



Memorandum

To: Denae Hart, Kansas Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics
From: Little Government Relations
Date: June 16, 2023
Re: June Legislative and Policy Report

Overview

The Legislature adjourned for the year on April 28th. They sent several bills to the Governor as the Session concluded and there was no opportunity to override any vetoes. The Governor vetoed a bill restricting the ability to respond to public health emergencies as well as one part of the K-12 education budget bill. At this point, we turn to the 2023 interim.

The full Legislature will return in January 2024 but there will be activity in interim committees. The Legislative Coordinating Council approved interim committee meetings and meeting dates for the summer and fall. Legislative leadership finalized member assignments to the committees reflected in our report. We do not anticipate the bulk of meetings until August or later. The full list of approved committees and days for meetings can be found here: <http://www.kslegresearch.org/KLRD-web/Committees/2023InterimDocs/2023-Approved-Meeting-Days.pdf> The committees of particular interest to us are included below.

Big Picture Overview

On the heels of the 2023 Session, the Governor and legislative leadership, with clearly varied perspectives, noted the significance of fully funding public education, except for special education. Legislative leadership pursued controversial gender/cultural tactics and other social issues, affirming their focus on “woke issues.” Despite the multi-billion-dollar cash balances, the Governor and the Legislature failed to resolve tax reductions and left the sales tax on food in place until 2025. Also as expected, long-standing policy issues—Medicaid expansion, medical marijuana, and a variety of other issues—remain unaddressed until next session.

The shuffle of elected officials and change in advance of the 2024 elections, when the full Legislature faces the voters, is already generating some changes that will continue through the summer and fall. Senator Dan Kerschen from Goddard will not run again. Senator Chase Blasi (R-Wichita), appointed to an open seat in late 2022, will seek election in 2024. Senator Mike Thompson (R-Shawnee) already has an opponent. Several House members, such as Drs. John Eplee (R-Atchison) and Bill Clifford (R-Garden City) have also announced they plan to run for the Senate after serving a number of years in the House. Many of these announcements will occur this summer and fall so candidates can raise campaign contributions for 2024 before the end of the calendar year.

Interim Committees

Below you will find a list of relevant interim committees and their topics. The approved interim committee list does not completely reflect the breadth of requested interim requests. A small percentage of requested interim topics were approved. Many related issues and topics will

be brought into like-minded committees to polish and perfect bills that failed in 2023. For example, there were three different requests for education interims that were combined into one committee and multiple energy, utilities, and climate topics combined.

Appointments of legislators to serve on interim committees is usually limited to committee leadership and a few other legislators. Seniority usually rules the selection process. Republicans and House Democrats have made their committee member assignments, and we've included what we know as of today and will update in our July report.

The Legislative Budget Committee, KanCare Oversight, and Committee on Taxation are the regular committees with long-standing statutory policy and funding review duties. Otherwise, interim committee topics are highlighted reflecting our specific interests. The summary for each of the referenced interim committees is attached at the end of the report and no meeting dates have been set.

Health

Medicaid issues will continue to be monitored by the KanCare Oversight Committee that will meet twice before the 2024 legislative session begins. Other committees of interest include:

- Child Welfare System Oversight. Continues on-going oversight of the child welfare system.
- Legislative Budget Committee. Review Medicaid rates and school-based behavioral health services.
- The Special Committee on Mental Health. School-based services, CCBHCs, workforce, and other issues.

The challenges of the Medicaid unwinding process following the end of the public health emergency continues to impact of Medicaid recipients. The end of continuous eligibility requirements and federal funding reductions throughout the year estimated the remove of 125,000 members. The State has been fairly silent about the process, but media accounts are reporting, as anticipated, that a significant majority are being removed for technical issues including inability to determine contact with members. The ineligible members may not be eligible any longer, but the failure of the State, the MCOs, providers, and members to maintain contact impacts the determination eligibility. We shall see if the State makes any changes in their process to address the high degree of technical-based removal.

Upcoming Activities

The legislative schedule of hearings is updated regularly throughout the interim can be found in the House and Senate calendars on the Legislature website at:

http://kslegislature.org/li/b2023_24/chamber/calendars/

Wrap Up

Let us know if you have any questions.

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Special Committee on Mental Health Senate Chair 2 Days

Topics:

- Review school-based behavioral health services, including the current limited mental health pilot.
- Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics.
- 988 hotline and suicide prevention.
- Behavioral health workforce.
- Interest in and the potential for Wichita to serve as a location for “behavioral health excellence as a result of ongoing efforts including the new south central mental health facility.”

Membership:

Chair: Beverly Gossage, Eudora

Vice Chair: Brenda Landwehr, Wichita

Senate Members:

Sen. Renee Erickson, R-Wichita

Sen. Carolyn McGinn, R-Sedgwick

Sen. Mark Steffen, R-Hutchinson

Sen. Cindy Holscher, D-Overland Park

House Members:

Rep. Les Mason, R-McPherson

Rep. Will Carpenter, R-El Dorado

Rep. Doug Blex, R-Independence

Rep. Barbara Ballard, D-Lawrence

Rep. Silas Miller, D-Wichita

Child Welfare System Oversight 4 Days

Topics:

- General statutory charge includes:
 - Review data on child maltreatment; duties of DCF, KDADS, KDHE, Corrections, judicial branch; programs systems, and benefits offered or provide through grants and contracts.

Membership:

Chair: Sen. Beverly Gossage, R-Eudora

Vice Chair: Rep. Susan Concannon, R-Beloit
Ranking Minority Member Sen. Oletha Faust-Goudeau, D-Wichita

Senate Members:

Sen. Molly Baumgardner, R-Louisburg
Sen. Renee Erickson, R-Wichita
Sen. Cindy Holscher, D-Overland Park
Sen. Kristen O'Shea, R-Topeka

House Members:

Rep. Cyndi Howerton, R-Wichita
Rep. Susan Humphries, R-Wichita
Rep. Timothy Johnson, R-Basehor
Rep. Jarrod Ousley, D-Merriam
Rep. Susan Ruiz, D-Shawnee
Rep. Jeff Underhill, R-Junction City

Legislative Budget 4 Days

Topics:

- General statutory requirements as well as:
- ARPA funds; Medicaid reimbursement rates; Kansas Lottery, Expanded Lottery, and historic horse racing; implementation of BILD program; Bipartisan Infrastructure spending; mental health initiatives; K-12 and post-secondary spending; higher ed grant funds; Governor's wild fire task force; Early Childhood Transition Task Force; APEX programs.

Membership:

Chair Rep. Troy Waymaster, R-Bunker Hill
Vice Chair Sen. Rick Billinger, R-Goodland

Senate Members

Sen. J.R. Claeys, R-Salina
Sen. Pat Pettey, D-Kansas City

House Members

Rep. Will Carpenter, R-El Dorado
Rep. Henry Helgerson, D-Wichita
Rep. Kyle Hoffman, R-Coldwater