



# Capitol Briefing



## My Committees

Taxation  
Transportation  
Economic Dev & Tourism  
Select Committee on Energy & Environment for the Future

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Representative 16<sup>th</sup> District

## Notice of Upcoming Special Event

### LEGISLATIVE TOWN HALL MEETING

I will be holding a Legislative Town Hall Meeting with House Minority Leader Dennis McKinney on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Matt Ross Community Center, Crown Room, 8101 Marty, Overland Park, KS 66204. We will be updating you on the results of the upcoming “veto session” and answering your questions. Hope you can be there.

For directions click here: [http://www.opkansas.org/ Res/Parks and Recreation/Places/Community\\_Centers/Matt\\_Ross/index.cfm](http://www.opkansas.org/Res/Parks_and_Recreation/Places/Community_Centers/Matt_Ross/index.cfm)

## Session News

### HOUSE IS OUT OF SESSION UNTIL APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>

As many of you know, the House adjourned on Friday afternoon, April 4<sup>th</sup> leaving a lot of things to be decided in the so-called “veto session” which will begin April 30<sup>th</sup> and may last from four days to ten days depending on how quickly remaining business can be completed. One of the main tasks for the “veto session” is the resolution of the “omnibus appropriations bill.” That bill will contain any remaining appropriations which the conference committees agree to and the House and Senate approve. As I’ve related in earlier newsletters, there have been a lot of issues put off until that “veto session.” In addition to appropriations, the omnibus sessions have in the past included debate and voting on what are called “provisos.” The relation of these provisos to appropriations is often quite tenuous and the Attorney General’s office has issued a legal opinion which frowns on them, but they have the force of law for one year. As you may have read, the Consensus Revenue Estimate for April came in below expectations and more Medicaid funding than anticipated is also needed. This will further complicate the appropriations negotiations which will be primarily conducted in the six-member House/Senate Budget Conference Committee

### APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup> UPDATE COAL PLANTS

That morning the House considered a new bill, House Substitute for SB148 which included construction of 1400MW of coal-fired generation at Holcomb. It was little changed from SB327 which the Governor had previously vetoed and the Senate had voted to override April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The vote began, division and roll call were demanded, meaning the tally board would show our votes (division) and they would be recorded (roll call). The vote was final action on SB 148, the new coal plant bill. When I voted, it had 82 yea and 40 nay votes. One Republican was absent and excused and another was absent by strategy. If one side wants to work the other side of an issue for change of votes, they will have one Rep. hide out and do a “call of the House.” When we are under a call of the House, no one leaves their seat and we wait. Meanwhile, members are on the phone pressuring other members to change votes. When Representative Marti Crow, Topeka, arrived after completing her cancer treatment, the hiding out member came in and votes yea, so we remain in a holding pattern with 83 yea votes and needing 84 to prove the Speaker’s claim in the press that he has the 84 votes to override the Governor’s veto. Of course, this is NOT the vote to override . . . and members may change when that is the issue. The call was raised at 10:20 a.m. after a little over an hour, with only 83 yeas.

## **OVERALL ENERGY BILL UPDATE**

### **April 21 Update: Governor Sebelius vetoed House Substitute for SB148 last week.**

The question of whether to allow two coal-fired plants in Holcomb has dominated the entire 2008 legislative session. It was the topic we started the session on and, now, it appears that it will be the topic we conclude with as well.

*Here is a breakdown of the energy issue this session:*

Two identical bills were introduced at the beginning of the session, House Bill 2711 and Senate Bill 515, and sent to their respective chambers. These bills were drafted to allow the construction of two coal-fired power plants in Holcomb, Kansas. The plants' construction had previously been halted when Kansas Department of Health and Environment Secretary Rod Bremby denied Sunflower Corporation the necessary air quality permits. Bremby argued the carbon dioxide emitted by the plants would pose a serious threat to the health and safety of Kansans. In short, House Bill 2711 and Senate Bill 515 would have changed Kansas law specifically to allow the plants' construction to continue. The bills also limited the Secretary of KDHE authority to approve or deny air quality permits in the future.

Early in the session, both bills were heavily amended in committee. Some argued the bill imposed too many regulations, others argued the bill did too little to decrease Kansas' carbon footprint. Each bill was amended heavily in committee and removed many of the environmentally friendly provisions. After lengthy debate, both bills passed each chamber in somewhat different forms.

A joint House and Senate conference committee then formed a new version of the bill, which was placed into House Substitute for Senate Bill 327. This bill included some, but not all, of the provisions of the two bills passed by both chambers regarding electricity production and regulation. Senate Bill 327 was vetoed by the Governor on March 21, 2008.

