

2007 Bills of Interest (2-28-07)

February 24th was the deadline for bills to pass out of their house of origin. However, that deadline does not apply to bills sponsored by, referred to or acted upon by the Senate Committee on Ways and Means; Senate and House Committee on Federal and State Affairs; House Appropriations, Calendar and Printing, and Taxation; and select committees of either house when so authorized.

SB 122 (Remains in Ways & Means Committee)

Prohibits state officers or employees from becoming a registered lobbyist or accepting employment with a registered lobbyist until one year after terminating employment. Raises the daily subsistence allowance for legislators from \$80 to \$199. Changes language related to the value of gifts, meals, etc., from an aggregate value of \$40 or more in a calendar year to \$5 or more for each occurrence.

SB 163 (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Adds sexual orientation to the Kansas Act Against Discrimination.

SB 168 (Remains in Election and Local Government Committee)

Amends state governmental ethics law to prohibit individuals from lobbying or being employed as a lobbyist within 2 years following the date of resignation from or expiration of a term of office that:

- the Governor appointed them to; or
- they were elected or appointed to – includes both the state legislature and elected offices.

SB 185 (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Public and private employers may restrict or prohibit concealed weapons on their property or their employees from carrying concealed weapons while performing their job duties provided that they post that concealed weapons are prohibited in accordance with rules and regulations of the Attorney General.

SB 246 (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Requires that two or more employees of the Insurance Commissioner, Secretary of State, Attorney General, and Governor have a certain level of fluency in Spanish.

SB 264 (Remains in Commerce Committee)

Allows labor organizations who represent all members of a bargaining unit to assess a fair share representation fee to non-member employees. Payment or non-payment of the fee shall in no way be a condition of employment.

SB 276 (*identical to HB 2302*) (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Changes the name of the Persian Gulf War Veterans Health Initiative Board to the Kansas Veterans Health Board. The board remains with the Commission on Veterans Affairs. Increases board membership to 11 members. Within available funds, requires the Commission to do a fiscal study of the increased costs of education, medical coverage, reemployment, underemployment, and other hardships to Kansas veterans resulting from deployment.

SB 330 (Remains in Ways and Means Committee)

Establishes several programs and requirements for state employees who serve in the military and for state employees whose family members serve in the military. Directs the Department of

Administration to adopt rules and regulations to implement the provisions affecting state employees.

- Establishes a one-time activation payment of \$1,500 to State employees who are called and deployed on full-time active military duty on and after July 1, 2007 as well as a program providing such employees with a payment in the amount of the difference between the employee's military pay and their regular State wages of up to \$1,000 should their military pay be less than their regular wages.
- Requires that any State employee in a regular position be granted up to six days of paid leave and four days of unpaid leave if the employee's immediate family member is a member of the military and is killed or injured while engaged in active service.
- Requires that any State employee in a regular position be granted leave without pay of up to one day per calendar year to attend a send-off or homecoming ceremony for the employee's immediate family member who is a member of the United States armed forces and is ordered into active service in support of a war or other national emergency.
- In all provisions, the term "immediate family member" is defined as an employee's parent, child, grandparents, siblings or spouse.

SB 338 (*identical to HB 2422*) (Remains in Ways and Means Committee)

Requires that teachers at the School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf be compensated at a rate comparable to teachers at USD 233 in Olathe.

SB 357 (*identical to HB 2542*) (Remains in Ways and Means Committee)

FY08 and FY09 appropriations bill authorizing certain transfers and position limitations.

- Attorney General shall employ an inspector general in the classified service to oversee, audit, investigate, and provide performance review of the administration of the state Medicaid program, MediKan program, and the state children's health insurance program.
- Adjutant General may appoint an unclassified Deputy Adjutant General.
- Provides for the Kansas savings incentive program.
- Sets salaries of elected officials.
- Authorizes a 4% salary increase for unclassified employees.
- Longevity bonus amount based on \$50 per service year for FY08

HB 2023 (Remains in Taxation Committee)

Imposes a special guest worker payroll tax on income earned in Kansas by certain non-U.S. citizens. The Secretary of Revenue, subject to the Governor's approval, may exempt classes of occupations.

HB 2024 (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

If state officials in other states interpret or enforce a federal regulation or statute or a national building or fire code less restrictively than it is interpreted or enforced by a Kansas state agency, the less restrictive interpretation shall apply in Kansas unless it conflicts with a Kansas statute, regulation or local ordinance or resolution.

HB 2025 (Remains in Government Efficiency and Technology Committee)

Creates the State Government Reduction Commission whose 15 members are paid per K.S.A. 75-3223. Six members shall be legislators who have served less than six years in the Legislature. The Governor shall appoint the chairperson who shall not have served in any state government capacity in the past. The remaining other members shall be from business or industry and no more than two shall be residents of Topeka or reside within 25 miles from Topeka city limits. The commission shall:

- study state government and ways it can be reduced;
- be an investigative committee authorized to use compulsory process;

- submit a report to Legislature on or before December 20, 2007; and
- make specific recommendations on how state government can be reduced and the savings anticipated.

