

# LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

ACEC of Kansas

No. 1 – January 16, 2015

---

825 S Kansas Ave, Suite 500 Topeka, KS 66612 Phone (785)357-1824 Fax(785)233-2206 email [scott@acecks.org](mailto:scott@acecks.org)

---

The 2015 Legislative Session is officially underway! Committees started meeting this week with a smattering of bill introductions. At this early point in the session, committees (budget excepted, see below) are not yet investing in serious policy discussions.

The big news at the Capitol this week was the Governor's budget, which was released earlier today. Everyone knew painful cuts were coming. As most of you know, Kansas is different than the federal government in that Kansas is not allowed to deficit spend. The budget must be balanced each year. In the current fiscal year (which runs through June 30, 2015), the state needs to trim well over a quarter billion dollars from its budget. For the upcoming fiscal year (which starts July 1, 2015), there could be up to another \$648 million that has to be cut. The Governor's budgeted today cast a broad net in attempting to close that shortfall.

As we have long feared, transportation funds were in the crosshairs. In addition to the over \$100 million that the Governor had proposed taking from the highway fund in the current fiscal year, his proposed two year budget for upcoming fiscal years included an additional sweep from the highway fund of \$100 million per year. The total (over \$300 million over three years) is eye watering. Secretary King has continued to confirm that T-Works will still be completed on time, which is encouraging.

This is just a starting point for discussions. Those numbers could end up worse, or better, than they are today. ACEC of Kansas will be heavily engaged in urging lawmakers to minimize the sweeps from the highway fund, but priority number one is protecting the 4/10 cent sales tax that is currently designated for the highway fund. Most parties agree that this sales tax stream is the #1 priority and must be protected at all costs. We'll continue to keep our finger on the pulse and visit with policy makers about the benefits of the T-Works program.

Also of interest this week was the introduction of SB 24. Many of you will recall legislation last year, backed by ACEC of Kansas, that updated the statutes governing the Kansas Board of Technical Professions. A Wichita attorney with experience in the A/E industry raised concerns over the summer about possible unintended consequences of some of the new language. The Board of Technical Professions decided to bring fresh language this year to address those specific concerns. That new language is contained in SB 24. The bill has the backing of all five professions under the Board, and ACEC will once again offer full support.

HB 2019 is intriguing, as it would raise a significant amount of money to help with vertical investment at Regents institutions. House leadership has already indicated the bill is not likely to make much progress, but it would provide a valuable funding stream for Regents infrastructure needs.

The Legislature will take Monday off in observation of Martin Luther King Day, and will reconvene on Tuesday. Stay tuned...

Bill Number and Sponsor	Bill Subject	Current Status	Last Action
<a href="#">SB 24</a>	Technical professions act; definitions clarification	In Senate Federal and	<b>01/15/2015 - Senate</b>

Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee		State Affairs	Referred to Federal and State Affairs
<a href="#">HB 2003</a> Michael Houser, R-1st	Cities; annexation of non-adjoining land	In House Local Government	<b>01/14/2015 - House</b> Scheduled Hearing in Local Government: Tuesday, 1/20/2015, 1:30 PM, Rm 281-N
<a href="#">HB 2012</a> Jim Ward, D-86th	Enacting the Kansas working families pay raise act	In House Appropriations	<b>01/13/2015 - House</b> Referred to Appropriations
<a href="#">HB 2014</a> Tom Sloan, R-45th	Authorizing the Kansas water office, with approval of the Kansas water authority, to establish the clean drinking water fee by rules and regulations and imposing a cap on such fee	In House Agriculture and Natural Resources	<b>01/13/2015 - House</b> Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources
<a href="#">HB 2019</a> House Vision 2020 Committee	Property tax levy for the Kansas educational building fund	In House Taxation	<b>01/15/2015 - House</b> Referred to Taxation