On March 24, the House Utilities Committee created a new bill, House Substitute for Senate bill 148. It was sent to the House Appropriations Committee to exempt it from regular legislative deadlines. Aside from a few additional "green" provisions, House Substitute for SB 148 is identical to Senate Bill 327.

Meanwhile, on April 2, the Senate Utilities Committee took the same action with Senate Substitute for Hose Bill 2919. Both bills passed their chambers, as expected. This allows the energy debate to continue until legislators return to Topeka for the Wrap Up session on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

## **HOUSE RESOLUTIONS AND PROPOSITIONS**

On Wednesday, the House heard two constitutional amendment propositions and five resolutions. One proposition aimed to create a constitutional right to hunt, fish and trap. The other proposed to change the way Kansas taxes watercraft.

- HCR 5037, approved by the House 99-21, would amend the Kansas Bill of Rights to constitutionally preserve the right of the public to hunt, fish and trap wildlife subject to governing laws and regulations. This right would not modify any law relating to trespass, eminent domain or other private property rights.
- HCR 5015, approved by the House 102-19, would amend the property tax classification section of the Kansas Constitution to authorize the Legislature to classify watercraft on a different basis from other property. Such property currently is assessed as "all other" personal property at 30 percent of its fair market value. A similar constitutional amendment also including aircraft was narrowly rejected by Kansas voters in 2000 by less than 12,000 votes.

Both proposed constitutional amendments now advance to the Senate for consideration. Constitutional amendments must be approved by two-thirds of all members of both chambers. If 27 of the 40 members of the Senate approve either of these proposals, they would then approve on the November ballot for statewide voter approval.

Resolutions are used to express a formal determination or sentiment of one or both chambers on a particular matter. Resolutions may be used to extend commendation, express an opinion, urge a policy preference, request a change in rules/regulation or request other action. They must be approved by a majority of the chamber, but do not have the force of law.

Resolutions approved:

- A resolution encouraging the State Board of Education to collaborate with institutions of higher education to review alternative teacher certification programs
- A resolution requesting the State Board of Education to study reading problems, including dyslexia
- A resolution urging Congress to amend the Flood Control Act of 1944, relating to Kansas reservoirs
- A resolution urging the United States to withdraw from the Security & Prosperity Partnership of North America (NAFTA highway)

The Senate also submitted another resolution, requesting the creation of a task force to study an electronic motor vehicle financial security verification system.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE MANDATES**

Another important issue debated the last week before break was whether the law should contain mandates for health insurance coverage. House Substitute for HB 2601 was amended to require insurance companies to cover colonoscopy screenings for colorectal cancer, but an amendment to require coverage of hearing aids failed.

According to the American Cancer Society, colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer found in men and women in this country. It is estimated that there will be approximately 108,070 new cases of colon cancer and 40,740 new cases of rectal cancer in 2008 in the United States. Combined, they will cause about 49,960 deaths. Screening has proven to be very effective at catching polyps or growths before they become cancerous, or can identify cancerous growths early when they are more receptive to treatment.

In the past, the Legislature passed bills requiring coverage of mammograms, osteoporosis screenings, second opinions for cancer diagnoses and other preventive procedures and treatments. Preventative screenings help reduce long-term costs that result from serious illnesses and lack of prevention. By mandating procedures like colon screenings and mammograms, long-term health care costs can be significantly reduced. Mandated screenings not only reward people for being proactive about their health, it rewards insurance companies by easing the burden of expensive treatment for advanced illnesses.

### **HOUSE PASSES FOURTH YEAR OF SCHOOL FINANCE PLAN**

The House approved a bill the last week before break that increases state funding for public schools by \$37.2 million in the 2009-2010 school year. It adds a fourth year to the school finance plan originally passed in 2006. The legislation was debated at length and explored differing needs between rural, suburban and urban school districts. Under the House plan, base state aid per pupil (BSAPP) will increase to \$4,492 beginning in the 2009-2010 school year. This increases the current rate by \$59.

On the House side, legislators proposed several amendments to the bill with an intent to modify the formula for determining how much money each district receives. Some members preferred to avoid specifying how additional money be distributed, arguing that it is too early to know individual school needs. Other members wanted funding to go to one weighting category to increase funding primarily for large or suburban schools.

One amendment would have placed all state funding into "high enrollment" weighting (previously referred to as "correlation weighting") to bring the larger school districts up and diminish the low enrollment weighting part of the formula. That amendment failed, so another amendment was proposed to take half of the money and use it the same way, then an amendment to automatically increase high enrollment weighting whenever funding is added to the base. All these amendments failed.

