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NEWS FROM THE CAPITOL

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We are now at day 39 of the session and I expect things to pick up significantly in the coming weeks. While the Legislature has passed a budget that budget is now out of balance and the Legislature will need to address that shortfall because the constitution does not allow us to have an unbalanced budget. Also, the Legislature still needs to address the school finance decision and find a way to properly provide equitable funding to our schools. There are several contentious bills, especially some that dramatically affect education that will be heard in the coming days. I strongly encourage you to contact the chairs of the committees hearing those bills and let them know how you feel about those bills. Below are some of the highlights of the past week:

Governor Signs Budget

Last week, Governor Brownback went ahead and signed the budget bill previously passed by the House and Senate¹. When February revenue was reported \$53 million below expectations that budget is already in the red <\$47> million. So, with roughly three months remaining in the current fiscal year (which ends June 30th) we will need to find roughly \$47 million just to balance the budget he signed. And if we continue to miss revenue expectations in the coming months that \$47 million will continue to grow. And since the governor and his Republican allies are unwilling to reverse course on their mismanagement of the state economy we should expect more cuts. Cuts like the \$17 million the governor just cut out of our universities and colleges (as I discussed last week).

¹ <http://www.kansas.com/news/politics-government/article64001582.html>

I am strongly against this budget because it uses transfers and budget tricks to balance rather than establish responsible fiscal policy. Below is a good description of the transfers this budget utilizes:

State General Fund	
FY 2016	
(July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016)	
(Dollars in Millions)	
Beginning Balance	\$ 72
Recurring Revenue	\$ 5,972
One-time Transfers:	
Economic Development Initiatives Fund	\$ 28
Children's Initiatives Fund	\$ 12
Kansas Endowment for Youth Fund	\$ 10
Department of Commerce	\$ 6
Kansas Insurance Department	\$ 8
Highway Fund	\$ 188
14 Other One-time Transfers	\$ 34
Total Available	\$ 6,330
Expenditures	\$ 6,298
Ending Balance	\$ 32

\$326 Million Structural Imbalance

Through January, recurring revenue fell \$26 million below expectations, which means the ending balance is now effectively \$6 million. By law the balance should be at least \$472 million for this size budget.

Governor Vetoes Power Plant Bill

In the last few weeks both the House and the Senate overwhelmingly passed SB 250² prohibiting the governor from entering into an agreement with a bank to finance the building of a new power plant for the state capitol complex. The reason the legislature passed this bill in the first place was because the governor entered into the agreement with the bank without seeking any approval from the Legislature. Unfortunately, Governor Brownback decided to veto the bill last week.³ This bill was necessary to send a message to the governor that he overstepped his authority and it passed both the House and the Senate overwhelmingly with near unanimous votes. A motion to override was withdrawn in the Senate and the bill has been enrolled.

Governor Mortgaging Children's Future

During debate in a Senate Committee this week, the President of Kansas Action for Children raised the prospect of the administration of Governor Brownback might be secretly contemplating the sale of future state tobacco settlement receipts SB 255 for a one-time payment of \$400 million to help resolve state government budget problems.

In 1998, Kansas and other states sued tobacco companies for the health related costs of smoking on the residents of Kansas. As a result of that litigation a settlement was reached that provided states with roughly \$200 million by 2025. Kansas's portion of that settlement is roughly \$57 million each year and statute requires that money to be used for programs that benefit children through the Kansas Children Initiative and the Children's Cabinet. So the Governor and his Republican allies in the Legislature have mismanaged the state's economy so poorly that the governor is apparently willing to mortgage money meant for children to fill his budget holes. This bill was sent to the House Judiciary Committee on 3/6/16, no action since.

Job Growth Falls Short

According to the Kansas City Star, "Kansas had only 1,400 more jobs this January than in January of 2015. That's far short of Brownback's goal of adding 25,000 more jobs a year during his second term. Overall, the annual growth rate in Kansas was a puny 0.1 percent from January 2015 to January 2016. That was one of the worst in the nation."

