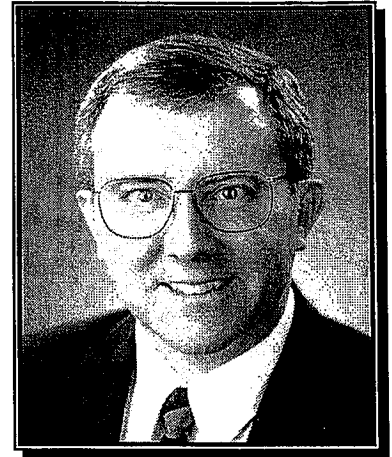


# From The Desk Of...

## Jay Scott Emler

Kansas Senate 35th District



~Week of March 13 - March 17, 2006~

- **Gaming**

The Senate on Thursday debated for several hours, and ultimately rejected, SB 587, which would have authorized expanded gaming in the form of two destination casinos, and 5,000 slot machines at pari-mutual dog and horse racetracks. The bill would have provided the state with approximately \$600 million in fiscal years 2007 through 2009. Seventy-five percent of that revenue would have gone into the Kansas Education Opportunity Trust Fund and the other 25 percent would have gone to the Kansas Gaming Revenue Property Tax Relief Fund. The bill was defeated 16-20.

- **School Finance**

SB 584, the bipartisan Senate leadership school finance plan, passed the Education committee on Monday. It was amended in committee to allow school districts to use their at-risk funding for all-day kindergarten for all students, not just those classified as at-risk. At-risk dollars could also be used for vocational programs and other programs to help at-risk, preschool at-risk, and bilingual students. The committee also amended the bill to clarify how school districts could receive additional spending authority through the transfer of funds from their local option budget to the general fund.

- **Eminent Domain**

The Senate Judiciary committee passed Sub SB 323 on Tuesday. The bill places additional restrictions on the taking of land through eminent domain. Public livestock markets and feedlots located within city limits, as well as agricultural land, would not be allowed to be taken through eminent domain. Land taken through eminent domain can be used for economic development purposes only if it will be used for a project that will provide significant job growth and new capital investment equal to \$10 million or at least one percent of the municipality's assessed valuation of taxable real property. The bill will be debated on the floor Monday, as will SB 398 and SB 319, which also deal with aspects of eminent domain. These bills were scheduled for debate on March 16<sup>th</sup>, but the debate on SB 587 lasted so long that the debate on eminent domain was rescheduled.

- **DNA Samples**

HB 2554 passed the Senate 28-11 on Thursday. The bill requires any person arrested or charged with the commission or attempted commission of any person felony to submit a DNA specimen at the same time that a fingerprint is submitted. The DNA specimen would then be kept on file with the KBI. Amendments clarifying a person's right to have their specimen destroyed if charges are dismissed, the person is acquitted, or the statute of limitations on the crime expire were added to the bill.

- **Exotic Animals**

The Senate debated and passed SB 578 on Thursday. The bill places additional restrictions on the ownership of exotic animals, such as lions, tigers, bears and snakes. It was amended on the floor to require owners to obtain liability insurance coverage for possible property damages or personal injuries caused by the dangerous regulated animals. The bill passed 40-0.

- **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.

Senator, 35th District  
State Capitol Building, Room 449-N  
Topeka, Kansas 66612  
(785) 296-7354  
emler@senate.state.ks.us