An amendment was proposed to add over \$70 million for "non-proficiency" student weighting. This targeted Johnson County schools, created for students who are not proficient but not considered "at risk" because they do not qualify for free lunch. It adds funding in many districts but primarily helps schools with students from higher income families. That amendment also failed, 28 to 92.

Another amendment would have removed provisions that placed the funding into the BSAPP and simply left it in a "lock box" to be addressed next year. This would have guaranteed the same amount of funding for school finance, just delaying the formula for distributing it. The problem with this amendment was that school districts need to know how much money they will receive before the end of the next legislative session in April 2009. School boards must make staffing decisions, plan programs and finalize their budgets before the school year begins. This amendment failed as well.

There was also a proposed amendment that would have removed a fix for Medicaid funding for special education services. Kansas previously lost Medicaid funding because some districts were not complying with the federal requirements. This amendment would have distributed the state funding that is appropriated to replace the Medicaid funding first to school districts working hardest to receive Medicaid funding for their Medicaid students. That amendment failed on a voice vote.

The Senate approved the funding increase early in the session, with 33 Senators co-sponsoring the bill. The bill requires that the funding be set aside in a trust fund, enabling school districts to make appropriate budget decisions in a timely manner. The bill includes other changes in the finance law to encourage small districts consolidation. There is also a requirement that money provided by the state to replace federal Medicaid money previously taken away go first to districts with eligible Medicaid students.

The education debate was one of the most important debates we engaged in during the 2008 session. I am confident the legislation we approved will keep our promise of a quality education for all Kansas schoolchildren, regardless of what public school they attend. With an adequate and fair increase in the BSAPP, districts of all sizes will receive proper funding to meet their needs.

## **COAL TAX PROPOSED**

There was an interesting proposal made the last week before break by some members in the House to impose the nation's first ever tax on carbon dioxide emissions. Under the proposal, the state would collect \$37 for each ton of excess carbon dioxide emitted by utility companies. The bill failed at a vote of 51-74 but was later amended into Senate Bill 471 by a vote of 78-42. That proposal was defeated on final action at 51-74.

Concerns were raised that the carbon tax proposal did not truly make an effort to decrease Kansas' carbon footprint. Instead, the proposal was seen as a political maneuver- targeting opponents of two highly publicized coal-fired power plant projects in Holcomb, Kansas. If enacted, a coal tax would shift the financial cost of environmental responsibility from utility companies to consumers' energy bills.

Earlier in the session, the energy bill, House Bill 2711, proposed a coal tax of \$3 for each ton of excess carbon dioxide emissions, but the tax was removed in committee. This amendment would create 12 times more taxes on existing utilities than originally proposed. The added tax would move directly to the pocketbooks of Kansas families in the form of increased energy rates.

I strongly believe that utility companies and lawmakers must work together to provide clean and affordable energy options in Kansas. As we work to develop a comprehensive energy policy for the state, we must ensure that Kansas consumers reap the benefits of environmental stewardship- not the cost.

### **DEFERRED TAXES PROPOSED FOR NEWLY BUILT HOMES**

The House gave approval the last week before break to House Substitute for House Bill 2543, which would allow homebuilders to delay paying property taxes on unsold homes for as long as two years. With the real estate market down, many new homes are sitting unsold for extended periods of time and Missouri already offers this feature, putting Johnson County Homebuilders at a disadvantage in the market. Though homebuilders would get a break, Kansans who purchase those homes may not get the one-year break they would enjoy as a new homeowner under current law. Currently, Kansas law requires the owner of a new home to pay taxes based on the home's value at the beginning of the year. If a family buys a home and moves in shortly after that date, they don't pay taxes on it for approximately two years. Under the House bill, new homeowners would pay a pro-rated tax on their property during the year they move in. Supporters argue that this bill will allow Home Builders to price their homes for less since buyers now pay that tax anyway through the price of the home. The measure now moves to the Senate.

### **BILL WOULD REQUIRE DRUG TESTS OF DRIVERS**

The Senate unanimously approved House Bill 2617 last week, which would require drivers who cause an accident that result in fatalities to be tested for drug and alcohol use. "Amanda's Law" was proposed after a Tonganoxie teen, Amanda Bixby, was killed in a car crash in 2007. The Senate amended the bill by deleting provisions which required drug testing of a driver after an accident if there is a "serious bodily injury" and applies the requirement for drug testing without the driver's consent only when there is a death and when there is reason to issue a traffic citation. The test will not be required if the law enforcement officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the driver was not responsible for the accident.

### **HOUSE CALLS FOR BETTER INSPECTION OF AMUSEMENT RIDES**

The House passed a bill, House Bill 2616, creating inspection rules for amusement rides. Currently, Kansas is one of only a few states that have no statewide regulations for rides. The Senate has not yet considered the measure. The bill requires inspection and certification by qualified inspectors and oversight by the Department of Labor. The bill does not require state inspection, however, as that would make the state liable for injuries on the ride.

