



BRADEN · HEIDNER · LOWE
& ASSOCIATES

LEGISLATIVE REPORT



GREATER KANSAS CITY CHAMBER

JANUARY 24, 2020

OVERVIEW

The 2020 Legislative Session has concluded its second week. Though the week was short due to the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, legislative committees quickly resumed work to introduce legislation and hold hearings.

Medicaid Expansion hearings started in the Senate Public Health & Welfare Committee and will continue next week. House and Senate committees reviewed a proposal for a constitutional amendment regarding abortion that was advanced to the House and Senate floor. The amendment, which would give the Legislature more authority in regulating abortions, would be placed on the ballot during August elections.

The session will pick up intensity as the weeks progress leading up to the Turnaround deadline at the end of February. This means most bills (except a few exempt committees) must be passed by their chamber of origin by the Turnaround deadline in order to continue through the process.

MEDICAID EXPANSION ACTION

Proponents provided testimony for Medicaid Expansion Thursday and Friday. SB252 is the compromise bill between Governor Kelly and Majority Leader Jim Denning. Neutral testimony will be on January 28 and opponents on January 29 and 30. The bill includes full expansion, a work referral program, reinsurance waiver, fee establishment for MCO's and hospitals to support the plan. The Governor's budget set aside \$17.5 million for FY2021 for Medicaid Expansion effective January 1, 2021 and \$35 million for FY2022.

Cathy Bennett, Senior Vice President, Public Policy & Government Relations of The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, testified in favor of SB252 on Friday, January 23. Cathy mentioned that businesses see this bill as making good economic sense and will reduce overall health care costs to business. She also praised the data compiled from the work referral program to find out the barriers to employment individuals face that prevent them from entering the labor force. Cathy complemented the collaboration effort that went into developing the bill and encouraged the Committee to pass Medicaid expansion.

WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR RETURNING CITIZENS

The Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee heard the Kansas Criminal Justice Reform Commission's interim report on January 23. The report outlined several proposals perceived as "low-hanging fruit" that would assist criminally-justice individuals to receive a second chance to succeed. Multiple bills have been introduced to address issues such as more uniformity in sentencing; clearer indicators to denote domestic cases; streamlining processes for reinstatement of driver's licenses; and sharing of data between law enforcement. The Commission will continue to meet throughout 2020 and deliver a more comprehensive

criminal justice reform plan to the legislature in December of 2020. The KC Chamber will continue to monitor and engage the Commission to offer its resources and guidance on how best to equip returning citizens with employable skills and jobs to succeed upon reentry.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The Senate Transportation Committee will hear a report next week from the Kansas Department of Transportation. The House Transportation and Public Safety Budget will also have a report from Julie Lorenz on the Kansas Department of Transportation. A Constitutional Amendment will also be heard that would prevent diversion of funds from the highway fund to the state general fund.

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

Legislation addressing the The Governor's Council on Tax Reform recommendations to provide food sales tax relief, property tax relief, and level the playing field by modernizing sales tax laws have not been yet. Requiring marketplace facilitators to start collecting sales taxes will increase State General Fund revenues by \$22.4 million in FY 2021 and requiring sales taxes to be collected on the sales of digital property legislation also has not been introduced.

Economic development will receive a great deal of attention this session. This week the House and Senate Commerce Committees had a joint meeting to hear presentations by Legislative Post Audit on the Edconomic Development Initiatives Fund and the Job Creation Program Fund audits. There were many questions about how both of these programs could be administered better and what the Department of Commerce recommends for the programs. At this time, the Department of Commerce is waiting to put together a comprehensive program for economic development for the State. Next week both Senate and House Committees will hear presentations on barriers to Economic Development in Kansas.

LINKS TO NEXT WEEKS CALENDAR

http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2019_20/chamber/documents/daily_calendar_house_20200124120511.pdf
http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2019_20/chamber/documents/daily_calendar_senate_20200124090744.pdf

QUESTIONS?

Please contact: Sandy Braden, President, Braden Heidner Lowe & Associates
Email: sandy@bhlandassociates.com Office: 785-233-4512