

From The Desk Of...

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Kansas Senate 35th District

~Week of January 29 - February 2, 2007~

Yesterday was the last day for committee bills to be requested in the committees.. That means we have been in session almost a month.

Last week I mentioned the possibility of a very significant investment being made in Kansas by the U.S. Government. This is for a bio-security lab in either Leavenworth or Manhattan, Kansas. It is about a \$500 million investment just in facilities in Kansas and it would mean, over the next several years, probably in excess of \$2 billion for the state's economy. It is very exciting that we are in the running. On Monday morning, Senator Pat Roberts will address a joint session of the Kansas Legislature. This is a very unusual event, but because of the importance of this issue, the Leadership felt it was important to have Senator Roberts tell all of us the story. After that session there will be a news conference. The Joint Committee on Kansas Security that I am Vice-Chair of this year will then hold informational hearings on three bills that need to be passed in order to support Senator Roberts efforts.

- **SB 14 ~ Methamphetamine Registry**

The bill requires offenders convicted of unlawful manufacture or attempted manufacture of methamphetamine, distribution or trafficking of methamphetamine, and offenders convicted of possession of the chemicals used to produce methamphetamine with the intent to use the product to manufacture methamphetamine, to register. The bill also would require the offender to pay a fee for registration on the Kansas offender registry and clarifies the money collected from the statutory fee would remain in the sheriff's office in the county in which it was collected to offset costs of the office registering the offenders. SB 14 passed the Senate 39 to 0.

- **SB 65 ~ Satellite Voting for all Counties**

Currently, the law restricts satellite voting places to counties with populations exceeding 250,000 (Sedgwick and Johnson counties). This bill would expand to all counties the ability to designate places other than the central county elections office as satellite advance voting site. SB 65 passed the Senate 40 to 0.

- **SB 18 ~ Uniform Child Abduction Prevention Act**

The bill enacts the Uniform Child Abduction Prevention Act (UCAPA) and provides the courts with guidelines to follow during custody disputes and divorce proceedings. The main purpose is to help courts identify families that have children who are at risk of abduction and provide measures to help prevent their kidnaping. These measures include travel restrictions, a prohibition against removing the child from this state, restrictions on the child's passport, and restrictions on custody or visitation. If a judge finds a credible risk of imminent abduction, the court may issue a warrant to take physical custody of the child. SB 18 passed the Senate 40 to 0.

- **SB 66 ~ Extension of Lottery**

SB 66 extends the lottery in perpetuity and does away with the sunset clause eliminating the need for legislators to have to act to continue its existence. Also, because games are electronically connected to the Kansas Lottery, the need to obtain and display the lottery retail certificate was also eliminated. SB 66 passed the Senate 36 to 4.

- **SB 69 ~ School Finance Fix**

Specifically, the bill would lower the maximum percentage of Local Option Budget (LOB), required in order for school districts to access the cost-of-living weighting or the declining enrollment weighting, to 25.0 percent. SB 69 passed the Senate 39 to 1.

OUT OF COMMITTEE

- **SB 37 ~ Smoking Ban**

The Senate Judiciary passed out of committee without recommendation a proposed smoking ban. An additional amendment allowing county commissioners to opt out of the smoking ban, subject to a protest petition for 30 days. If a county does opt out, a municipality within that county can enact a smoking ban if their regulations are more stringent than the state law. Also included in the areas exempt from the ban are freight and passenger trains and commercial trucks

- **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 who would like to receive this newsletter, have them contact me and I will add them to my list. I prefer to send this letter 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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NOTE: I receive many emails and I need to make certain I am responding to my constituents and not to somebody in another part of the state. I want to be responsive to you, so please include your street address so that I know I am being responsive to my constituents.