



KHA's Capitol Comments
January 18, 2023

Senate Public Health and Welfare Reviews Foster Care Audit

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Senator Renee Erickson (R-Wichita), heard from Legislative Post Audit staff member Amanda Schlumpberger regarding the foster care services audit in Kansas. The committee is slated to meet again tomorrow for additional select committee reports from the Kansas Legislative Research Department.

House Appropriations Hears Update on SPARK Expenditures

Today, the House Appropriations Committee, chaired by Representative Troy Waymaster (R-Bunker Hill), discussed the allocations of the Strengthening People and Revitalizing Kansas funds and COVID-19-related expenditures.

Recovery Office Director Ethan Belshe updated the committee on the two federal bills that sent funds to each state and the role of the Office of Recovery to allocate and oversee the disbursements of those funds. In addition, the committee received an overview of the SPARK Executive Committee's recommendations and the State Finance Council approval for the following areas and amounts:

- Connectivity – \$35 million
 - Broadband infrastructure investments – \$30 million
 - Digital Equity Grant Program – \$5 million
- Efficiency and Modernization – \$100 million
 - State Efficiency and Modernization Program – \$95 million
 - Local Safety and Security Equipment Grant Program – \$5 million
- Health and Education – \$109 million
 - Health Facilities and Program Expansion – \$66 million
 - Child Care and Community Resource Capacity Accelerator – \$38 million
 - Early Childhood Data Integration and System Enhancements – \$5 million
- Economic Revitalization – \$130 million
 - Building a Stronger Economy 2.0 (BASE 2.0) – \$50 million
 - Tourism – \$30 million
 - Housing – \$10 million
 - Aviation and Aerospace – \$20 million
 - Delivering Residents and Workforce – \$10 million
 - Small Town Water and Sewer Infrastructure Assistance Program – \$10 million

Conferees indicated program announcements would be released by the end of February. The committee expressed frustration with the idea submission process and suggested improved communications methods to those who have previously applied for funds.

The committee also heard from Kansas Legislative Research Department staff on the Budget Stabilization Fund and got a status update on the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Laboratory Construction Status and the Docking State Office Building.

House Health and Human Services Hears from Community Mental Health Centers

Today, the House Health and Human Services, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr (R-Wichita), received an overview of the Kansas Community Mental System. The committee heard from Kyle Kessler, executive director of the Association of Community Mental Health Centers of Kansas, Inc. Kessler presented a membership update. The committee heard about the implementation of certified community behavioral health clinics.

The committee also heard from member organizations and associate partners about how to address mental health needs in community and school settings.

The committee will meet again Thursday, Jan. 19, to receive presentations from the Kansas Medical Society and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.