



Kansas Association of Counties Legislative Update ***January 12, 2024***

Welcome to the 2024 Kansas Legislative Session. This is the second year of the biennium, so bills and resolutions from the 2023 Session **do** carry over to the 2024 Session. Bill numbers also carry over, meaning they pick up where they left off last year, rather than starting over at 1 (Senate) or 2001 (House). It also means that legislation that was “dead” last year has been revived and can be debated again this year during the legislative session.

For a review of common legislative terms, please refer to the [Common Legislative Terms](#) list on KAC’s website or bookmark this link: <https://www.kansascounties.org/legislative/common-legislative-terms/view>

Summaries of all legislation passed during the 2023 session can be found at www.kslegresearch.org under the Publications tab by searching the 2023 Summary of Legislation and 2023 Legislative Highlights.

What Happened This Week

The Legislative Session got off to a fast, but bumpy start.

The session officially gaveled in on Monday afternoon but was quickly on hiatus as a winter storm rolled across Kansas, causing most of the Tuesday committee work to be cancelled or postponed. In addition, because Wednesday’s schedule called for both the State of the Judiciary and State of the State addresses, many committees were already not meeting on Wednesday.

That made Thursday the first full day of committee work all session, but even that was somewhat curtailed by the upcoming Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday on Monday, which means that many legislators were eager to begin a four-day weekend with a pro forma day coming on Friday before a holiday on Monday.

All of this means that the legislative session has had several logistical stops and starts already.

That said, counties had their voices heard on the issue of the Local Ad Valorem Tax Reduction (LAVTR) fund with a hearing in the Senate Assessment and Taxation committee on Thursday morning. Thank you to all of the county officials that sent in testimony, talked to your legislators or showed up in person or online to show support for restoring LAVTR funding.

The Senate committee heard the testimony from local officials, as well as from a small group of opponents. It is unclear what the next step for the Senate committee will be. KAC encourages county officials to continue to talk to not only your legislators, but also your local residents, community groups and business leaders about the importance of restoring LAVTR funding.

While this hearing was going on, the governor’s budget recommendations were announced, which included \$54M in LAVTR funding. KAC will monitor the progress of this funding as budget discussions continue.

A rare conference committee was held during the first week of the session. Generally, conference committee meetings are a feature of the latter part of the legislative session, but the Tax conference committee met to discuss a tax package that may go before the Senate as soon as next week. The final product of this conference committee discussion will be inserted into HB 2284. This tax cut package could set the tone for the remainder of the session, as any cuts included in the package will necessarily impact the budget and potential spending such as Medicaid Expansion or Education funding.

It is anticipated that the Tax package will include the single rate income tax, as well as some sort of increase in the property tax exemption level. Other items are likely to be included, though it is not known right now what those will be. The conference committee will meet again on Tuesday at 10:30 AM to discuss further.

What's Coming Next Week

The Senate Assessment and Taxation committee will have a two day hearing on HB 2036, which would grant a property tax exemption to certain disabled veterans. KAC has been tracking this issue.

Most committees are still getting up to speed on their work for the session, holding informational briefings and receiving informational updates to prepare for substantive work later in the session.

A couple of items to keep track of at this early stage in the session:

- [HCR 5017](#), introduced by Rep. Dodson, which would grant county home rule power constitutional protections. No hearing has been scheduled on this item at this time. The resolution has been referred to the House Local Government Committee.
- [SB 332](#), introduced by Senator Olson, which is a different approach to LAVTR, turning the program into a residential rebate program. KAC is still analyzing this bill and how it would impact county taxpayers and counties. It has been referred to the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee. No hearing has been scheduled at this time.

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.org.

You can watch or listen to committee proceedings at: www.sg001-harmony.sliq.net/00287/Harmony/en/View/Calendar/ or by following the Kansas Legislature on YouTube.

2023 anticipated Legislative deadlines can be found at:

https://kslegislature.org/li/documents/2024_session_deadlines.pdf