



***KHA's Capitol Comments***  
**January 20, 2021**

**Kansas Capitol Quiet Under Increased Security Surveillance**

The Kansas statehouse was under tighter security and encouraged legislators and lobbyists to participate remotely as much as possible. While the statehouse didn't appear to have any active protests associated with civil unrest that has been seen at the national level, many committees were canceled or moved to remote only participation.

**House to Take Up COVID-19 Flexibility Bill Tomorrow**

With the upcoming expiration of [House Bill 2016](#) and the loss of a workday this week, the House sped up the legislative process and referred [Senate Bill 14](#), the COVID-19 disaster response legislation, to the House for full action tomorrow, Jan. 21. Thank you to everyone who responded to the grassroots alert and contacted legislators.

**Discussion Continues on the Mental Health Modernization and Reform Report**

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), continued their review of the recommendations around mental and behavioral health, which were a part of the interim Special Committee on Kansas Mental Health Modernization and Reform. The House Health Committee received updates today from several special committee members that chaired working groups throughout the process.

Today's presentation included:

- Rachel Marsh, CEO, Children's Alliance of Kansas, who discussed the 2020 Mental Health Reform recommendations and highlighted components of the modernization vision related to prevention and education policy and treatment working group;
- Andrea Clark, Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Behavioral Health Commission and co-chair of one of the working groups, who presented recommendations on system capacity and transformation; and
- Sandra Berg discussed the specifics of the Telehealth working group recommendations.

The chair indicated the committee is likely to see several bills related to the work of the Special Committee throughout the 2021 legislative session.

### **Committee Meeting on Drug Abuse Treatment and Diversion Programs**

[House Bill 2026](#) – Creating a drug abuse treatment program for people on diversion and allowing county and district attorneys to enter into agreements with chief judges and community corrections for supervision. Appearing before the committee in support of the bill was Scott Schultz with the Kansas Sentencing Commission, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police. Neutral conferees included the ALCU of Kansas, Kansas Department of Corrections and Behavioral Health Association of Kansas who pointed to concerns about funding.

### **House Insurance & Pensions Holds Information Hearing on Mental Health Legislation**

The House Insurance & Pensions Committee, chaired by Representative Steven Johnson (R-Assaria), is scheduled to hold an informational hearing on [House Bill 2073](#) – an act concerning insurance; relating to coverage of mental illness and substance use disorders; limiting utilization review under certain circumstances; enacting the Kristi L. Bennett Mental Health Parity Act.

### **Registration Now Open: Advocacy Briefing – Feb. 12**

Kansas Hospital Association invites you to participate in the second in a series of four [Advocacy Briefings](#) at noon on Feb. 12. During this webinar, Representative Fred Patton will discuss the 2021 Legislature's progress on the extension of the COVID-19 response legislation. Each Advocacy Briefing will focus on a different health care issue being considered by the Legislature. We will also provide key messages about issues facing Kansas hospitals you can use when interacting with your elected officials. KHA encourages Kansas hospital chief executive officers, senior staff and hospital trustees to participate in these webinars.

**REGISTER NOW**

Please contact the [KHA Education Department](#) at (785) 233-7436 if you have questions.