

From the Dome to Home

Kansas House of Representatives

1/15/2021

House Appropriations, Chairman

Kansas State Budget

Governor Laura Kelly delivered her State of the State speech on Tuesday, January 12, 2021. This year however, she presented her speech virtually and not in the House Chamber due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wednesday morning, the Governor's proposed budget was released to a joint meeting with House Appropriations and Senate

will cost the Kansas taxpayer \$4.6 billion over time. She has proposed this method in her last two budget submissions and the House has voted this down each year.

Governor Kelly also proposed generating more revenue by imposing a sales tax on digital property, such as Netflix and Hulu. The estimations from the Governor's office state this

"Life without liberty is like a body without spirit."

Kahlil Gibran

Ways and Means committees.

Governor Kelly is proposing some of the same maneuvers that she has for the last two years. The main component of her budget is the reamortization of the unfunded liability for the Kansas Public Employee Retirement System, (KPERs). The Governor would like to reamortize for another 10 years, making it 25 years total, to utilize \$158.7 million in savings in 2022 and then \$160.8 million in 2023. Reamortizing the unfunded liability for a total of 25 years

could generate \$42.7 million in additional revenue. Another revenue generating proposal would be an increase in revenues of approximately \$43.1 million, called market facilitators. These collect sales tax revenue from third party sellers.

The Governor claims that with her budget proposal, the state of Kansas will have a positive ending balance in the current fiscal year of \$767.5 million and \$600.9 million in 2022.

2021 Legislative Session Begins

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The 2021 session of the Kansas Legislature started this past Monday, January 11, 2021. This session will operate in a different fashion than we have in the past. I will continue as the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee and the committee format has changed. The members of the Appropriations Committee will all be in the committee room daily, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the members will be seated where social distancing can be observed. All conferees, staff, press, and guests will participate virtually during the committee time. The House Chamber is different, as well. The seating on the House floor is utilizing social distancing where members may be sitting on the floor or in the East and West galleries. We made many changes throughout the Capitol building so we could return and conduct the needs for the state of Kansas.



Bills Introduced

There are many different pieces of legislation that I have been working on prior to returning to Topeka. Here are the details of the bills that I have been working on.

The first is a bill that I introduced in committee last year. Although it did pass out of the Appropriations Committee, it never was debated on the House floor due to COVID-19. This bill would combine the two funds that can be used to plug abandoned oil and gas wells into one.

The next two bills address rural economic needs across the state of Kansas. One is a loan guarantee program for rural housing. If a home is built or renovated, this guarantees a mortgage loan through a

financial institution up to 125% of the value of the home.

The other bill is also a loan guarantee program that would assist farmers in Kansas. The program would guarantee agricultural loans through a financial institution and these loans could be used by farmers to buy land, equipment, operating cash, purchase livestock, and/or seed.

Another bill will assist businesses willing to relocate to rural areas of the state. Unlike the Ad Astra Rural Jobs Act that I introduced years ago, this bill would grant tax breaks for those businesses from out of state moving to a rural area.

Anytime that you would like to participate and listen to the

developments of committee hearings or discussion on the House floor, you can tune in by listening to the audio footage at www.kslegislature.org.

As always, if you have any concerns, feel free to contact me (785) 296-7672, follow on twitter at @waymaster4house, or email me at troy.waymaster@house.ks.gov. Please contact me regarding any issues and legislation that we are discussing during session.

It is a distinct honor to serve as your representative for the 109th Kansas House District and the state of Kansas. Please contact me with your thoughts, concerns, and questions. I always appreciate hearing from the residents of the 109th House District and others from the state of Kansas, as well.

Representative Troy L. Waymaster represents the 109th Kansas House District.

Paid for by Troy L. Waymaster for Kansas House, James Malone, Treasurer.

