



## **KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | FEBRUARY 16, 2026**

### **TURNAROUND APPROACHES: DEADLINES, DECISIONS, AND LEGISLATIVE DIRECTION**

The Kansas Legislature is nearing turnaround, the midpoint of the 2026 session. Committee work will conclude Monday, Feb. 16, and Thursday, Feb. 19, will serve as the deadline for non-exempt bills to be considered in their chamber of origin.

This session, lawmakers introduced 779 House bills and 509 Senate bills. After turnaround, hundreds of those measures will effectively be finished for the year. Attention will shift decisively from committee hearings to debate on the House and Senate floors in the upcoming week, where priorities become clearer and legislative momentum takes shape.

Last week marked the final push before the deadline. Lawmakers moved quickly to position bills for floor debate, signaling which proposals carry support and which face steeper hurdles. Election policy and landlord-tenant measures remained active topics of discussion, though related proposals had not advanced as the week concluded.

### **ELECTION BILLS REFLECT A SESSION FOCUSED ON CLARITY AND PROCEDURE**

Several election-related bills received hearings this session. While most remain in committee, the discussions offer insight into how lawmakers are approaching election policy. Rather than sweeping changes, much of the focus has been on tightening procedures, clarifying statutory language, and responding to concerns about administration and public confidence.

HB 2023 would create the crime of interference with an election official. Committee testimony describes the bill as establishing a felony offense for intimidation, threats, coercion, or attempts to impede or retaliate against election officials. The Secretary of State's office testified in support, citing documented harassment of election workers and emphasizing deterrence. Opponent testimony questioned whether existing criminal statutes already address such conduct and raised concerns about statutory scope.

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HB 2056 addresses candidate nomination procedures and certain election crimes. According to committee testimony, the proposal followed issues observed during the 2024 election cycle, including nominations filed without a candidate's consent and the use of multiple nomination pathways. The bill would require a notarized acceptance of nomination and limit overlapping nomination avenues. Supporters characterized the changes as technical clarifications intended to reduce disputes and improve ballot certainty.

HB 2448 would require citizenship status to appear on driver's licenses. For voting purposes, individuals whose licenses list them as non-citizens would cast provisional ballots if they claim citizenship. In testimony, a representative of the Secretary of State's office stated that non-citizen voting prosecutions in Kansas are rare, citing two cases, with 10 additional cases under investigation. The bill passed the House 77-41 and now moves to the Senate.

SB 394 addresses advance mail ballot verification procedures. The bill provides that if a court rules the signature verification requirement unconstitutional or blocks it in a final, non-appealable order, the advance mail-balloting statute would be repealed. Supporters, including the Secretary of State's office, testified the measure clarifies legislative intent that signature verification is integral to the mail-balloting framework and cannot be severed. The Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee recommended the bill for passage.

SB 310 regulates cryptocurrency campaign contributions. Testimony outlined requirements for U.S.-based, federally registered processors, know-your-customer standards, and prompt conversion of digital assets to U.S. currency. Discussion centered on transparency and compliance.

Taken together, the hearings reflect a session largely focused on statutory clarity and enforcement standards. Many proposals refine procedures and address administrative concerns. At the same time, measures such as SB 394 demonstrate that more fundamental questions about the structure of election law remain part of the legislative debate.

## **LANDLORD-TENANT LEGISLATION ADVANCES ON MULTIPLE FRONTS**

Housing policy has become a focal point of the 2026 legislative session. Lawmakers are advancing several distinct bills that amend different sections of the Kansas Residential Landlord and Tenant Act. Although the measures are not formally linked, they reflect competing views on property rights, tenant protections, and municipal authority.

HB 2504 and SB 391 would preempt local ordinances that prohibit landlords from declining to accept tenants solely because of source of income, including participation in federal rental assistance programs. The proposals follow adoption of such an ordinance in Lawrence and related litigation. Supporters, including housing industry representatives, argue the bills promote statewide uniformity and protect landlord discretion. Opponents contend the measures limit municipal home rule and reduce locally adopted tenant protections.

HB 2454 and HB 2768 address rent payment and qualification standards. The bills would require landlords to accept multiple or partial rent payments if the total rent is paid in full and on time. They would also require income-screening policies to consider lawful income sources. Supporters describe the changes as increasing flexibility for working households. Landlord organizations caution that revised payment structures may increase administrative and financial risk. Enforcement would occur through existing civil liability or consumer protection provisions.

HB 2634 concerns maintenance obligations. In jurisdictions without an adopted property maintenance code, the bill would apply the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code as a baseline standard. Proponents characterize the bill as clarifying an existing statutory duty. Landlord groups have raised implementation questions but have not uniformly opposed the measure.

