

Property Tax Transparency

Senate Bill 13, also called Truth in Taxation, is a positive step forward in reforming property taxes in Kansas. SB 13 seeks to stop what many refer to as “stealth tax increases” through increased property valuations.

This bill would repeal a previous “lid” on increases to the mill levy. In its place, local jurisdictions would be required to notify the public when budgets exceed the revenue-neutral rate.

Residents would receive information detailing the increase and when a vote will take place. This would be regardless of the increase in revenue is a result of higher property values or an increase in the mill levy.

While this legislation does not restrict local authorities from increasing taxes, it brings much-needed transparency to the local budgeting process and tax structures.

I voted in favor of this legislation that passed with bipartisan majorities and was signed into law.

Covid-19 Small Business Relief

Two important pieces of legislation were passed to help small business that have been impacted by shutdowns during the previous year. SB 273 sets aside a portion of federal dollars allocated to Kansas by the federal government from the various COVID-19 relief packages passed by Congress. Small businesses of less than 50 employees who were damaged by government lockdowns, or other government restraints, will be eligible to apply for relief.

Another bill passed this session will create property tax reimbursements for businesses unjustly shut down by government entities. If the government forces you to close your business, you are no longer able to earn an income and makes no sense that you would be obligated to pay property taxes on that business.

Unfortunately, Governor Kelly vetoed this bill, choosing instead to put government ahead of Kansans and deprive small businesses of critical relief for reopening and restoring jobs in our communities.

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KANSAS STATE REPRESENTATIVE KRISTEY WILLIAMS

LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER



Dear Friend,

The 2021 legislative session is likely one of the most consequential in recent memory as we worked to recover from the Covid pandemic. Three major areas were immediately addressed to set Kansas on a stronger footing going forward. First, we implemented measures to restore our economy, provide relief to small businesses and jumpstart job growth. Second, the pandemic revealed gaps in our education system. We took steps to provide greater education choices for parents and their students, and to provide critical resources to ensure schools meet student learning needs and to fully fund the K-12 budget. Finally, we addressed structural issues in state operations. We sought to curb abuses of power by the Governor and local officials who shutdown our economy and violated the rights of citizens to freely move and gather together. Additionally, we implemented stronger oversight of the Department of Labor to rectify gross mismanagement of that agency and to adopt best practices and technology found successful in other states. Though addressing pandemic issues was a focal point of the session, we also passed legislation providing property tax transparency, individual income tax relief, 2nd Amendment rights protections, and election security reforms.

Thank you for the honor of serving as your representative in Topeka. Stay in touch!

Sincerely,
Rep. Kristey Williams
District 77



KRISTEY WILLIAMS
KANSAS REPRESENTATIVE

506 Stone Court Lake Ct.
Augusta, KS 67010



Educational Opportunity & Accountability



As chair of K-12 Education Budget, I am very happy we were able to combine policy and funding together — something that should always be the norm. The policies tied with approximately \$6 billion in education funding included parameters around remote learning (students would have to enroll in a virtual education program rather than take remote classes if online education is needed/desired), expansion of our low-income tax credits (school choice provisions) to free and reduced lunch students from any school, requirement of school boards to ‘certify’ their budgets meet the needs of students to suitably attain the Rose Standards, addition of dyslexia to the at-risk list with accountability provisions for high-density at-risk funding, as well as other provisions. The bill included the full Governor’s recommended budget plus added accountability — a win for Kansas kids, families, schools, and taxpayers. I’m very proud of the efforts and strides that were made on such an important issue — educating kids.

Fixing the Unemployment Insurance Debacle

There are many reasons the Kansas Department of Labor failed Kansans during the surge of pandemic related unemployment. Chiefly, failed management and failing technology combined with a pandemic served to reveal critical systemic gaps creating backlogs, enabling mass fraud, and depleting reserves. Unfortunately, when Kansans needed solutions, the Kelly Administration wasted valuable time dwelling on excuses. The Kansas legislature stepped in to bypass the excuses and empowered a special task force to analyze and implement solutions to ensure that Kansans are protected from fraud, while timely receiving benefits. Already, initial funding has been set aside and requests for proposals issued to modernize both administration and technology. Meanwhile, we have made it clear to Gov. Kelly and her Labor Department that the immediate frontline focus must be customer service – responsive to Kansas workers and employers, and clearing the current backlog benefits owed to Kansans.

Securing Our 2nd Amendment Rights

Through the Kansas Attorney General, the state has entered into reciprocal agreements with other states regarding the recognition of firearms licenses and permits. Law abiding individuals who are licensed and legally permitted to conceal carry in another state may also conceal carry in Kansas. Depending on the state, this means out-of-state individuals who are age 18 to 20, can conceal carry in Kansas, yet Kansans of the same age are legally not permitted to conceal carry. House Bill 2058 brings parity to this issue by creating a new provisional license in which Kansans 18 to 20 years of age are able to conceal carry. The governor vetoed this legislation in April. House and Senate Republicans overrode her veto last week.

Value Them Both Constitutional Amendment

In 2019, the Kansas Supreme Court released a shocking ruling which found a right to an abortion in our state Constitution. This session, the Kansas House and Senate voted to pass the Value Them Both Amendment to give Kansans, not the Supreme Court, the final say on abortion in Kansas. Kansans will have the opportunity to vote on the Amendment in the August 2022 Primary Election.

I voted “yes” on this important legislation.

Occupational Licensing for Military Members & Spouses

This bill will make it easier for members of the military or their spouses to get occupational licenses when they move to Kansas. State licensing agencies will now be required to issue the appropriate credentials to a military service member or their spouse — who are already licensed out of state — within 15 days from the date of the submission of a “complete application” or within 45 days for all other nonmilitary applicants from out of state.

Strengthening Election Security

There were several commonsense bills passed to ensure that our elections remain free and fair.

- ▶ **HB 2332:** Ensures that the executive and judicial branch cannot unilaterally change state election laws. It also prohibits advance ballot solicitations by out of state entities and expands the crime of election tampering.
- ▶ **HB 2183:** This bill focused on limiting the practice commonly referred to as ballot harvesting. This is an effective way to prevent fraud and to keep our elections secure.

Preventing Shutdown 2.0

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Oversight Of Federal Covid Relief Funding

The Legislature included language in the state budget to require the \$1.6 billion in federal Coronavirus funding go through the legislative process rather than be distributed without proper oversight by the Governor’s appointed SPARK Committee. Gov. Kelly vetoed the language, but was overridden with a vote of 86-39 in the House. Unfortunately, the matter was not further considered by the Senate, leaving the Governor broad authority to spend the money on her chosen political agenda, rather than long term state priorities.



UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIM

Birthday