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NEWSLETTERS



KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | MAY 1, 2020

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On Tuesday, April 28, Senate President Senator Susan Wagle announced her plan to reopen most Kansas businesses immediately at 50% capacity while retaining stay-at-home restrictions on assisted living and nursing home facilities. On Wednesday, April 29, Gov. Laura Kelly announced the emergency declaration would be extended until May 14. The declaration is necessary for Kansas to continue receiving federal funding. Gov. Kelly announced a new Executive Order on reopening Kansas would be unveiled on Thursday.

On Thursday evening, April 30, in a statewide television address, Gov. Kelly announced Executive Order 20-29 to implement phase one of her “Ad Astra: A Plan to Reopen Kansas,” which starts on May 4. Many businesses will be able to reopen following social distancing guidelines. Kansas would gradually reopen in two-week increments with phase two starting May 18 and phase three starting June 1. The current stay-at-home order is due to expire on May 3. A complete lifting of many of the statewide restrictions could occur by June 15. The specific details of the plan for each phase can be accessed at <https://covid.ks.gov/>. The Republican leadership in the House and Senate advanced several questions about the plan and indicated a preference that restrictions on all businesses be lifted sooner.

The March total tax collections were \$523.4 million, or 1.6% below the October estimate. As expected, the Kansas Department of Revenue April Kansas-only revenue numbers dropped sharply by \$612 million, or 50% below last April. April is the first full month reflecting the pandemic’s impact on Kansas tax revenue due to rising unemployment and the struggling Kansas economy. The total April revenue was \$574 million, which was dramatically impacted by tax deferral until July 15 and high unemployment. The good news is the numbers were very close to the Consensus Revenue Estimating Group estimates from April 20.

Next week, the Legislative Coordinating Council will meet to determine when the Legislature will reconvene.

Kansas Legislative Insights is a publication developed by the Governmental Relations & Public Policy Law practice group of Foulston Siefkin LLP. It is designed to inform business executives, human resources and governmental relations professionals, and general counsel about current developments occurring in current Kansas

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legislation. Published regularly during the Kansas legislative session, it focuses on issues involving health care, insurance, public finance, taxation, financial institutions, business & economic development, energy, real estate & construction, environmental, agribusiness, employment, and workers compensation. Bill summaries are by necessity brief, however, for additional information on any issue before the Kansas Legislature, contact Foulston Siefkin's Governmental Relations & Public Policy Law practice group leader, James P. Rankin at 785.233.3600 or jrankin@foulston.com.

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As a partner at Foulston Siefkin, Jim's practice focuses on employee benefits law relating to public, private, governmental, and tax-exempt organizations. A large part of his work involves insurance regulatory and compliance issues in many industries, including healthcare. Jim has been selected by his peers for inclusion in The Best Lawyers in America® and the Missouri & Kansas Super Lawyers® list. He is the firm's representative with State Law Resources, Inc., a national network of independent law firms selected for their expertise in administrative, regulatory, and government relations at the state and federal level.

Gary, a governmental affairs consultant to Foulston Siefkin's Governmental Relations & Public Policy practice group, provides legislative monitoring and lobbying services for Foulston's governmental relations clients. He holds a bachelor of science degree in history and political science from Southwestern College and a master's degree in labor economics from Wichita State University. Throughout his extensive career, Gary has served as CLE Director to the Kansas Bar Association and as Executive Director of the Kansas Optometric Association.

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