



Legislative Update January 31, 2020

Welcome to the 2020 Kansas Legislative Session. This is the second year of the biennium, so bills and resolutions from the 2019 Session carried over to the 2020 Session. As a result, the bill numbers will not start over at 1 and 2001, but will pick up where they left off last session. Additionally, bills that “died” in committee last year have been revived and are available for debate.

For a review of common legislative terms, please refer to the “Common Legislative Terms” list on the www.KansasCounties.org website in the “Services” Tab under “Legislative,” or bookmark <http://www.kansascounties.org/services/legislative/common-legislative-terms.pdf/view>

Summaries of all legislation passed during the 2019 session can be found at www.kslegresearch.org under the Publications tab by searching the 2019 Summary of Legislation and 2019 Legislative Highlights.

What Happened this Week

It was another busy week in the legislature. A good example of how quickly the first few weeks of the legislature have gone is looking at the bill numbers. The first pre-filed bills in each chamber were SB 242 and HB 2420. Already, at the close of the third week, SB 351 has been introduced and HB 2539 has been introduced. That means each chamber has had over 100 pieces of new legislation introduced already this session, with more coming each day.

That pace will probably continue, as the last day for individuals to introduce bills is less than two weeks away (Wednesday, February 12). The last day for non-exempt committees to introduce bills is Friday, February 14. With those two deadlines looming, things will probably get busier long before they slow down.

The big news of the week was the vote on the Constitutional Amendment in the Senate. The floor debate ran into the evening before passing by a 28-12 margin. This amendment affects counties because of when the election is scheduled. Currently, under the resolution, the election is scheduled during the August primary election. The bill was amended on the floor to classify the August primary as a “special election” to comply with the Kansas Constitution, as Constitutional amendments can only be considered during either General elections (i.e. November) or special elections.

The difference between the primary and general election is that during the general election, all voters, whether affiliated or not, will receive the same ballot in a given precinct. During the primary, however, declared voters only receive a ballot for their

declared party, while unaffiliated voters would either have to declare, or receive no ballot. Because every Kansan must have the right to vote on Constitutional amendments, each county must have ballots available for unaffiliated voters to cast their vote on the Constitutional question whether those voters declare a party affiliation or not. Printing and distributing these extra ballots for unaffiliated voters in each precinct is a cost that must be absorbed by counties. Keep an eye on the timing of this election, as county election offices may need to budget for the extra expense associated with this ballot question. Election officials may also want to prepare to answer questions from voters regarding which ballot they will receive.

The action was not just on the Senate floor this week, however. The Department of Transportation introduced its new transportation plan, "Forward" in bills introduced this week. You can provide feedback on the "Forward" program at kdotapp.ksdot.org/ForwardFeedbackForm/

Senate Tax continued to be busy considering various property tax proposals. SB 272 (preventing increases in valuation on appeal to BOTA) and SB 273 (allowing for electronic attendance during BOTA hearings) were both heard. KAC raised several concerns about both of these bills.

On the House side, House Judiciary heard a bill brought by the Attorney General's office that would prohibit local governments, including counties, from entering into contingent fee agreements for legal services without the permission of the Attorney General. KAC also raised several important concerns in opposition of this bill.

As of now, none of these bills has been scheduled to be worked, but that schedule could change at any time.

What's Coming Next Week

The hearing calendar stays full next week. If you have questions on any hearings listed below, or do not see a bill that you are interested in, feel free to email or call KAC for more information. If you want to submit testimony on any of these bills, but cannot make it to Topeka, you can email your testimony to me for submission. Please send your testimony in PDF format. All testimony is due 24 hours prior to the hearing (for Monday hearings, testimony must be submitted on Friday).

Tuesday, February 4:

Hearings in the Senate Ethics, Elections and Local Government Committee on SB 248 (regarding extraterritorial zoning) and SB 296 (regarding rejected zoning appeals) will both be heard. That committee meets at 9:30 AM in room 142-S.

Senate Judiciary will hear SB 319, which would require a bondsman to return a bonded individual to the county holding the bond. That committee meets at 10:30 AM in room 346-S.

Wednesday, February 5:

Senate Tax will hear SB 294, which would require a hearing and notice if property tax collections would exceed the previous year's collections. That hearing is at 9:30 AM in room 548-S

The House Tax committee will hear HB 2513, which would allow the state of Kansas to require marketplace facilitators to collect sales tax on internet sales. That hearing will be at 3:30 PM in room 112-N.

Thursday, February 6

Senate Transportation will hear SB 302, which would grant the Secretary of Revenue the authority to set letters and numerals for license plates, and would no longer require that plates be shipped to the county treasurer. That hearing is scheduled for 8:30 AM in room 546-S

Senate Tax will hear SB 295, which would prohibit valuation increases solely based on normal repair, replacement or maintenance of existing structures. The hearing is slated for 9:30 AM in Room 548-S.

As with all legislative meetings, the schedule is fluid and subject to change on short notice.

Additionally, please watch for email blasts from KAC for important hearings that have been added to the calendar, and please watch your individual affiliate and associate groups for discussion on bills that relate directly to your county office.

Other Resources

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

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

2020 Legislative deadlines can be found at www.kslegislature.org/li/documents/2020_deadline_card.pdf