SB 485 proposes procedural changes to eviction actions, including mediation requirements and expanded record sealing. Supporters view the reforms as enhancing tenant stability. Property owners have expressed concern about

additional compliance burdens.

Together, the proposals illustrate continued legislative attention to the balance between statewide consistency, local authority, landlord discretion, and tenant stability in a changing housing market.

## UPCOMING WEEK: FEBRUARY 16–19, 2026

The final day for all non-exempt House and Senate committees to pass bills by an exempt committee, originally in the House or the Senate, is Monday, Feb. 16.

### Monday, Feb. 16

- Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
  - Hearing on SB 497: Adding kratom to Schedule I of the Uniform Controlled Substances Act and making conforming amendments to the definition of fentanyl-related controlled substance in the criminal code.
- House Financial Institutions and Pensions Committee
  - Hearing on SB 39: Establishing the Kansas Legal Tender Act and providing for an income tax subtraction modification for sales of specie.
- House Agriculture and Natural Resources Budget Committee
  - Informational briefing: World Cup update, Pam Kramer, KC202.
- House Education Committee
  - Discussion and action on HB 2717: Decreasing the minimum age requirement from age seven to six for compulsory school attendance of students.
- House Health and Human Services Committee
  - Hearing on HB 2718: Creating a right for an adult care home resident to use the resident's pharmacy of choice without being charged a fee or financial penalty by the adult care home because of that choice.
- House Transportation Committee
  - Hearing on HB 2575: Discontinuing yearly registration and registration fees for motor vehicles when registered by an individual or individuals and used as a passenger vehicle or for personal use and discontinuing sales tax on transfers and property tax on such vehicles.
- House Judiciary Committee
  - Hearing on HB 2724: Authorizing judges to waive the docket fee in expungement cases by reviewing and granting a poverty affidavit.
  - Hearing on HB 2696: Providing for the modernization of notarization and the notary public process with respect to real estate documents for the purpose of mitigating real estate document-related fraud; requiring the development, implementation and administration of a two-tiered authentication system for notarization of real estate documents; and requiring use of a 3D biometric antifraud system by all notaries public by Dec. 31, 2027.
- House Taxation Committee
  - Final action on HB 2745: Requiring a vote of the electors to approve increases in property tax revenues for the next year; establishing the Property Tax Relief Fund and providing transfers to counties that limit property taxes to certain increases; establishing the property tax limit in lieu of the revenue neutral rate to provide for certain budget increases of taxing subdivisions; and continuing in existence the Taxpayer Notification Costs Fund.
  - Final action on HB 2644: Requiring a county appraiser to adjust the value of residential and commercial property upon final determination or obtain a fee simple appraisal if the appraised value exceeds a 5% increase over three years.
- House Insurance Committee

- Hearing on HB 2550: Requiring certain 340B entities to report annually to the Kansas Department of Insurance on certain costs, savings, and payments made under the federal 340B drug pricing program.

## BILL INTRODUCTIONS

### HOUSE BILLS

#### Employment

**HB 2764: Labor and Employment/Employment Security Law.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Sean Tarwater (R-Stilwell), would prohibit amendments, suspensions or repeals of employment security law provisions through budget provisos, appropriations bills, or temporary fiscal measures without following specified review procedures; and would authorize the Secretary of Labor to recognize and approve employer-sponsored supplemental unemployment benefit plans; to ensure such plans do not disqualify employees from state unemployment benefits; require maintenance of a registry; update terminology; enhance federal conformity; clarify procedures; and update the Employment Security Board of Review. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development and was heard Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 1:30 p.m.

#### Government

**HB 2759: State Governmental Ethics Laws.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Rebecca Schmoe (R-Ottawa), would require registration of agents and political organizations representing countries of concern and foreign principals. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

#### Insurance

**HB 2770: Health Care Stabilization Fund/Investments.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Appropriations chaired by Rep. Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), would permit the director of investments of the Health Care Stabilization Fund to invest funds as authorized for insurance companies. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

#### Judicial

**HB 2747: Crimes, Punishment and Criminal Procedure/Kansas Sentencing Guidelines Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Judiciary chaired by Rep. Susan Humphries (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Jill Ward (R-Wichita), would specify that courts must consider certain factors in determining whether a prior violation of law is comparable to any act described in certain driving under the influence crimes when calculating criminal history classification. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary and was heard Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 3:30 p.m.

**HB 2748: Civil Actions/Protection from Abuse Act; Protection from Stalking, Sexual Assault or Human Trafficking Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Judiciary chaired by Rep. Susan Humphries (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Linda Featherston (D-Overland Park) and Rep. Lance W. Neelly (R-Tonganoxie), would increase the time of initial orders and possible extensions. This bill has been referred to the Committee on

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Judiciary.

