

The Moser Minute

Week 12

From March 28 – April 1st, committee leadership in the Kansas Legislature worked through differences in versions of bills between the House and Senate. All bills passed up to this point will be presented to the Governor for her consideration. Any vetoed bills may be considered for overrides once we return to session on April 25th. Following is a sampling of legislation from the week. This is by no means a complete list.

SB 563 Conference committee report (hereafter called “CCR”) passed 83-40 on Redistricting Maps, including Senate maps, House maps, and the State Board of Education map, reapportioning the 10 SBOE districts. All maps developed using data obtained from the 2020 Census.

SB 421 Steps to stabilize the KPERS retirement fund were approved by the House 106-10, so that it will be there for our teachers, our firefighters, and other public employees when they need it. SB 421 transfers up to \$1.125 billion directly to the KPERS Trust Fund between now and December 2023. SB 421 was not acted upon by the Senate prior to First Adjournment.

SB 267 Appropriations bill (the Budget) passed 104-12. Senate also passed the bill. Any potential line-item vetoes can be considered by the Legislature when it returns for the Veto Session. Priorities include:

- Securing the Rainy-Day Fund-\$500 million was appropriated directly to the Fund.
- Taking a “save more” instead of “spend more” approach, resisting the urge to overspend one-time federal stimulus dollars.
- Continuing to invest in mental health, so our children, our veterans, and our families can access services when and where they need them. Targeted funds for those caring for our most vulnerable citizens were earmarked-the intellectual and developmentally disabled, the frail and elderly, and nursing homes.
- \$50 million set aside for business closure reimbursement fund, aiding businesses shut down during the pandemic.
- \$40 million provided for the Moderate-Income Housing program and the Rural Housing Revolving Loan Program. Funding for rural housing has been a priority of mine this session.

HB 2644 Establishes the Sandhill Plum as the State Fruit. Originating in Sabetha Elementary School, students researched and identified four native fruits to choose from-the American persimmon, gooseberry, red mulberry, and sandhill plum. Their teacher, Mr. Jobi Wertemberger, reached out to other Kansas school children over the summer, and received replies from 24 schools, representing more than 400 Kansas kids. Student voting resulted in the selection of the sandhill plum. The House Federal & State Affairs Committee heard testimony from ten students from Sabetha, Healy, and Valley Falls grade schools. House concurred with the Senate amendments, passing 108-5. This was a bill I was happy to be involved with as Mr.

Wertenberger reached out to ask for help answering questions he and his students had during the process.

HB 2087 Requiring the review of rules and regulations by state agencies every five years; requirements for adoption of rules and regulations; providing an alternative procedure for revocation of certain rules and regulations. Senate passed the CCR, as did the House, 105-12.

HB 2239 Amending law related to property tax, income tax, and sales tax. Containing provisions of 29 bills, tax relief in various forms will be provided to Kansans. Senate passed the CCR, as did the House, 103-10.

HB 2299 relating to criminal history record information; fingerprint information; limiting access to fingerprints and records relating to fingerprints; relating to privacy rights on real property; imposing restrictions on surveillance by employees of the Kansas department of wildlife and parks; expanding the jurisdiction and powers of law enforcement officers; relating to search and seizure; extending the time within which a search warrant may be executed; clarifying information exchange in investigations of child abuse between the Kansas department for children and families and law enforcement agencies; directing the department to release certain information to law enforcement agencies. Senate passed the CCR, as did the House, 110-3.

HB 2456 Establishing the "Kansas Kids" lifetime combination hunting and fishing license. Senate passed the CCR, as did the House, 93-20.

HB 2559 Creating the Kansas cotton boll weevil program; relating to the powers and duties thereof; requiring the program to levy an assessment upon Kansas-produced cotton to monitor and mitigate the risk of boll weevils; relating to plants and seeds; seeds treated with certain substances; definitions; labeling; unlawful actions; certain registrations; inspections; live plant dealers; relating to industrial hemp; testing services; creating an advisory board. Senate passed the CCR, as did the House, 102-15.

HB 2605 Increasing the rural population requirement maximum for the Veterinary Training Program for Rural Kansas and creating a food animal percentage requirement that may be fulfilled in lieu thereof. House concurred with Senate amendments, 119-2.

