KHA’s Capitol Comments
March 12, 2020

House Committee Works Rural Hospital Innovation Grant Bill
The House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), met this morning to work House Bill 2522. The bill would establish the Rural Hospital Innovation Grant Program within the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. An eligible county could apply to KDHE for rural hospital transitional assistance grants. "Eligible county" would mean any county other than Douglas, Johnson, Sedgwick, Shawnee or Wyandotte county. "Transitional assistance" would be defined to mean any assistance related to changing a hospital's current health care delivery model to a model more appropriate for the community served by the hospital. For every $1 of state funds awarded, eligible counties must provide a $2 match from private stakeholder monies, which could include hospital foundations or other organizations. At the request of the Kansas Hospital Association, the bill was amended to add language allowing donors to certify their match instead of putting it in the larger pool in the state treasury to help them target their dollars at their own discretion. The bill as amended was then passed by the committee and will now go to the full House for approval.

KDHE Shares Information on Its Newborn Screening Program
Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee heard an informational briefing on The Kansas Department of Health and Environment’s Newborn Screening Program. This program began in 1965, and at that time screened for just one health condition. Currently, each year, 34,000 Kansas babies have their blood tested for 30 conditions in addition to receiving hearing and heart screens. All testing is done 24 to 48 hours after birth, with blood spot tests sent to the KDHE lab for processing. The goal is to have all results reported to the health care provider within seven days. In 2018, one in 100 babies screened were found to have a reportable condition. KDHE’s Newborn Screening Advisory Committee, of which the Kansas Hospital Association is a member, is recommending three screens be added to the panel for a total of 35 tests. If approved, Kansas would be one of six states that test for all 35 newborn conditions. To continue to grow its program, KDHE is requesting the addition of $2.5 million to the current newborn screening funding cap of $2.5 million. Senate Bill 364, which includes this funding increase, is currently in the Senate Ways and Means Committee.
**Senate Committee Completes Budget**

The Senate Ways and Means Committee, chaired by Senator Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick), met this afternoon to make final recommendations on the budget. The meeting was scheduled a few days earlier than expected to allow the legislature to begin its usual break early, if necessary, to address COVID-19 infection concerns. There are no major changes in the bill impacting hospitals, though the committee did leave the funding for Medicaid expansion in the bill for state fiscal year 2021.

**Introduction of Bills**

**House Bill 2742** — Concerning health and health care; enacting the Kansas Equal Access Act; relating to medical cannabis; providing for the licensure and regulation of the manufacture, transportation and sale of medical cannabis. By the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.

**Senate Bill 495** — Concerning insurance; reinstating the Kansas Uninsurable Health Insurance Plan Act and renaming such plan the Kansas Guaranteed Coverage Pool Act contingent upon the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act being held invalid or unconstitutional. By the Committee on Federal and State Affairs.