**HB 2751: Crimes, Punishment and Criminal Procedure/Bail Requirements.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Judiciary chaired by Rep. Susan Humphries (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Laura Williams (R-Lenexa), would increase minimum bail requirements for certain drug-related crimes from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and require specific findings to reduce those requirements. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary.

**HB 2771: United States Immigration and Enforcement Detainers by County Sheriff.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita), would require municipal insurance pools to provide coverage for law enforcement agencies enforcing federal law; require the state to pay certain judgments in federal civil actions and provide legal representation by the attorney general; would update the Interlocal Cooperation Act. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

**HB 2774: Crimes, Punishment and Criminal Procedure/Crimes Against Persons.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Appropriations chaired by Rep. Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill) on behalf of the Kansas Public Transit Association, would increase criminal penalties for assault or battery committed against a public-facing worker engaged in assigned duties. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Appropriations.

**HB 2778: Crimes, Punishment and Criminal Procedure/Firearms.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Jo Ella Hoye (D-Lenexa), would remove the current exception to the criminal use of weapons statute that allows any individual over the age of 21 or with a provisional license to possess a concealed handgun on school property or at any regularly scheduled school-sponsored activity or event if not otherwise prohibited under either federal or state law. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

## Public Health and Welfare

**HB 2740: Health and Healthcare/Pharmacy.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Health and Human Services chaired by Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) on behalf of the Kansas Board of Pharmacy, would adopt United States Pharmacopeia compounding standards under the Pharmacy Act. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services and was heard Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 1:30 p.m.

**HB 2741: Health Professions and Practices/Medical Rights and Conscience Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Health and Human Services chaired by Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) and requested by Rep. Ron Bryce (R-Coffeyville), would enact the Medical Rights of Conscience Act, which would permit a healthcare professional to refuse to provide transgender healthcare services if such services violate the healthcare professional's conscience; and create a civil cause of action for violations of the act. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services.

**HB 2752: Health and Healthcare/Health Freedom Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Health and Human Services chaired by Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) and requested by Rep. Brett Fairchild (R-St. John), would establish the Health Freedom Act addressing medical cannabis regulation, patient protections, and agency structure. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita).

**HB 2753: Program of Medical Assistance/Procurement and Oversight of Managed Care Organizations.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Health and Human Services chaired by Rep. Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado) on behalf of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, would establish the Managed Care Bid Fidelity and Accountability Act, which would prohibit the termination of certain clinical service contracts and provide penalties for material deviations thereof. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Health and Human

Services.

**HB 2772: Consumer Protection/Kansas Age-Appropriate Design Code Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Bill Rhiley (R-Wellington), would enact the Age-Appropriate Design Code Act, which would require businesses to assess and mitigate risks of compulsive use of digital products in minors and other related digital protection provisions including the creation of a private right of action for violation thereof; would enact the Stopping Digital Likeness Abuse by Nonconsensual Digital Replicas Act, which would create a private right of action for the unauthorized digital replication and distribution of individuals' digital likenesses; would enact the Saving Human Connection Act, which would prohibit deceptive practices and ensuring transparency in chatbot interactions and create a private cause for violations thereof. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs and mirrors SB 499.

## Real Estate

**HB 2739: Housing/Fire Safety and Prevention.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Sean Tarwater (R-Stilwell), would prohibit certain municipal fire sprinkler requirements for multi-family dwellings of four or fewer attached living units; defining apartment buildings for purposes of the fire code. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development and was heard Monday, Feb. 9, at 1:30 p.m.

**HB 2768: Residential and Landlord Tenant Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) and requested by Rep. Leah Howell (R-Derby), Rep. Cyndi Howerton (R-Wichita), Rep. Robyn R. Essex (R-Olathe) and Rep. Sean Tarwater (R-Stilwell), would require landlords to accept multiple payment amounts under specified conditions and would provide for penalties for violations of such requirements. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development.

## Taxation

**HB 2745: Property Taxation/Property Tax Revenues of Taxing Jurisdictions.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Taxation chaired by Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan), would require voter approval for certain property tax increases and establish related funds and limits. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Taxation and was heard Thursday, Feb. 12, at 3:30 p.m.

**HB 2757: Income Tax Credit Incentives/Abandoned Well-Plug Credits.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita) on behalf of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce, would repeal or discontinue certain income tax credit incentives and modify others. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development and was heard Thursday, Feb. 12, at 1:30 p.m.

**HB 2769: Property Taxation/Budgets and Expenditures for Public Services Established by Governing Bodies of Subordinate Service Taxing Areas.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Taxation chaired by Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan) and requested by Rep. Carolyn Caiharr (R-Edwardsville), would require appointed members of governing bodies to reside in the taxing area. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Local Government chaired by Rep. Emil Bergquist (R-Park City).

