



## KANSAS LEGISLATIVE INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER | MAY 5, 2026

By: C. Edward Watson II, Susan Peterson PhD, and Eric L. Sexton PhD

### **“I’M SO GLAD WE HAD THIS TIME TOGETHER ...” THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

The Kansas Legislature concluded its 2025-26 legislative biennium in early April, and as discussed later, the legislature and the governor have finished their business. Of course, the Foulston Government Affairs Team has been reporting along the way, and we appreciate each of our KLI readers. We hope we’ve delivered timely, interesting, and salient information related to policy and political developments during the session.

Legislative and policy activity will continue through the summer. Our team will monitor legislative and executive activity throughout this interim period and periodically report any significant developments.

While we have consistently received positive feedback from our readers, we are always seeking to make KLI better. We welcome any suggestions that would make the newsletter more beneficial to you, including ideas for improvement in our content or format. Again, thank you for following us this session, and we look forward to engaging with you in the future.

### **2026 SESSION ENDS WITH ACTION, OVERRIDES, AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

The 2026 Kansas legislative session ended much the way it unfolded: fast-moving, full, and shaped by final-day decisions. Lawmakers worked through a compressed calendar, and that pace was especially clear in the closing stretch when conference reports, veto messages, override votes, and budget disputes all carried unusual weight.

This was not a session defined by any one issue. The Kansas Legislature acted across education, elections, housing, healthcare, public assistance, and the budget. Lawmakers approved measures ranging from pharmacy benefit manager reform and restrictions on cellphone use in schools to housing and public assistance changes. There were also areas of bipartisan agreement, including Senate Bill 82, which expanded tax credits for employers that help support childcare for employees and communities. The legislature also showed a clear willingness to override vetoes, making the veto session a defining part of the year’s end.

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Property tax remained one of the session's most persistent and unsettled issues. Lawmakers returned to it repeatedly, but the House and Senate never fully aligned on a broader solution. HB 2043 appeared as the session's final surviving property tax bill, only to be vetoed by Gov. Laura Kelly after adjournment. She argued the bill would not provide a workable answer to a tax burden driven largely by local levies and called for a different state-local approach. That left the session without a major enacted property tax measure and with one of its biggest debates still unresolved.

The budget also remained at the center of the closing days. Disputes over spending, raises, and line-item vetoes helped shape the session's final hours and underscored the continuing push and pull between the legislature and the governor. By the end, lawmakers had produced a large agenda, but not a fully settled one.

## 2026 LEGISLATIVE SESSION: BY THE NUMBERS

The Kansas Legislature adjourned sine die, Latin for "without a day," on Friday, April 10, 2026, after a session marked by a compressed calendar and significant legislative output. The adjournment came on day 89 of the 90-day constitutional limit.

## LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY AT A GLANCE:

- 626 bills were introduced in the House and Senate
- 250 bills were sent to the governor
- 236 bills were signed into law
- 25 bills and 28 appropriation line-items were vetoed by Gov. Kelly
- 14 bills and 8 line-item vetoes were overridden by a two-thirds majority in both chambers
- 8 bills became law without the governor's signature
- 21 bills were sent to conference committee where they remained and died
- 675 bills and 37 resolutions remained in committee and died

The historically high number of both vetoes and veto overrides underscores the policy divide between Gov. Kelly and the Republican supermajorities in the House and Senate.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

With the 2026 session in the rearview mirror, the focus now turns quickly to campaigns, candidate filings, and the interim work that will help shape next year's agenda. All 125 House seats and every statewide office will be on the ballot this year, and the full candidate picture should come into clearer focus after the June 1 filing deadline at noon. From there, the calendar moves quickly toward the Aug. 4 primary and the Nov. 3 general election.

At the same time, the policy work will continue through the interim. Interim committees serve as the legislature's research season, giving lawmakers, task forces, and committees time to study issues that could not be fully resolved during the regular session. Requests for interim topics go to the Legislative Coordinating Council near the end of May, and because this is an election year, interim work may begin later than usual. Even so, those committees often help frame budget priorities, test policy ideas, and build momentum for the next session.

The session may be over, but the policy and political work will continue.

## BILL TRACKING HISTORY

A history of the bills we are tracking as of May 5, 2026, can be found [here](#). Most recent actions are listed first.

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Kansas Legislative Insights is a publication developed by the government affairs & public policy law practice group of Foulston Siefkin LLP. It is designed to inform business executives, human resources and government relations professionals, and general counsel about current developments occurring in current Kansas legislation. Published regularly during the Kansas legislative session and periodically when the legislature is not in session, it focuses on issues involving healthcare, insurance, public finance, taxation, financial institutions, business & economic development, energy, real estate & construction, environmental, agribusiness, and employment. Bill summaries are by necessity brief, however, for additional information on any issue before the Kansas Legislature, contact Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy law practice group leader, C. Edward Watson, II, at 316.291.9589 or [cewatson@foulston.com](mailto:cewatson@foulston.com). Learn more about the authors below:

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As a partner at Foulston Siefkin, Eddie represents clients in matters before state regulatory commissions, courts, and local government bodies. He has built and maintained relationships with key individuals – including lobbyists, elected and appointed officials, and staff members – that prove valuable in advancing clients' interests and issues. Drawing on his experience as a regional government affairs attorney for AT&T in Chicago, he helps clients navigate the maze of federal policies and agencies, advises on how processes work in Washington, and provides introductions to those who can help them accomplish their goals.

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Sue, a government affairs consultant to Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy practice group, is a strategic advocate, advisor, and connection to the Kansas Legislature, government agencies, and elected officials. She has built a robust and well-established network of state and federal lawmakers, corporate/academic leaders, and policymakers nationwide. She earned a Bachelor of Science in political science from Kansas State University, a Master of Public Administration from the University of Kansas, and a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from KSU. Before joining Foulston, Sue served as Kansas State University's chief government relations officer for 34 years; her experience also includes staff positions in Kansas' executive and legislative branches.

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Eric, a government affairs consultant to Foulston Siefkin's government affairs & public policy practice group, has nearly 30 years' experience providing strategic direction and government relations services. As Wichita State University's governmental relations leader for 18 years, Eric developed lasting relationships at the local, state, and federal government level around Kansas. Eric holds a doctorate in political science from the University of Kansas and a Masters in Public Administration from Wichita State University, complementing his undergraduate business degree from Wichita State.

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