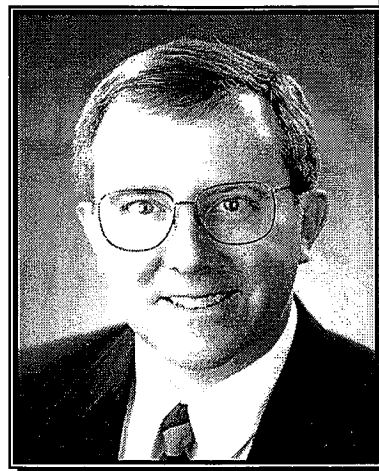


# From The Desk Of...

## Jay Scott Emler

Kansas Senate 35th District



~Week of January 30 - February 3, 2006~

- **Animal Cruelty**

Thursday, the Judiciary committee began dealing with two bills regarding animal cruelty. For both SB 402 and SB 408, the maximum first offense penalties for animal cruelty are the same - one year in county jail, though the crime is a misdemeanor under SB 402 and a felony under SB 408. Animal cruelty would be classified as a felony on the second offense under SB 402. SB 402 would also require first time offenders to register as required by the Kansas Offender Registration Act. The bills will likely be acted on by the committee early next week.

- **Biofuels**

Several bills dealing with biofuels are still being considered in the Agriculture committee, and are expected to reach the Senate floor in the next two weeks.

- **Concealed Carry**

In the Federal and State Affairs committee, a bill to allow some people to carry concealed weapons was heard on Wednesday. With the passage of SB 418, citizens would be required to complete an eight-hour training course in weapons safety before receiving a concealed carry license. Such licensure would also be noted on the individual's driver's license or non-driver identification card. The committee will continue considering the bill next Tuesday, and it will likely reach the Senate floor later in the week.

- **Eminent Domain**

Senate committees began looking at a variety of eminent domain bills and resolutions this week. In the Judiciary committee, bills dealing with several aspects of eminent domain were considered, one adding more due process, one dealing with appeals, and one prohibiting land being taken from one private individual through eminent domain and then given to another private individual. That bill would restrict eminent domain to more traditional public uses, such as roads. (A pair of constitutional amendments protecting property rights are also under consideration in the Judiciary committee.) The Commerce committee considered SB 360, which would allow developers to

either acquire land through eminent domain or receive tax credits for redevelopment, not both. SB 319 passed to Commerce committee and would prohibit a developer from selling excess land received through eminent domain.

- **Funeral Picketing**

Wednesday was a busy day for the Federal and State Affairs committee, as it heard SB 421. The bill, aimed at moving protestors at least 300 feet away from funerals, drew criticism from Fred Phelps, but was supported by many other groups, and is expected to reach the Senate floor next week.

- **Tax Proposals**

The Assessment and Taxation committee will start looking on several income tax checkoffs next week, including one for Kansas military relief and another for breast cancer research. Those bills are slated for hearings next Tuesday. A pair of sales tax exemptions, one for food warehouses and another for the Special Olympics, will be considered next Wednesday.

- **Fair Fares**

The Ways and Means committee held a hearing on SB 475 regarding \$5,000,000. support for Mid-Continent airport to retain a competitive carriers' service.

- **UTILITIES**

Hearings were concluded this week on the AT&T "deregulation" bill. The committee is scheduled to work the bill during the next two weeks. The committee also heard testimony on SB 414, which is known as the Gas Safety and Reliability Policy Act.

- **TOLL FREE LEGISLATIVE HOTLINE**

The State Library will continue its practice of operating the toll free hotline for Kansans to call their legislators and leave brief messages. The hotline number is 1-800-432-3924. If you are receiving this newsletter and really would like to be taken off my list, just let me know. My legislative district includes: Barton, Dickinson, Ellsworth, Lincoln, Marion, McPherson and Rice counties. If you know of others that would like to receive this newsletter, have them contact me and I will add them to my list. I prefer to send by e-mail since the cost is essentially free, but I do have a limited legislative postage allowance, which is largely reserved for distributing this letter.

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