**HB 2773: Income Taxation.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Taxation chaired by Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan) on behalf of the Kansas Chamber of Commerce, would provide for the apportionment of business income for manufacturers of alcoholic liquor depending on whether the taxpayer is a qualifying Kansas investor or a

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general manufacturer. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Taxation.

**HB 2775: Severance.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Taxation chaired by Rep. Adam Smith (R-Weskan) on behalf of the Kansas Independent Oil and Gas Association, would provide a three-year exemption from severance tax for oil and gas wells.

## Veterans

**HB 2767: Veterans and Military/Commissions.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Rep. Tom Kessler (R-Wichita), would establish the Military Affairs Commission and prescribe its powers and duties. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Veterans and Military chaired by Rep. Rick James (R-La Cygne).

## SENATE BILLS

### Commerce

**SB 505: Consumer Protection/Entertainment Ticket Sales.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would prohibit certain conduct in connection with the sale or resale of tickets; and would provide that violation of such requirements is a deceptive act or practice subject to penalties pursuant to the Consumer Protection Act. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary chaired by Sen. Kellie Warren (R-Leawood).

### Elections

**SB 507: Elections/Federal Immigration Laws at Polling Places.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would prohibit enforcement of federal immigration laws at polling places and locations designated for canvassing, auditing, and recounting of ballots. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

### Employment

**SB 504: Healthcare Practices and Professions/Noncompete.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would enact the Healthcare Professional Employment Mobility and Patient Access Act; and would prohibit noncompete agreements restricting post-employment patient care. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Public Health and Welfare chaired by Sen. Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora).

### Government

**SB 502: Sports Wagering/Administrative Rules and Regulations.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would authorize the adoption of permanent administrative rules and regulations by the Racing and Gaming Commission. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

### Judicial

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**SB 501: Criminal Procedure/Racial or Other Bias-Based Policing.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would require law enforcement agencies to adopt policies related to racial and other bias-based policing using technology and criminalize violations of such policies. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Judiciary chaired by Sen. Kellie Warren (R-Leawood).

**SB 503: Federal and State Laws/Firearms.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would remove the criminal prohibition against firearm suppressors and firearm barrel-length qualification requirements. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

**SB 506: Crimes, Punishment and Criminal Procedure/Crimes Against Public Safety.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would increase the criminal penalty for criminal use of weapons on a second or subsequent adjudication and modify the penalties for criminal possession of a weapon by a convicted felon and the length of the ban on possessing a weapon. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

## Public Health and Welfare

**SB 499: Consumer Protection/Age-Appropriate Design Code Act.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Federal and State Affairs chaired by Sen. Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee), would enact the Age-Appropriate Design Code Act, which would require businesses to assess and mitigate risks of compulsive use of digital products in minors; would mandate privacy settings for minors to be set at the highest level by default; would detail the right of each consumer to access and control such consumer's personal data; would authorize the Attorney General to enforce compliance and adopt necessary rules and regulations; and create a private right of action for violations. The bill would also enact the Stopping Digital Likeness Abuse by Nonconsensual Digital Replicas Act, which would create a private right of action for the unauthorized digital replication and distribution of individuals' digital likenesses; would enact the Saving Human Connection Act, which would prohibit deceptive practices and ensuring transparency in chatbot interactions; would impose liability on chatbot providers for injuries caused by such providers' products; would create a private right of action for violations; and would grant the attorney general authority to enforce compliance of this act and adopt necessary rules and regulations. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Federal and State Affairs and mirrors HB 2772.

## Taxation

**SB 498: Income Taxation.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Assessment and Taxation chaired by Sen. Caryn Tyson (R-Parker), would provide a tax credit for the retail sale of higher-ethanol blends of fuel and discontinue the tax credit for qualified alternative-fueled motor vehicle property or fueling station expenditures. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Assessment and Taxation and was heard Wednesday, Feb. 11, at 9:30 a.m.

**SB 509: Sales and Compensating Use Tax/City and Countywide Retailers' Sales Tax.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Ways and Means chaired by Sen. Rick Billinger (R-Goodland), would provide countywide retailers' sales tax authority for Sheridan County to finance the construction of a jail and law enforcement center. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

## Transportation

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**SB 495: Motor Vehicle Repairs.** This bill, introduced by the Committee on Commerce chaired by Sen. Larry Alley (R-Winfield), would enact the Motor Vehicle Right to Repair Act, establish the Motor Vehicle Repair Board under the supervision of the Office of the Attorney General and require vehicle manufacturers to make diagnostic repair tools, parts, software, and other components available for purchase to motor vehicle owners and independent repair facilities. This bill has been referred to the Committee on Commerce.

## BILL TRACKING HISTORY

A history of the bills we are tracking as of Feb. 16, 2026, can be found [here](#).

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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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