SB 2 Relating to the Kansas state fair; sales during the state fair; issuance of temporary permits; liquor enforcement tax and liquor drink tax; crediting a portion of such tax moneys collected to the state fair capital improvements fund; relating to the sale and delivery by retail liquor stores of alcohol and cereal malt beverages; increasing the of alcohol by volume in domestic table wine and domestic fortified wine; relating to cereal malt beverage retailer licenses; permitting farm wineries and producers to hold cereal malt beverage licenses; allowing farm wineries and producers to have alcoholic liquor such as wine on their premises while holding a cereal malt beverage license; and other agritourism licensing. CCR was passed by the House, 86-31, as did the Senate.

SB 58 Relating to schools and school districts; establishing the parents' bill of rights. House passed the CCR, 67-46, as did the Senate.

SB 84 Relating to the Kansas expanded lottery act; Kansas lottery and Kansas racing and gaming commission, rules and regulations; authorizing sports wagering; creating the sports wagering receipts fund, the white-collar crime fund, the attracting professional sports to Kansas fund, the privilege fee repayment fund, and the facility manager licensee repayment fund; authorizing parimutuel licensees to operate historical horse race machines. House passed the CCR, 63-49. SB 84 awaits action by the Senate.

SB 160 Enacting the fairness in women's sports act regarding student athletes; restricting participation on women's teams to female students; providing a cause of action for violations. House passed the CCR, 74-39, as did the Senate.

SB 200 Expanding the pharmacist's scope of practice to include initiation of therapy for certain health conditions and developing statewide protocol for such therapy; prescription monitoring program data changes and increasing the number of members of the prescription monitoring program advisory committee. House passed the CCR, 112-2, as did the Senate.

SB 261 Prohibiting the use of identifiable meat terms on the labels of meat analogs when such labels do not include proper qualifying language to indicate that such products do not contain meat. House adopted the CCR, 113-0. SB 261 awaits action by the Senate.

SB 286 Extending regulatory cuts and liability protections in our health care system because of Covid 19. House negotiators put forth an amendment expanding protections only to those healthcare providers who agreed *not* to discriminate against patients based on their Covid vaccination status. Without this amendment, protections for businesses, hospitals and nursing homes would have been lost. Also included are increasing the criminal penalty for battery of a healthcare provider and extending the expanded use of telemedicine. Immunity valid through January 20, 2023. House passed the CCR, 64-51, as did the Senate.

SB 408 Relating to theft; increasing criminal penalties for multiple thefts of mail ("Porch Pirating"); relating to burglary; including locked or secured portions of dwellings, buildings or other structures; relating to supervision of criminal offenders under supervision of both court services officers and the department of corrections. House passed the CCR, 114-2, as did the Senate.

SB 446 Allowing restricted driver's license holders beginning at age 15 to drive to and from religious activities held by any religious organization; providing for the electronic renewal of nondriver's identification cards. House passed the CCR, 87-30.

Visitors to the Capitol this week were approximately 40 Juniors and Seniors from Rock Hills High School, Mankato. I was able to discuss the legislative process and my duties as a state

representative with them in the second-floor hallway just off the rotunda going toward my office, right next to the farming mural with the Hereford bull! Six students and two teachers from Sabetha Elementary School stopped by my office on Tuesday, March 29th. They had testified in the Senate earlier that morning on HB2644-Establishing the Sandhill Plum as the state fruit. Later that morning, my colleague, Representative Trevor Jacobs, led this brave bunch to the top of the Capitol dome, all 296 steps! I chaired the final Rural Caucus lunch meeting on Thursday, March 31st. Kansas Secretary of Agriculture Mike Beam and Janelle Dobbins, “From the Land of Kansas” marketing manager, gave an informative presentation on qualifying products and businesses, and how to apply for membership into the program. I attended the Washburn Ag Law supper at Gage Park that evening, where I was able to visit with law students focusing on working in the agricultural sector upon graduation.

When the House returns April 25th, consideration may be given to legislation that was agreed upon in conference, but not yet acted upon by the House, including responsibly addressing a lowering of the food sales tax rate in conjunction with other sales tax reductions; building on the safety and integrity of our Kansas elections system; fully funding K-12 education and directing policy; making provisions to allow the next Governor to consider how best to assist Kansans being served by Managed Care Organizations while providing Kansans on Medicaid with continuity leading up to the bidding process. Thank you for your support of the legislative process.

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