunger advocates are concerned for the well-being of the 63K households this decrease in benefits will affect as they now struggle with rising food costs due to inflation. Community food banks and soup kitchens are also worried that they may become overwhelmed as this change will precipitate a significant influx of new people in need of their services.

The Kansas Child Advocate Office was created by Governor Kelly through an executive order, and now the Senate and House are working to enact law making it permanent. One plan would fill the position(s) with nominees selected by the Governor and approved by the Senate, while the House proposes to create an advisory board to select candidates.

The Senate Education Budget Committee has rejected a plan to provide a \$5K annual tax credit per student to parents who opt not to send their children to public K-12 schools and use private institutions or homeschooling instead. There was bipartisan oppositional concern about how much the plan would cost. The House is considering similar legislation.

The State Senate Passed Several Tax Bills and sent them on to the House for consideration. The measures include replacing the state's three-tiered income tax with a flat tax, removing both state and local sales taxes on groceries, and eliminating state taxes on all income from retirement accounts such as 401K accounts and Social Security which had bipartisan support as a measure that could keep Kansans from moving out of state upon retirement. As written, the combined tax cuts would reduce state revenue by over a billion dollars. Senate President The bills are expected to be a good starting point for tax-policy negotiations.

The State Senate Failed To Pass A Ballot Bill that would have given candidates in all local elections the option to list their political affiliations. The vote of 24 against and 16 in favor means that all local

election ballots will remain nonpartisan, but it does not mean that the candidates may not receive endorsements from political groups.

The Senate Committee on Elections has voted to prohibit the use of mail-in ballot drop boxes statewide citing the measure will protect the integrity of all elections by abolishing an instrument for potential fraud. Secretary of State Scott Schwab, who oversees elections opposes limiting, let alone eliminating the boxes. The full Senate will now need to take a final vote on the plan before sending it to the House for consideration.

The State Senate Passed Transgender Issue Related Bills last week, but all three votes fell short of the two-thirds majority needed to overcome a Gubernatorial veto. The first would force the Kansas Medical Board to revoke the license of any physician, including psychiatrists, who are found to have provided gender-related care to minors identifying as transgender, even if there was parental consent. The second would legally define a person's gender for their entire life based solely on their anatomy at birth making it unlawful to change that status on any state-issued documents. The Kansas House also passed legislation banning transgender female athletes from joining sports teams whose members are exclusively cis-gender females at public K-12 schools.

Nine Major Kansas Shortline Railways will receive a combined total of \$5 million for maintenance and rehabilitation from the Kansas Department of Transportation's Improvement Fund. program. The projects are meant to strengthen Kansas' agriculture supply chain, connecting the state's farmers and ranchers to regional, national, and international markets to maximize the state's economic growth. The improvements will expand carload capabilities, reduce truck traffic, increase speeds and improve operating efficiencies. The following grant recipients are all required to make a 30% matching funds commitment: Bestifor Farms in Republic County; Cargill Salina in Saline County; Gaviion Grain in Sedgwick County; Garden City Western Railroad in Finney County; Hi-Plains Cooperative Association in Sheridan County; Kansas-Oklahoma Railroad's Wichita South Yard in Sedgwick County; Scoular Grain Pittsburg in Crawford County; South Kansas & Oklahoma Railroad in Elk County; V&S Railway in Barber and Harper counties

KANSAS HOUSING ASSOCIATION, INC.

513 SW VAN BUREN STREET, TOPEKA, KANSAS 66603

PHONE: 785-235-6283 FAX: 785-235-8676

KHA@KANSASHOUSINGASSOCIATION.COM

WWW.KANSASHOUSINGASSOCIATION.COM

HOUSING HIGHLIGHTS IS A WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY
PREPARED BY KHA, INC. KANSAS GOVERNMENT AND STATEWIDE
NEWS ARE GATHERED AND COMPILED INDEPENDENTLY FROM
VARIOUS MEDIA REPORTS.

KHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MATT GILLAM, PRESIDENT

TREY GEORGE, VICE PRESIDENT

BETH EASTER, TREASURER

KELSEY HERR, SECRETARY

DIRECTORS AT LARGE

Director - Rebecca Arthur

Director - Andrew Danner

Director - Matt Fulson

Director - Chris Hite

Director - Tony Krsnich

Director - James Oltman

Director - Joshua Yurek