



## KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | JANUARY 13, 2025

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### **NEW FACE, NEW TIMELINE FOR 2025 KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS; LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR AND PRIORITIES**

The 2025 Kansas legislative session officially started on Jan. 13, and Kansas Legislative Insights is your trusted resource for timely updates and well-informed analysis regarding the policies and debates shaping our state. We're excited to enhance our coverage this year with two important updates.

First, we are proud to welcome Sue Peterson to Foulston Siefkin's government affairs and public policy team as a government affairs consultant. As the former government relations chief at Kansas State University, Sue brings unmatched experience and a deep understanding of Kansas government to our efforts. Second, to provide you with the most current and relevant information, Kansas Legislative Insights will now be published on Mondays, delivering a comprehensive preview of the week ahead.

Stay tuned as we guide you through the key developments of this legislative session.

### **2025 LEGISLATIVE "FAN GUIDE"**

Welcome to the 2025 legislative session, where the drama is set to unfold — and to follow the action, all of you "fans" need to know the players. And what's a game without a "fan guide"?

Below, you'll find your fan guide to the key players in the committee world and the leaders driving the agenda. Plus, we've included a sneak peek at the 2025 legislative session calendar to keep you in the loop. Get ready for a political spectacle like no other!

### **WHAT'S NEW IN THE SENATE:**

- Senate President Ty Masterson announced the creation of the Committee on Government Efficiency (COGE) to identify ways to reduce spending and improve state government efficiency. Modeled after former and president-elect Donald Trump's Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), the committee reflects the supermajority's

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commitment to ensuring government serves Kansans effectively. Chaired by Sen. Renee Erickson of Wichita, COGE will focus on restructuring and reforming state operations.

- Sen. Masterson also merged the local government committee with the transparency and ethics committee to streamline legislative oversight.

## WHAT'S NEW IN THE HOUSE:

- House Speaker Dan Hawkins made leadership changes on 23 committees, some in cases where incumbent lawmakers didn't run for re-election.
- There are significant membership assignment changes on a number of committees.

Click here to receive the 2025 Legislative "FanGuide," which lists the committee assignments and legislative leadership.

## 2025 LEGISLATIVE CALENDAR

The session begins on Monday, Jan. 13, and is expected to conclude within the statutory 90-day duration.

The 2025 legislative session is exceptionally condensed and is scheduled to conclude approximately five weeks earlier compared to previous years.

Legislative days are being counted differently this year. Previously, "no session" days didn't count toward the 90-day limit, but they do now.

Legislative committees are likely to hold meetings five days a week, instead of the current three days.

Below is a list of key session dates:

- January 13 – First day of 2025 legislative session
- January 27 – Last day for individual bill draft requests
- February 7 – Last day for non-exempt committee bill introductions
- February 17 – Last day for committees to meet before turnaround
- February 20 – **Turnaround Day**
- March 21 – Last day for non-exempt bills in either chamber
- March 28 – **First Adjournment**
- April 10 – Veto session begins
- April 12 – Day 90

## THOUGHTS ON THE UPCOMING SESSION

Governor Laura Kelly is entering her sixth of eight Kansas legislative sessions as governor. She has always had a robust legislative agenda, and the 2025 legislative session is no different.

In pre-session interviews, the governor has cautioned legislators to have a wait-and-see approach on additional tax reductions. The 2024 special session passed a tax-reduction act, and the sales tax on food was removed completely as of Jan. 1, 2025.

In a Jan. 4, 2025, interview with the Kansas Reflector, Gov. Kelly also indicated her desire "to broaden commitment to a bipartisan, multigenerational investment in protection of the state's water supply." She has had a long-term commitment to protecting the state's water resources for future Kansans.

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Additional items on Gov. Kelly's 2025 legislative agenda include continuing to fund education and transportation infrastructure; expanding broadband access; and continuing efforts to provide affordable housing. In addition, the governor wants to continue her administration's endeavors to promote economic development.

As the Republican House of Representatives and Senate begin the 2025 legislative session, a combined agenda will be released. This will guide the actions and goals for the Republican legislature. It is clear from specific statements legislative leaders have made that property tax reductions will be on the agenda. Another new issue during this session will be a renewed focus on specific committees to examine ways to make government, laws, and regulations work more efficiently and effectively in the state. When this document is released, we will report it to our readers.

## LEGISLATURE WORKING TO DEVELOP ITS OWN BUDGET

The Special Committee on Legislative Budget concluded its interim meetings, diving deeply into state agency budgets and funding requests to give the legislature a better understanding of state spending. The final meeting in mid-December took a serious turn when the Kansas Department of Revenue presented a fiscal profile that raised alarm about the state's financial trajectory, including projections that Kansas' budget surplus could be depleted by 2030.

Faced with these concerning findings, the committee responded decisively, emphasizing the need for transparency, accountability, and a reevaluation of the budget process. A motion was passed to reset the budget, eliminating all enhancements and supplemental requests and returning to a bare-bones approach to ensure the budget receives the necessary scrutiny and attention. This work did not culminate in any specific recommendations; however, we should expect a legislatively initiated budget to be introduced very early in the session reflecting a re-set, bare-bones budget. This legislatively initiated budget will compete with the governor's statutorily presented budget, which is prominently featured during the first week of the session as part of the State of the State address.

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Kansas Legislative Insights is a publication developed by the government affairs & public policy law practice group of Foulston Siefkin LLP. It is designed to inform business executives, human resources and government relations professionals, and general counsel about current developments occurring in current Kansas legislation. Published regularly during the Kansas legislative session and periodically when the legislature is not in session, it focuses on issues involving healthcare, insurance, public finance, taxation, financial institutions, business & economic development, energy, real estate & construction, environmental, agribusiness, and employment. Bill summaries are by necessity brief, however, for additional information on any issue before the Kansas Legislature, contact Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy law practice group leader, C. Edward Watson, II, at 316.291.9589 or [cewatson@foulston.com](mailto:cwatson@foulston.com). Learn more about the authors below:

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As a partner at Foulston Siefkin, Eddie represents clients in matters before state regulatory commissions, courts, and local government bodies. He has built and maintained relationships with key individuals – including lobbyists, elected and appointed officials, and staff members – that prove valuable in advancing clients' interests and issues. Drawing on his experience as a regional government affairs attorney for AT&T in Chicago, he helps clients navigate the maze of federal policies and agencies, advises on how processes work in Washington, and provides introductions to those who can help them accomplish their goals.

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Sue, a government affairs consultant to Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy practice group, is a strategic advocate, advisor, and connection to the Kansas Legislature, government agencies, and elected officials. She has built a robust and well-established network of state and federal lawmakers, corporate/academic leaders, and policymakers nationwide. She earned a Bachelor of Science in political science from Kansas State University, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Kansas, and a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from KSU. Before joining Foulston, Sue served as Kansas State University's chief government relations officer for 34 years; her experience also includes staff positions in Kansas' executive and legislative branches.

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Eric, a government affairs consultant to Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy practice group, has nearly 30 years' experience providing strategic direction and government relations services. As Wichita State University's governmental relations leader for 18 years, Eric developed lasting relationships at the local, state, and federal government level around Kansas. Eric holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Kansas and a Masters in Public Administration from Wichita State University, complementing his undergraduate business degree from Wichita State.

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