

April 7, 2017



NEWS FROM THE CAPITOL

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Westar Rate Increase (Reminder)

Westar has filed an application with the Kansas Corporation Commission requesting a \$17.4 million (1.2%) rate increase for Westar Energy’s retail electric customers. Residential customers with average monthly consumption of 1,000 kilowatt hours of electricity would have an average increase of \$1.54 per month.

Westar Energy’s application indicates the increase relates to costs incurred to meet Environmental Protection Agency requirements, investment related to the extended operating license for Wolf Creek and investment in distribution assets to improve reliability.

An evidentiary hearing on **Westar Energy’s request is scheduled to begin May 9, 2017, at 9am at the Commission’s Offices, 1500 Arrowhead Rd., Topeka, KS 66604-4027.** The public is invited to attend.

April-Month of the Military Child



*Month of the Military Child
Resolution Presentation on
the House Floor, April 6,
2017*

*(Left to Right)
Nevaeh Buffington, Rep.
Carlin, Ilima Lewis*

Rep Carlin said, “Today when I asked my pages if any of them were children of military parents, two of my five pages said yes. I would like to introduce Nevaeh Buffington and Ilima Lewis from Manhattan. I appreciate that 100% of this body supported recognizing April as the Month of the Military Child. Through words and actions today we recognize the contributions and the significant impact the Army has on its children. Mr. Chairman, I move Resolution #2069.”

Rep Carlin initiated the House Resolution (HR) 6029 recognizing April as Month of the Military Child on Thursday, April 6, 2017. The resolution was accepted unanimously by all 125 Representatives signing the Resolution. The Army places a special emphasis on the children with high standards for the care of the children by providing excellent educators and facilities on bases to support the soldier families. In April 2009 Kansas became the first state to join the Military Child Interstate Education Compact recognizing the special situations facing children of military. The Army places a special emphasis on the children through high standards for academics in education. The Army places a special emphasis on health of military child by providing recreational facilities and activities which provide an opportunity to bring families and friends together, such as Ft. Riley's Apple Days, ball fields and recreation centers.

Medicaid Expansion Veto Sustained

Last Thursday, Governor Sam Brownback vetoed the Medicaid expansion bill that had successfully passed through both the Kansas House and Senate. The House took up the veto override vote that same Thursday, but tabled the vote. There was no session Friday.

It was brought back off the table on Monday. All 125 House members were in attendance for the final action vote. To override in the House a total of 84 votes are required. The final tally was 81 – 44. To override in the Senate requires 27 votes, but also requires an override in both chambers. Without the House, the Senate did not hold a vote.

The Medicaid expansion veto was sustained. House Democrats will continue to work towards expanding healthcare to the 150,000 Kansans currently without coverage.

Education

An Education Committee bill has passed out of committee and will be debated on the Floor when we return for the Veto Session. The bill is largely a re-creation of the former School Finance Plan of 1994. That bill has been tried and proven by our courts for Constitutionality – that makes it a really good place to start. The new bill offers an increase on the Base State Aid Per Pupil, and raises \$749 Million for schools over a 5-yr. period beginning with \$149 Million the first year (FY2018). It funds 4-yr. old's at risk, bi-lingual education and all-day Kindergarten. I am sure that there are issues to be considered that I have not mentioned here, but my district will see increases in revenue in this plan so I think it is a good start. As I said, we will be debating it after May 1st.

No Gun Debate

On Monday, a motion was made by House Democratic Leader Jim Ward to bring HB 2042 above the line on to General Orders. HB 2042 is a reciprocity bill regarding firearms – [read the details on the bill here.](#) This bill would have been a vehicle to bring amendments on keeping guns off campuses and out of hospitals, something that has yet to be addressed this session. As of July 1st, 2017, concealed carry without a permit will be legal in state hospitals and universities. The motion to bring HB 2042 to the floor failed on Tuesday morning with a 44 – 81 (the same vote # as voted against Medicaid).

House Democrats are hopeful for another chance at this debate when we return for veto session.

Bicycle Reflectors HB 2170

HB 2170 would require a bicycle in use between sunset and sunrise to be equipped on the rear with a red reflector visible from 100 feet to 600 feet, a lamp that emits a red light visible from 500 feet, or the operator wearing a device that emits a red or amber light visible from 500 feet. This will become effective upon publication in the Kansas Statutes. It is on its way to the Governor.

