Senate Committee Hears Continued Discussion on Abortion and Medicaid Expansion
The Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Senator Gene Suellentrop (R-Wichita), met yesterday to hear additional testimony on the effect of Medicaid expansion on abortion rates in other states. The sole conferee added to the information previously presented to the committee that given the current Supreme Court decision, pro-life advocates believe expansion may result in more women having state funded abortions.

House Committee Hears Health Care Cost Containment Strategies Discussion
The House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), heard a presentation on Health Care Costs and State Cost Containment Strategies from the Kansas Health Institute. The presentation included an overview of health in insurance coverage in Kansas, insurance costs, what drives health care costs and policy options implemented by other states to control costs. It was noted that health care expenditures in the United States far exceed expenditures in other countries, without a significant increase in income. During the discussion on cost control measured, the focus was on ways to reduce or control prescription drug costs. The committee closed the meeting without recommending any action on the information presented.

Public Health and Welfare Committee Hear Testimony on SB 407
Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee heard testimony on Senate Bill 407, which requires the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services to operate no less than 12 acute psychiatric inpatient beds for children in Hays and Garden City, or surrounding communities. Senator Billinger (R-Goodland) introduced this legislation because of the lack of mental health services for children in western Kansas. Several months ago, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services instructed KVC to close its combined acute care and Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility beds citing its rule against combining these services in one facility. Representatives from the Association of Community Mental Health Centers in Kansas and the Kansas Mental Health Coalition also testified in favor of opening additional acute beds for children in the western part of the state. Currently, children from western Kansas must seek treatment in Wichita or Kansas City, creating severe hardships for the patient and their family. KDADS Secretary Howard said she agrees with the spirit of the bill, and her staff are meeting with Hays Medical Center today and touring other potential sites to locate acute psychiatric beds for children. She voiced concern with Senate Bill 407 requiring a specific number of beds and cited past studies, which show daily census numbers of six youth when Larned had acute
beds for children, while the KVC facility in Hays had five patients on average. Committee Chair Sullentrop said the committee plans to continue to work this legislation.

**Introduction of Bills**

**House Bill 2740** – Concerning health and health care; enacting the Kansas Medical Marijuana Regulation Act; relating to medical cannabis; providing for the licensure and regulation of the manufacture, transportation and sale of medical cannabis; providing certain fines and penalties for violations of the act. By the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

**Senate Bill 491** – Concerning public health; relating to infectious disease testing; crimes in which bodily fluids may have been transmitted from one person to another; amending the definition of infectious disease. By the Committee on Ways and Means.

**Senate Bill 493** – Concerning the Healthcare Stabilization Fund; relating to coverage requirements; changing membership on the Board of Governors; providing for the dissolution of the fund under certain circumstances. By the Committee on Ways and Means.