HB 2050 (See HB 2140) (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Designates English as the official language of the State of Kansas. The official language is to be used on any official public document (such as deeds, birth records, and any other record required to be kept open for public inspection per the Open Records Act) and any official public meeting. The bill states that agencies are not required to provide documents, information, literature or other written materials in any language other than English except that another language may be used as listed in the bill. Agencies are to list all costs related to providing information in another language as a separate budget line item. No person may be denied employment with the state based solely on lack of facility in a foreign language except where it relates to a bona fide job need. Agencies may not place restrictions or requirements regarding language usage in private sector business other than official documents, forms, submissions or other communications to government agencies.

HB 2051 (Remains in Election and Local Government Committee)

Amends the governmental ethics law to allow meals provided to:

- The Governor's spouse when his or her presence at the event or meeting at which the meal is provided serves a legitimate state purpose or interest;
- a state employee when their presence at the event or meeting at which the meal is provided serves a legitimate state purpose or interest and their employing agency authorizes their attendance.

HB 2067 (Passed out of House Committee)

Authorizes the Commission on Veteran Affairs to conduct criminal history checks on potential or current employees. Prohibits the Commission to hire a person who has been convicted of a felony.

HB 2068 (Remains in Appropriations Committee)

Authorizes the Adjutant General to appoint security officers, who shall possess all general law enforcement powers. Includes these security officers in the definition of law enforcement officer.

HB 2080 (Passed out of House Committee)

Allows employees to accept meals from a source outside of state government that are \$25 or less.

HB 2140 (Passed out of House Committee)

Designates English as the official language of the State of Kansas for all public documents and official public meetings. The bill would not diminish or expand existing rights. No state agency would be required to provide documents in a language other than English, but may use other languages at the agency's discretion or to permit a person who does not speak English to use an interpreter to communicate at an official public meeting. The bill authorizes the use of Braille to provide signage and documents, and communication in American sign language to accommodate persons with disabilities.

HB 2149 (Remains in Appropriations Committee)

Transfers the Office of the State Fire Marshal to a newly created Board of Fire Services on January 1, 2008. Transferred employees retain all retirement benefits and leave balances with continuous service. Classified employees who transfer shall retain their classified status. Thereafter, the Board may convert vacant classified positions to unclassified positions. The new Board of Fire Services shall have 9 members appointed by the Governor and receive

compensation per K.S.A. 75-3223. The duties of the Board include appointing a State Fire Marshal and appointing committees as necessary to assist in coordination and oversight of divisions and special projects.

HB 2233 (Passed out of House Committee)

Allows state employees to purchase Department of Corrections' prison-made goods for their personal use. Removes the requirement that all purchases of prison-made goods be made through the Division of Purchases.

HB 2323 (Remains in Appropriations Committee)

Requires Legislative Post Audit to study the compensation of members of the legislature and elected officials. The compensation study of the legislature includes per diem, other compensation and any expense allowance or reimbursement including any retirement benefits. The study shall review compensation paid in other states. Post Audit shall submit a report to the Governor, House Speaker, and Senate President on December 1, 2008. The report shall make specific recommendations if the study finds that legislative members and elected officials are not paid adequate compensation in comparison to other states. Any recommended increase shall take effect on the first day of the first payroll period chargeable to the fiscal year recommended in the report.

HB 2385 (Remains in Appropriations Committee)

Abolishes the administrative oversight committee on deferred compensation and transfers responsibilities to KPERS on January 1, 2008. Department of Administration employees who perform related duties shall transfer. Transferred classified employees retain the classified status. The board may convert vacant classified positions to unclassified. Transferred employees transfer with continuous service.

HB 2390 (Passed out of House Committee)

Requires the Department of Revenue to improve security for drivers' licenses and identification cards:

- security clearances on persons and examiners who are authorized to manufacture, produce or issue drivers' licenses and identification cards
- fraudulent document recognition training programs for certain employees
- physical security in locations where licenses and cards are produced

The Secretary of Revenue shall designate agents in the classified service who shall have law enforcement authority. Adds these designated agents to the definition of police officer or law enforcement officer in the law enforcement training act.

HB 2401 (Remains in Health and Human Services Committee)

Creates the healthy workplace act, which makes it an unlawful employment practice to subject employees to an abusive work environment. Makes employers vicariously liable.

HB 2471 (Remains in Federal and State Affairs Committee)

Requires that agency media advertising paid with state taxpayer dollars include the statement : 'Paid for with your Kansas taxpayer dollars.'

Substitute for HB 2457 (Passed out of House Committee)

Enacts the Kansas Taxpayer Transparency Act requiring the Secretary of Administration to create a searchable website where the public can access certain state and local revenue and expenditure information. The website must be operable by March 1, 2008, and include data available from the central accounting and state payroll systems including salaries and wages and compensation paid to individual state employees. Also creates the Public Finance Transparency Board whose members are paid per K.S.A. 75-3223.

KPERS Bills

For information on KPERS related legislation, please visit the KPERS web site at <http://www.kpers.org/legislativesummary.htm>