Uncorked – SB 13

The camel's nose is finally under the tent! Not regarding what anyone in the small liquor store business or the general public thinks, the lobbyist for convenience stores, grocery stores and the big box liquor stores made an agreement and sold it to the legislature which will allow strong beer – 6% - to be sold in stores that sell food in Kansas. Liquor stores will in turn be able to sell food products in their stores. And, a gentlemen's agreement has apparently been reached with some in the legislature that there will be no request for changes in the law for the next 10 years. 3.2% beer will be available as long as the industry produces it – which may not be very long. Also, the cities will have a net loss in revenue due to the difference in the way Cereal Malt Beverages and other liquor products are taxed. I voted against this bill in an effort to protect small Mom &

Pop liquor stores throughout Kansas from the competition and the drain on their sales. I feel it is only the beginning.

Kansas House Democrats Fight for KPERs

On Thursday, the House and Senate passed Senate Sub for Sub HB 2052, a rescission bill that added #'s to the current year budget for the current fiscal year. The current budget was in a deficit of \$290 million. Fiscal year 2017 ends on June 30th.

House Democrats stood their ground on this bill to ensure that the Kansas Public Employee Retirement System (KPERs) was fully funded through the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2017. The budget passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in 2016 had not made full payments to the retirement system.

As a result of House Democrats standing firm for working Kansans, an additional \$86 million was appropriated to KPERs and payments will be made through the fourth quarter of FY 2017.

Autism Bill – Senate Sub for HB 2174

HB 2174 passed the House on Wednesday with a vote of 124-0. This bill included HB 2148 (Autism) which was amended into HB 2174. It is now on its way to the Governor.

Bookmark Art Contest Awards Ceremony

Congratulations to Alexis Todd, Bluemont Elementary School honoring young Kansas artists. The theme for the project is "Farm Animals and Me". The awards ceremony took place on March 14th. This contest is sponsored by the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom.

Flat Tax Proposal Dies in Senate

This week Conservatives introduced a plan to put the State of Kansas under a flat tax. Under their plan the State of Kansas would have implemented a flat tax of 5% of income.

Health Factors Ranking – Pottawatomie & Riley Counties

The Kansas Health Institute released their 2017 County Health Rankings this week (Rankings are attached in the link - [2017 Health Factors Rank Pottawatomie-Riley 4-7-17.pdf](#)) compiled by the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. According to the rankings, the five healthiest counties in Kansas, starting with most healthy, are Johnson, followed by Wabaunsee, Pottawatomie, Logan and Riley. The rankings took a closer look at premature death – deaths that occur among people under age 75.

Ban on Democrats Carrying Bills Lifted

After Democrats in the House were banned from carrying bills on the floor by Republican leadership, the ban was lifted this week as the Speaker began to allow Democrats to carry a non-controversial bill.

This Week on the House Floor

Several bills were passed this week in the House. Here are a few. [You can read about all the bills to hit the floor this week here.](#)

HB 2319: An act concerning abortion; relating to the woman's-right-to-know act, relating to certain physician information to be disclosed.

HB 2391: An act concerning driving; relating to driving under the influence and other driving offenses; authorized restrictions of driving privileges, ignition interlock device; expungement of convictions and diversions.

SB 55: An act concerning public construction contracts; relating to performance and payment bonds; Kansas fairness in public construction.

SB 149: An act concerning the attorney general; relating to briefs in a criminal matter or post-conviction case in the supreme court or court of appeals; legal representation charges; legal services; creating the attorney general's state agency representation fund.

HB 2360: An act concerning the administration of the state employee health benefits plan; creating the division of state employee health benefits plan in the department of administration.

H Sub for SB 70: An act concerning amusement rides; relating to the Kansas amusement ride act.

SB 184: An act establishing the Kansas intelligence fusion center act.

Sub HB 2230: An act concerning property taxation; relating to exemptions, property owned by a redevelopment authority and located in a redevelopment district within a former federal enclave.

HB 2279: An act concerning courts; relating to disposition of failure to comply with a traffic citation reinstatement fees; judicial branch nonjudicial salary adjustment fund

Visitors to my office



Pages on April 7
(Left to Right)
Gili Johnson, Sharon Bieber (mom), Alison Bieber, Ilima Lewis, Malia Lewis (mom),

House of Representatives on Break until May 1

Please note that the House of Representatives has adjourned from April 8, returning for veto session on May 1. During that time, the governor signs off on or vetoes the bills that were passed. There will be no one in my office during that time. If you need to get in touch with me you can either call at 785-539-6612 or email me at Sydney.carlin@house.ks.gov .

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

Proudly representing you in the Capitol



Sydney Carlin, 66th District

