



KHA's Capitol Comments
January 26, 2023

Senate Public Health and Welfare Hears about Adolescent Suicide Rates and Marketplace Enrollment

Today, the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee, chaired by Senator Beverly Gossage (R-Eudora), heard from Wyatt Beckman, Kansas Health Institute, on suicide rates and trends. Beckman emphasized Kansas is above the national average and is trending up with males being more impacted. The conferee highlighted impacts on rural communities, veterans, farmers and ranchers.

Linda Sheppard, KHI, updated the committee on plans available for 2022 Kansas insurance enrollment rates. She highlighted in Plan Year 2022, 107,784 Kansans selected or were automatically re-enrolled in a health insurance plan through the federally facilitated marketplace, an increase of 19,157 or 21.6 percent compared to 2021 enrollment.

The conferee highlighted plans offered on the exchange. In Kansas, 15.0 percent of Kansans enrolled in gold plan, which covers about 80 percent of health care expenses, 49.0 percent selected a silver plan, which covers 70 percent of health care expenses, and 35.7 percent selected bronze, which covers about 60 percent of health care expenses. Sheppard highlighted that 90.6 percent of Kansas enrollees received financial assistance through cost-sharing reductions.

It was reported that approximately one in five Kansas enrollees were able to pay premiums of \$10 or less per month with the enhanced tax credits. Kansas enrollees with incomes between 100 and 250 percent of the federal poverty level (\$26,500 to \$66,250 for a family of four in 2021) were eligible for subsidies, which reduced out-of-pocket costs such as deductibles, copayments and co-insurance.

The Senate Committee also saw the introduction of bills dealing with the following topics:

- Naturopathic doctors' scope of practice
- Naturopathic doctors' corporate practice of medicine
- Massage therapy licensure
- Expanding nurse anesthetists' scope of practice

The committee is slated to meet on Monday, Jan. 30, for a presentation from The University of Kansas Cancer Center.

Governing Rules Set

Today, the House today approved [House Resolution 6004](#), the rules of governing the activities in the House. The rules passed on a final action vote of [79-41](#). The resolution provides the permanent rules of the House of Representatives for the 2023-2024 biennium.

The House also approved today the [House Concurrent Resolution 5002](#), the rules that govern the Joint rules for the House and Senate for the 2023-2024 biennium.

House Health Committee Hears About Long-Term Care Industry

Today, the House Health and Human Services Committee, chaired by Representative Brenda Landwehr, received an update on the long-term care industry in Kansas. Linda MowBray, Kansas Health Centers Association, reported 7 percent of nursing homes in Kansas have closed, and the need for skilled workers continues to plague the industry. Rachel Monger, Leading Age Kansas, provided testimony highlighting major issues of funding and workforce that include:

- Staffing agency reforms needed to increase transparency and eliminate buy-out provisions in non-compete clauses
- Apprenticeships were mentioned as being explored by the industry

The committee also saw bills introduced on the following topics:

- Scholarships at the KU Med Center
- Music therapy
- Mental health medications to be available for Medicaid patients
- Apprenticeships for embalming
- Conversion therapy

Introduction of Bills

[Senate Bill 102](#) – By Committee on Education

Concerning postsecondary education; relating to technical colleges; establishing residency criteria for students of technical colleges

[House Bill 2181](#) –By Representatives Jacobs, Fairchild, Garber, Goetz, Hill, Murphy and Rhiley
Concerning abortion; prohibiting abortion; creating the crimes of unlawful performance of an abortion and unlawful destruction of a fertilized embryo and establishing penalties therefor; restricting the use of fetal tissue; relating to exclusions from sales and use tax exemptions for certain abortion providers

[House Bill 2183](#) – By Committee on Judiciary

Concerning civil actions; relating to wrongful death actions; removing the cap on the amount of damages that may be awarded