

## NEWSLETTERS



### KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | JUNE 10, 2025

#### BACK IN ACTION: WHAT'S NEXT AFTER SINE DIE

After a short breather following the close of the 2025 Legislative Session, we're back and recharged, ready to bring you up to speed. While the Statehouse may be quieter, change hasn't slowed. With two veteran lawmakers heading to Washington and a full slate of interim committees set to convene later this summer and into the fall, the next phase of policymaking is already underway.

#### CHANGES IN KANSAS LEGISLATURE: VETERAN LAWMAKERS TAKE ROLES IN TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

Two veteran Kansas legislators have submitted their resignations to the Kansas Secretary of State's office following adjournment of the 2025 Kansas Legislature.

**Rep. Patrick Penn (R-Wichita)** resigned on May 15. President Donald Trump appointed Rep. Penn as Deputy Secretary for the Food and Nutrition Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. First elected in 2020, Rep. Penn most recently served as chair of the House Committee on Legislative Modernization and as a member of the House Elections and Insurance committees.

At a meeting of Republican precinct committeemen and committeewomen in the 85th District, former Rep. Steve Brunk (R-Wichita) was elected to fill the remainder of Penn's unexpired term.

**Sen. J.R. Claeys (R-Salina)** resigned on June 2. Pres. Trump appointed Sen. Claeys as Administrator of the Office of Rural Business Service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Sen. Claeys was first elected to the Kansas House in 2012 and served until 2020. He was then elected to the Kansas Senate in 2020 and re-elected in 2024. During the 2025 legislative session, he served as vice chair of the Senate Ways and Means Committee.

A special election of Republican precinct committeemen and committeewomen from Saline and Dickinson counties will be held on June 16 to elect a senator to serve for one year. A candidate for the remainder of Claeys's unexpired term will be selected in the 2026 primary election.

#### LEGISLATIVE LEADERS APPROVE INTERIM TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS FOR 2025

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The Legislative Coordinating Council has approved eight special interim committees for 2025, allocating 82 interim meeting days, up from the 56 days allocated last year. These committees will explore major policy issues, including campaign finance reform, tax exemptions, healthcare workforce shortages, and government efficiency.

Membership lists and leadership roles have now been finalized, with meetings scheduled to begin later this summer.

## **Special Committee on Campaign Contributions and Transparency**

Focus: Investigates fraudulent campaign contributions, particularly through the ActBlue platform, and reviews Kansas and federal campaign finance law.

Chair: Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee)

Vice Chair: Rep. Pat Proctor (R-Leavenworth)

Members:

- Rep. Emil Bergquist (R-Park City)
- Rep. Shawn Chauncey (R-Junction City)
- Sen. Tory Blew (R-Great Bend)
- Sen. Elaine Bowers (R-Concordia)
- Sen. Joe Claeys (R-Wichita)
- Sen. Marci Francisco (D-Lawrence)
- Rep. Kirk Haskins (D-Topeka)
- Sen. Rick Kloos (R-Berryton)
- Rep. Alexis Simmons (D-Topeka)
- Rep. Bill Sutton (R-Gardner)
- Rep. Paul Waggoner (R-Hutchinson)
- Sen. Kellie Warren (R-Leawood)

## **Special Committee on Commerce**

Focus: Studies the use of cryptocurrency as an economic development tool, housing incentive program ROI, occupational licensing reciprocity, and regulatory burdens that may hinder growth.

Chair: Rep. Sean Tarwater (R-Stilwell)

Vice Chair: Sen. Larry Alley (R-Winfield)

Members:

- Rep. Barb Wasinger (R-Hays)
- Rep. Adam Turk (R-Shawnee)
- Rep. Nick Hoheisel (R-Wichita)
- Rep. Mike King (R-Hesston)

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- Sen. Stephen Owens (R-Hesston)
- Sen. Brenda Dietrich (R-Topeka)
- Sen. Kenny Titus (R-Wamego)
- Sen. Jeff Klemp (R-Lansing)
- Sen. Caryn Tyson (R-Parker)
- Sen. Mary Ware (D-Wichita)
- Rep. Stephanie Sawyer Clayton (D-Overland Park)
- Rep. Rui Xu (D-Westwood)

### **Special Committee on Health and Social Services**

Focus: Reviews credentialing timelines for nursing facilities, staffing shortages at state hospitals, and the growing waitlist for intellectual and developmental disability (I/DD) waivers.

