



AGC  
of KANSAS

# Under The Dome

The Associated General Contractors of Kansas

[www.agcks.org](http://www.agcks.org)

AGC  
of KANSAS



## Under the Dome

Associated General Contractors  
Legislative Update  
April 3, 2017

### Legislative Overview

Associated  
General Contractors of  
Kansas Legislative  
Update

#### In This Issue

[Quick Links](#)

[Bill Tracking](#)

[Legislative Calendars](#)

#### Quick Links

[State OSHA Plans](#)

[AGC of Kansas](#)

[Kansas Legislature](#)

### Legislative Materials

#### Bill Tracker Tool

AGC's lobbying team uses an industry standard electronic bill tracking service. Once we have identified bills of interest, the service monitors any change to the legislation. While we watch the information in real time, we will attach a weekly report for the members to view.

[AGC Bill Tracker 4.3.17](#)

The Kansas Legislature spent the majority of the week dedicated to floor sessions passing bills ahead of next week's conference committee meetings. Those floor sessions were relatively short compared to past years. That's a combination of the Senate just not acting on much legislation and the House moving bills through the process at a little faster pace earlier in the year.

The Kansas Senate has been much more reluctant to pass bills or even act on legislation sent over from the House. Senate leadership has been frustrated by a lack of movement on budget and taxes and at one point basically suspended floor action until a resolution could be reached. That resolution has remained elusive and the moratorium was eventually lifted, but leadership has steered clear of anything that appears to have a price tag.

The House has taken a different approach. First year Speaker Ron Ryckman Jr. is "letting the process work." Ryckman has been a lot less controlling of the House calendar than some previous speakers. Some of that is just his management style, but it is also a reflection of the fact that the Kansas House has a much more diverse membership comprised of more democrats and moderate republicans than in recent sessions. Letting the process play out is probably a better path to finding the will of the House than the alternative which is being overridden by your members.

That means there will be times when the House passes legislation that it's leadership doesn't favor. Last week's passage of Medicaid expansion is a prime example. Medicaid or Kancare expansion couldn't even get a hearing the last two year under

### **Legislative Calendars**

For those interested in more detail, the legislative calendars are printed daily and include floor and committee action. Please keep in mind, they can change on a simple announcement, but they are a good starting point.

[Legislative Calendars](#)

now retired and former Speaker Ray Merrick. While House Health Chairman Daniel Hawkins, R-Wichita, and Speaker Ryckman both oppose expansion, it nonetheless received a hearing and a floor vote. It passed with 81 votes.

### **Medicaid Expansion Vetoed**

It didn't take long for Kansas Governor Sam Brownback to veto the Kancare expansion bill sent to him after the Senate passed the House version. It also didn't take long for the House to, at least initially, attempt to override the veto. That rapid attempt at an override was not a sign of eagerness by supporters of expansion. Rather, it was opponents in the House knowing the votes were not there to override the veto and trying to hustle a vote before others could be lobbied.

A passionate debate ensued before Russ Jennings, R-Lakin, made a motion to table the issue for up to 30 days. That afforded at least a few days for supporters to try to get the 84 votes needed. Look for the motion to be taken off the table as early as Monday.

### **School Finance**

The House Select Committee on K-12 Funding appears very close to having a school finance bill ready to kick out of committee. The plan is little more than a dressed up version of the old school finance formula with pumped up at risk weightings. Recall the old formula was abandoned in favor of block grants.

A goal seems to be emerging that would increase school funding by \$150M per year over a five-year period. However, as of Thursday night when the committee adjourned until Monday, spending by way of amendments had exceeded \$200M. It remains unclear if the Court will accept the staggered funding approach.

### **Taxes**

As we've reported previously, taxes will be increased. The legislature has clearly demonstrated that spending cuts will not be in the tool box for budget balancing. The question remains which ones and how much. This week saw hearings and even a favorable committee vote on flat tax plans. The House tax Committee forwarded to the full House a 5% flat tax plan.

Several other tax schemes remain in play that involve income tax increases, sales exemption repeals and

some are even discussing raising property taxes to pay for K-12 school finance. It will likely be veto session before any tax plans are adopted.

### **First Adjournment Ahead**

Friday, April 7th is First Adjournment. The upcoming week is dedicated to conference committees meetings and those agreements between the two Chambers being voted on in their respective Houses. The legislature will then take a three-week break and return for what is likely prolonged Veto Session on May 1, 2017.

---

[scott@wks.us](mailto:scott@wks.us)