

March 12, 2021  
Newsletter Week #9

#### SB 13

This bill was passed with amendments passed the House last week. SB 13 removes the state mandated property tax lid for cities and counties. With this repeal, the local taxing authority will be required to post on its website and publish in local newspapers the proposed increase. Starting in 2022, they will be required to mail letters notifying taxpayers of the proposed change and must hold public hearings before passing such an increase. The Senate has concurred with House amendments and it now goes to the Governor for approval.

#### HB 2066

We tried to exempt architecture from this legislation. I represent K-State and thousands of its employees. I also support Fort Riley and welcome their service members. I have participated in several BRAC efforts, one lasting more than 4 hours. I wrote the Military Child Education Compact Act, and the bill to allow dependents to pay instate tuition and many more bills that support the military in Kansas. But many times, these professionals do not stay in Kansas and the construction projects they design need to last. While I want to be welcoming to new coming professionals, I was disappointed that architecture was included in the bill. For that reason, I voted No.

#### Riley County Vaccination Process

I want to commend our County officials, especially our County Health Officer Julie Gibbs, for the amazing job they have done with the COVID vaccination effort in Riley County! They have moved ably and through the process of vaccinating our elderly and first responder populations. However, I have seen some news reports about the County and its desire to move to the Phase III of the plan. Ms. Gibbs handled this quickly and gracefully, after KDHE learned of the plan. States are required to follow CDC guidelines for vaccine distribution. While I applaud our local efforts to adjust to our community's specific need, it was not possible.

I want to thank again our County Commissioner, health workers, volunteers, and anyone who assisted or participated in the Riley County Vaccination program. You have done wonderful work!

#### Broadband Expansion

Last year we approved a ten-year grant programs for the Office of Broadband Expansion for Kansas. This program allows a 50/50 match between private and state funds to bring high quality broadband access to underserved communities. Expansion projects incur large costs to only few residents. I believe it is extremely important that all Kansans have access to quality internet access. With the pandemic many school children were left without broadband speeds that allow effective video-chat capabilities.

The first year's \$5 million appropriation has been announced. I was happy to see that WTC Communications based in Wamego has been awarded \$505,829 from the state, which will be matched by the company for a \$1 million expansion project in the Zeandale area. This program needs to continue until all Kansans have access to high-speed internet access for educational and economic opportunities.

## Gun Legislation

Last week, the House passed an amended version of HB 2058. Originally, it was to recognize out of state concealed carry licenses, if they provided similar reciprocity for Kansas permit holders. It was amended to allow 18–20-year-olds to also apply for concealed carry permits. I opposed this change. Your car insurance premium is reduced at age 25 based on research in the marketplace showing the impact of maturity in the decision-making process. This would be a reasonable guide for use to follow in handgun legislation.

Today, as I write this newsletter, the House Federal and State Affairs Committee amended HB 2089. It would allow the State Board of Education to adopt gun safety curriculum for schools. It mandates the only acceptable curriculum for elementary schools is that provided by the NRA. Amendments were offered to make this provision voluntary and to allow local school boards to experiment with other programs. These amendments failed. I will be opposing this type of mandated demand on our local school boards if comes to the House floor.

across the state shared with us how they were able to prevent colleges from becoming super-spreader sites, and the financial impact on the university. I congratulate all Kansas Universities on the heroic effort it took to continue to provide superior education for our college students, while battling a global viral pandemic!

*Sydney*