Chair: Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado)

Vice Chair: Sen. Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora)

Members:

- Rep. Ron Bryce (R-Coffeyville)
- Rep. Dave Buehler (R-Lansing)
- Rep. Sandy Pickert (R-Wichita)
- Rep. Allen Reavis (R-Atchison)
- Rep. Susan Ruiz (D-Shawnee)
- Rep. Melissa Oropeza (D-Kansas City)
- Sen. Bill Clifford (R-Garden City)
- Sen. Renee Erickson (R-Wichita)
- Sen. Mike Murphy (R-Sylvia)
- Sen. T.J. Rose (R-Olathe)
- Sen. Adam Thomas (R-Olathe)
- Sen. Cindy Holscher (D-Overland Park)

### **Special Committee on Federal and State Affairs**

Focus: Evaluates Kansas' sports wagering system, including its revenue performance, regulatory structure, and comparisons to other states.

Chair: Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita)

Vice Chair: Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee)

Members:

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- Rep. Rebecca Schmoe (R-Ottawa)
- Rep. Kyle McNorton (R-Topeka)
- Rep. Francis Averkamp (R-St. Marys)
- Rep. Sherri Brantley (R-Hoisington)
- Rep. Silas Miller (D-Wichita)
- Rep. Brooklynne Mosley (D-Lawrence)
- Sen. Tory Blew (R-Great Bend)
- Sen. Rick Kloos (R-Berryton)
- Sen. Brad Starnes (R-Riley)
- Sen. Adam Thomas (R-Olathe)
- Sen. Mike Argabright (R-Olpe)
- Sen. Oletha Faust-Goudeau (D-Wichita)

### **Special Committee on Taxation**

Focus: Analyzes countywide sales tax authority, a proposed constitutional amendment affecting tax exemptions, and the tax structure for energy and fuel industries.

Chair: Sen. Caryn Tyson (R-Parker)

Vice Chair: Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan)

Members:

- Rep. Carl Turner (R-Leawood)
- Rep. Marty Long (R-Ulysses)
- Rep. Shannon Francis (R-Liberal)
- Rep. Dawn Wolf (R-Bennington)
- Rep. Tom Sawyer (D-Wichita)
- Rep. Jerry Stogsdill (D-Prairie Village)
- Sen. Virgil Peck (R-Havana)
- Sen. Jeff Klemp (R-Lansing)
- Sen. Craig Bowser (R-Holton)
- Sen. Brad Starnes (R-Riley)
- Sen. Mike Petersen (R-Wichita)
- Sen. Ethan Corson (D-Fairway)

### **OTHER APPROVED INTERIM COMMITTEES**

#### **House Water Committee**

Focus: Reviews water storage improvements through a pilot dredging project at Tuttle Creek Reservoir.

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Chair: Rep. Jim Minnix (R-Scott City)

Vice Chair: Rep. Gary White (R-Ashland)

Ranking Minority Member: Rep. Lindsay Vaughn (D-Overland Park)

Members:

- Rep. Doug Blex (R-Independence)
- Rep. Duane Droge (R-Bucyrus)
- Rep. Robyn Essex (R-Olathe)
- Rep. Brett Fairchild (R-St. John)
- Rep. Linda Featherston (D-Overland Park)
- Rep. Fred Gardner (R-Garnett)
- Rep. Dale Helwig (R-Columbus)
- Rep. Angela Martinez (D-Wichita)
- Rep. Sandy Pickert (R-Wichita)
- Rep. Lon Pishny (R-Garden City)
- Rep. Joe Seiwert (R-Pretty Prairie)
- Rep. Alexis Simmons (D-Topeka)
- Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan)
- Rep. Jerry Stogsdill (D-Prairie Village)

### **Senate Government Efficiency Committee**

Focus: Reviews public submissions through the efficiency portal and assesses the role of nongovernmental organizations in public programs.

Chair: Sen. Renee Erickson (R-Wichita)

Vice Chair: Sen. Michael Murphy (R-Sylvia)

Ranking Minority Member: Sen. Cindy Holscher (D-Overland Park)

Members:

- Sen. Larry Alley (R-Winfield)
- Sen. Rick Billinger (R-Goodland)
- Sen. Patrick Schmidt (D-Topeka)
- Sen. Doug Shane (R-Louisburg)
- Sen. Adam Thomas (R-Olathe)
- Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee)

### **STILL PENDING**

### **Special Committee on the State Budget**

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This committee was approved for five meeting days and will begin early planning for the 2026 budget under the Legislature's two-year budget cycle.

Appointments to the committee have not yet been finalized.

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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:cewatson@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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