



LEGISLATIVE REPORT

KEDA

MARCH 4, 2022

OVERVIEW

Warmer weather in Topeka signals spring is on the horizon and the second half of the session is underway. After a short break for Turnaround, legislators returned to the capitol on Tuesday. The Turnaround deadline stopped hundreds of bills, exempting only legislation which has been passed by one chamber or resides in an exempt committee. The next two weeks will see committees work diligently to hold hearings and recommend bills. March 24 marks another deadline in which bills should be passed by the second chamber, reserving the last week of the month for conference committees to reconcile any differences between House and Senate versions.

The coming weeks expect to see both chambers develop and pass a budget while each also choose redistricting maps for their respective districts. Consideration of food sales tax reform continues with signs the recommended product will be more fiscally conservative than initial proposals.

Sales Exemptions and Tax Credits

HB2711 was heard in House Taxation this week. The bill would reduce the food sales tax to 3.5%. It would then reduce it further if the balance in the stabilization fund is \$100 million or more, with the end goal of elimination of the food sales tax. It keeps the highway fund whole and reduces the overall rate to 6.3%. Each year the calculations would need to be made for the highway fund. No action was taken.

Judicial Selection

The Senate Judiciary Committee heard two constitutional amendments regarding the way Supreme Court Justices are selected in Kansas. SCR1621 would allow the governor to appoint supreme court justices and the senate would confirm. SCR1622 would allow for statewide, partisan elections. Neither was worked on Friday. The expectation is that SCR1621 will be the choice of the Committee.

SCR1620

A new factor to enter discussion under the dome includes Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 1620, scheduled for a hearing on Thursday in the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation. SCR 1620 is a proposed constitutional amendment that aims to stipulate new state taxes and increases to existing tax rates shall require a 2/3 majority of the House and Senate instead of a simple majority like regular legislation. This proposed constitutional amendment must be approved by the House and Senate with a 2/3 majority this session to have the amendment placed on the ballot during the November 2022 general election. To date, the House has not considered such a proposal this session.

Housing Bills

SB375 and SB369 were placed in HB2212 and passed out of Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee. Then HB2212 was amended on the Senate floor into SB282 and passed out of the Senate.

SB375 in the bill would enact the Kansas Housing Investor Credit Act. The purpose of this new tax credit program would be to facilitate investment in suitable housing that will support the growth of communities that lack adequate housing by attracting new employees, residents, and families and would support the development and expansion of businesses that are job and wealth creating enterprises in counties or cities with population of 70,000 or less. SB369 would enact the Kansas Affordable Housing Tax Credit Act. The Act would provide a new Kansas Affordable Housing Income Tax Credit for qualified low-income housing projects located in Kansas and determined by the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation (KHRC) to be eligible for the federal low-income housing tax credit beginning in tax year 2023.

Budget

The subcommittees of the House Appropriations and Senate Ways and Means Committees have begun meeting to finalize individual budgets and present to the full Committees. There are many budget discussions expected in the next couple of weeks with a preliminary budget expected to pass before first adjournment.

General Issues

The Senate Education Committee will have a hearing on SB484 on Monday. This bill would require a student athletic team only include members who are of the same biological sex unless designate as coed.

Monday, the Senate Judiciary Committee will have a hearing on SB541, which would include orders and actions by public officials relating to vaccine passports, face mask mandates, gathering limitations, business restrictions, and religious gathering limitations.

SB 482 is a bill that would prohibit certain government contracts with companies that allegedly discriminate against firearm entities and firearm trade associations. This bill passed out of committee.

Next Week

Below is a link to the calendars: http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2021_22/chamber/calendars/

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