



Kansas Association of Counties Legislative Update ***January 26, 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

First, thank you to everyone that attended Local Government Day here in Topeka. There were many beneficial conversations with state officials. I hope that each of you had the opportunity to visit with your legislative delegation during the event. Do not forget about County Day at the Capitol on February 8. That will be another opportunity to connect with your legislators and tell your county’s story.

The Local Government committees were busy this week. The House Local Government Committee welcomed KAC staff to the committee for an overview of not only KAC operations, but a review of what counties do and the services that counties provide. The League of Municipalities also provided an update to the committee. This was another opportunity for KAC to promote the need for LAVTR funding, which prompted several questions from the committee as they wanted to learn more about this topic.

The Senate Local Government Committee heard the Riley County nuisance abatement bill ([SB 162](#)) this week as well. This bill would give Riley County (and potentially other counties as well) the ability to abate nuisances after a court ruling and charge those abatement costs to the property. The bill contains an agriculture exception. This nuisance abatement process is more limited than the city nuisance abatement process.

On Thursday, the Senate Local Government Committee heard the bill that would renew the Sedgwick County nuisance abatement law. This law has been in effect for two years, but was set to sunset at the end of three years. Sedgwick County is seeking to make this permanent. They have yet to have to use the process, as many problem properties have taken notice of the existence of the law and taken steps to remedy their issues, but the authority has been beneficial to the county.

The Senate Local Government Committee also received [a briefing](#) (starts at the 9:12 mark of the linked video) on the local ad valorem tax reduction fund (LAVTR) provided by the Legislative Research Department. This was not a bill hearing, but an informational briefing for the benefit of the committee.

What's Coming Next Week

Next week is a busy week, as the calendar begins to fill up.

The House Tax committee is hearing informational hearings on the different portions of SB 8, which was vetoed last year. The House committee did not have the opportunity to hear many of these provisions, so this gives them an opportunity to hear testimony on these provisions.

Of particular importance is the government competition portion of SB 8. The House Tax committee will hear that portion of SB 8 on Tuesday, January 30 at 3:30. KAC encourages counties to submit testimony from your counties perspective on not only how this bill would harm your county, but also how your community is served by having these services available. The committee would benefit from these specific examples.

The bill that allowed counties to recover costs for housing individuals that were awaiting competency evaluations in county jails ([SB 228](#)) will have an update before the Senate Judiciary committee at 10:30 AM. This update will inform the committee of how that program is being used. I would remind counties to submit your expenses as allowed under the bill.

The Plastic bag ban bill is back. [HB 2446](#) will be heard in Senate Federal and State Affairs at 10:30 AM on Tuesday. KAC opposes this bill because it potentially interferes with the county responsibilities of solid waste management. Additionally, KAC opposes this bill as an invasion of local control more broadly.

[HB 2511](#) would allow for candidates to include a party indicator next to their name even in non-partisan races. This would automatically make any non-partisan race a partisan race, as any party indicator makes a race partisan. KAC has opposed this bill because it interferes with local control (cities and counties can designate whether races are partisan or non-partisan already). This will be heard on Tuesday in House Elections at 3:30 PM. In addition, there will be a hearing on a bill to ban ranked choice voting ([SB 368](#)) in the Senate Federal and State Affairs committee on Thursday at 10:30 AM.

A bill that would require counties and cities to include a state form in all contracts ([HB 2537](#)) is scheduled for hearing on Wednesday in House Local Government. KAC is working with the League of Municipalities on solutions to this issue and will testify on this bill. The hearing will be at 9:00 AM.

Senate Local Government will hear a bill that would require only one licensed individual in emergency medical services vehicles ([SB 384](#)). That hearing will be at 9:30 AM on Thursday.

There will be an overview of the 911 system on Thursday at 1:30 PM in Senate Utilities.

Senate Tax will hear [SB 377](#), which deals with a multitude of tax provisions on Wednesday at 9:30 AM. KAC is monitoring this bill and how it will be affected by any action taken on the conference committee report for [HB 2284](#) (the current tax proposal before the governor). The governor could take action any day on HB 2284. If she vetoes the bill (she has indicated that she will), the Senate will have the first opportunity to override the veto.

Finally, a bill that would require that only a land owner could propose zoning changes ([SB 346](#)) was supposed to be heard in Senate Local Government on Tuesday, but as of this writing, it has been removed from the schedule. KAC will monitor this bill to see if it gets a hearing at a later date.

As always, the calendar can change, which is very possible as more bills have been introduced and are being assigned as they are drafted.

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 additional information on things happening in the Legislature, follow [@KansasCounties](#) and [@JayHallKS](#) on X (formerly 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.

2024 Legislative deadlines can be found at:

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