Committee Chair Halts Discussion on Medicaid Expansion
The Senate Public Health and Welfare Chairman, Senator Gene Suellentrop (R-Wichita), appears to be delaying discussion of Senate Bill 252, which the committee expected to take action on this week. Instead, the chair announced that tomorrow they would hear how other states are spending their state share of Medicaid expansion funding, and they would wait for additional information pertaining to the bill. Additional information would come from the Attorney General, who indicated Medicaid expansion would require additional funding in the AG’s office to investigate fraud and abuse in the program. The chair also indicated he was waiting on information from the Insurance Department about the costs of pursuing and implementing the 1332 waiver for reinsurance. The delay aligns with actions taken by Senate President Susan Wagle to send back to committee any House bills being considered by the full Senate until the Kansas House approves the constitutional amendment on abortion. This action attempts to thwart the full Senate from conducting a procedural move to "gut-and-go" a House bill and insert the contents of Medicaid expansion. The Kansas House took final action on the abortion resolution, Senate Concurrent Resolution 1613, last Friday but failed to muster the two-thirds vote necessary for passage. The Kansas Hospital Association will continue to work with our legislative supporters in both the Kansas House and Senate to advocate for the passage of expansion.

Legislation Introduced to Allow for Rural Health Care Delivery Models
The Kansas Hospital Association requested the introduction of legislation in the House Rural Revitalization Committee that would modify Kansas statutes to include the Primary Health Center model. This model seeks to both change the service bundle and the payment mechanism to preserve access to care and incentivize community health. The Primary Health Center model is intended to fill the gap between a rural health clinic or Federally Qualified Health Center and a full service Critical Access or Prospective Payment System hospital. It provides services focused on emergency and outpatient needs. Once read into the Kansas House, the legislation will be assigned a bill number.
House Committee Makes Budget Recommendations for State Hospitals
The House Social Services Budget Committee, chaired by Representative Will Carpenter (R-El Dorado), met this afternoon to make recommendations for the budgets of the state hospitals. The committee concurred with the Governor's recommended budget, but added $3.2 million from the State General Fund for salary increases at Osawatomie State Hospital, Kansas Neurological Institute, and Parsons State Hospital and Training center in state fiscal year 2021. The dollars would fund a 10 percent increase for mental health/development disability technicians and a 2.5 percent salary increase for other staff. The funding was added after noting that pay increases for Larned State Hospital were added to the budget last year. The committee recommendations will now go to the Ways and Means Committee for approval.

Introduction of Bills
House Bill 2597: Making and concerning appropriations for fiscal years ending June 30, 2020, June 30, 2021, and June 30, 2022, for state agencies; authorizing certain transfers, capital improvement projects and fees, imposing certain restrictions and limitations, and directing or authorizing certain receipts, disbursements, procedures and acts incidental to the foregoing. By the Committee on Appropriations.