



Legislative Update

February 11, 2022

Another busy week is in the books as the Turnaround deadline lurks closer. Monday marked the last day most committees could introduce bills but there are still a few paths for new legislation to emerge. Nonetheless, over a thousand bills are currently floating within the process. Activity continues to heat up as next week is the last full week committees can work to consider and recommend bills while the following week will be reserved for day-long debates on the Senate and House floor.

Governor Kelly has already vetoed her first bill of the session, rejecting the congressional redistricting map sent to her desk last month. After a day of scrambling, the Senate provided enough GOP votes to override the veto with the House following suit the next day. This means the congressional map, which takes effect later this year, will now move forward to the typical judicial review process. Meanwhile, the House debated and approved the major Eco Devo Incentive Bill that is on the way to Governor Kelly's desk, since the Senate concurred with the House amendments.

Economic Lifelines' Transportation Day at the Capitol



Governor Kelly Welcomes Economic Lifelines

Economic Lifelines saw a busy week as members travelled from across the state to attend EL's Transportation Day at the Capitol. Governor Laura Kelly came to welcome members and noted the importance of transportation advocacy. KDOT Secretary Julie Lorenz followed with a similar message and her enthusiasm over IKE progress. Senate President Ty Masterson (R-Andover), Speaker Ron Ryckman (R-Olathe), Senate Minority Leader Dinah Sykes (D-Lenexa), House Minority Leader Tom Sawyer (D-Wichita), Senate Transportation Chair Mike Petersen (R-Wichita) and House Transportation Chair Rich Proehl (R-Parsons) participated in a legislative panel discussion for Economic Lifeline members in attendance. Discussion topics included the suspension of transfers from the State Highway Fund, holding the State Highway Fund harmless in food sales tax proposals, progress of the IKE plan and general forecasts for the state budget. A reception followed allowing

members to mingle with legislators that stopped by after the session. Economic Lifelines thanks all the sponsors and attendees for making this event a success.



Tax Policy Relevant to Transportation Funding

Formal discussion of food sales tax legislation waned a bit this week until the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation recommended SB 339 out of committee. SB 339 is one of the proposals that does not hold the State Highway Fund harmless. The bill heads to the Senate floor where an amendment to adjust the designated percentage is expected to be proposed if the bill is debated. The House Committee on Tax has not taken action on legislation at this time.

House and Senate Transportation Committees

The Senate Transportation Committee continued hearings on SB 379, which creates law for autonomous vehicles. The committee saw supportive testimony for SB 379 last week while opposition filled two

days. Opponents noted the bill needed more stakeholder review and input before such a law should be created.

As noted last week, the Senate Transportation Committee transformed into its transportation budget committee role, to discuss the Department of Transportation budget proposal. Discussion covered ongoing needs for the department, especially personnel, noting the Department has 147 fewer employees than in 2017, and impact of the federal infrastructure law. The new federal support will add \$146M, with \$89M for highways, \$45M for bridges, 8M for electric vehicle infrastructure with \$4M for rural transit. The Department noted specific funds can be shared at the local level. The Committee is expected to take action soon and forward their recommendation the Senate Ways & Means Committee.

Likewise, the House Transportation and Public Safety Budget Committee had similar conversation on the KDOT budget last week and plans to take action with a recommendation to the House Appropriations Committee on February 16.

Thank you!

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