² http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/sb250/

³ <http://ksnt.com/2016/03/04/governor-vetoes-legislatures-attempt-to-block-demo-of-docking-building/>

Missed Votes

I missed the following votes due to Legislative duties away from the Capitol:
HB 2582, H Sub for SB 128, HB 2605, HB 2549, H Sub for SB 44, SB 319, SB 321

Bill Update

My two bills you've been reading about are moving through the process:

- HB 2501 – Clarifying the definition of crime committed with an electronic device. The Revenge Porn bill passed out of the Senate Committee and will go to the Senate floor.
- HB 2134 – Authorizes consumer credit report security freezes for individuals less than 18 years old. "Credit freeze for minors" will be heard Tuesday in Senate Financial Institutions & Insurance Committee.

Below are a few of the bills that saw action on the House floor in the last week:

- HB 2605 – Authorizing the director of the Kansas turnpike authority to instruct the division of vehicles to refuse to register certain vehicles. The county treasurers association oppose this bill. It will prevent counties from collecting property tax in order to collect for an outside organization. Secondly, it puts more work on treasurer offices than work with the customer and the turnpike authority to clear up these matters. And thirdly it opens up county offices to become a collection agency for other organizations. The bill was passed out of the House on 3/9/16, I did vote on this as I was out of the bldg. on Legislative business, but I opposed it.
- HB 2369⁴ – Prohibiting minors' access to a tanning device. Due to the harmful effects of tanning beds this bill would prohibit any person under the age of 18 from accessing any tanning device at a tanning facility. The bill would establish a maximum fine of \$250 for any licensee found in violation of this new standard. Passed the House 77-44. I voted YEA.
- HB 2612⁵ – Refugee resettlement; refugee absorptive capacity act. Seeks to limit the ability of refugees to enter Kansas. The bill was debated on the House floor quite dramatically but was eventually sent back to committee. The bill was re-referred back to the House Federal and State Affairs Committee on 3/10/16.
- HB 2573⁶ – Live streaming of legislative meetings and the information network of Kansas. A transparency bill that would require legislative committee meetings to be live streamed (audio) on the internet. Passed the House on final action, I voted YEA
- HCR 5024⁷ - Urging the U.S. President to not send terrorist detainees to Kansas or elsewhere in the U.S. Passed the House 104-16, I voted NAY and I signed a letter to the President Obama asking him to reconsider.

Library Information

The Kansas Constitution, including the Ordinance, Preamble, and Bill of Rights, is available to print in a pocket sized version from the State Library's website <http://kslib.info/constitution>. Just click on the link and follow the instructions. A helpful diagram shows how to fold and where to cut to assemble your booklet. Helpful tip: print double sided and flip on the long edge.

If the page above asks for a Kansas Library eCard number, you may get one at any library in Kansas. Most people will be automatically recognized as inside Kansas and will not need this step. Questions: kslc@library.ks.gov or 785-296-3296. To see all of the State Library's online resources, visit <http://kslib.info/eor>

⁴ http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/hb2369/

⁵ http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/hb2612/

⁶ http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/hb2573/

⁷ http://www.kslegislature.org/li/b2015_16/measures/hcr5024/



Pages on March 9, 2016

(Left to Right)

Erica Woike

Megan Geyer

Representative Carlin

Brett Seaton

Colin Devane

Keep in touch

It is a special honor to serve as your state representative. I value and need your input on the various issues facing state government. Please feel free to contact me with your comments and questions. My office address is Room 451-S, 300 SW 10th, Topeka, KS 66612. You can reach me at (785) 296-7657 or call the legislative hotline at 1-800-432-3924 to leave a message for me. Additionally, you can e-mail me at sydney.carlin@house.ks.gov. You can also follow the legislative session online at www.kslegislature.org. I'm working on my website, www.sydneycarlin.com. You can connect to my Twitter & Facebook pages through Icons on the site. Even if I haven't posted, there are plenty of interesting news items there.

Proudly representing you in the Capitol

Sydney Carlin, 66th District

<http://www.kansascity.com/news/politics-government/article60720236.html>

<http://www2.ljworld.com/news/2016/feb/17/kansas-house-preparing-vote-budget-balancing-plan/>

<http://www.kansas.com/news/local/education/article61033637.html>

<http://www.wibwnewsnow.com/democrats-solidly-behind-ethnic-studies-bill/>