### **DISASTER TRAINING AVAILABLE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

When disaster strikes, people with disabilities face greater risk of serious injury, and even death. Researchers at the Life Span Institute at the University of Kansas have taken this lesson from the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and Hurricane Katrina to create a two-hour online training course on how to assist people with disabilities during a community emergency. Targeting staff in county health departments and hospitals, emergency managers, disaster relief teams and professionals working with people with disabilities,

the "Ready, Willing and Able" course was developed by institute's Research and Training Center on Independent Living. It addresses the needs of people with sight, mobility, hearing and cognitive disabilities and covers disability etiquette, terminology, communications and assistance techniques during disasters.

### **HOUSE APPROVES GUN SALES BILL**

House Substitute for Senate Bill 46 started out last year as a bill to create a crime of defacing identification marks on a firearm. It was passed 40-0 by the Senate in February. The last week before break, the bill was amended by the House Fed & State Affairs Committee and provisions added that would allow persons who are in compliance with the National Firearms Act (26 USC 5801 *et seq.*) to possess silencers for firearms, shotguns with barrels less than 18 inches long, and automatic weapons. The amendment added the contents of House Bill 2819. The bill would allow a licensed dealer, manufacturer, or importer to deal in these types of firearms in Kansas and for any person to possess such firearms as long as they comply with federal restrictions. The underlying bill would amend current law to increase the penalty for the crime of defacing identification marks of a firearm from a class B nonperson misdemeanor to a severity level 10, nonperson felony.

Under current Kansas law, it is illegal to possess silencers for firearms; to sell, manufacture, purchase, or carry shotguns with barrels that are less than 18 inches; and to sell, manufacture, purchase or carry any automatic firearm.

### **VOTER IDENTIFICATION BILL PASSES HOUSE**

Voters would have to show photo identification to cast a ballot in person in Kansas under House Substitute for Senate Bill 169, passed by the House last week. No photo ID would be required to request and receive an advance ballot by mail. If voters meet low income requirements such as being at 150% of poverty level or less, they would be able to receive their photo ID free of charge. One hundred fifty percent of poverty level for a family of four is \$30,000 per year. The measure will not effect this year's election but would require people to present photo identification for all elections after January 1, 2010. The bill passed 74-49. Exempted from photo ID requirements are Kansans older than 65, those with permanent or temporary disability, those serving in the military on active duty or those living outside the United States .

Opponents of the bill argued that the identification requirement will discourage voting, especially among disabled, elderly, poor and minority voters and that the cost to obtain a photo ID would in effect be a poll tax on voting. Studies have shown that people earning less than \$35,000 per year are less likely to have photo identification than those who earn more. Also, an identification requirement will make advance voting more difficult, which is extremely important to immobile Kansans who are not able to easily reach their voting place. This could also have implications in the 2008 November election. Turnout is projected to be extremely high, with a highly contested presidential election at the top of the ballot. Many counties are relying on advance balloting to help reduce strain on polling locations. By making advanced voting more difficult, it will likely increase voting lines on Election Day and make the entire process more challenging for voters and election workers alike.

Earlier this year, the United States Supreme Court heard arguments over whether it is constitutional to require people to show photo identification to vote. This measure is viewed as one way to address illegal immigration. Several lawmakers argued that the law was trying to solve a nonexistent problem. During debate, it was also pointed out that the Secretary of State's office has said there are no cases of voter fraud in Kansas that would have been prevented by showing photo identification.

After record turnouts for the presidential caucus in February, many Kansans have indicated they would prefer Kansas hold a presidential primary in 2010. To address this concern, an amendment was approved that will require Kansas to hold a presidential primary on the first Saturday of February as opposed to a caucus the first Tuesday of February in the next presidential cycle. This amendment will enable more Kansans to participate in the presidential selection process.

### **BILL WORKS TO LIMIT STATE DEBT**

The House approved legislation the last week before break to establish a new formula limiting state borrowing. House Bill 2891 was approved in an effort to curb state debt.

House Bill 2891 creates a State General Fund debt ceiling by limiting debt accumulation to no more than 20 percent of the State General Fund revenue estimates. The bill would require the calculation be based on dividing the total estimated debt for the next fiscal year by the total estimated revenues for that same fiscal year, with the debt ratio cap to be estimated on or before December 4 of each year and published in the next Governor's Budget Report.

Issued State General Fund Debt currently totals \$945 million, or 15.3 percent of the State General Fund. This bill is an important step forward to help reduce Kansas' debt service. By setting reasonable limits on state debt, lawmakers will have more money to fund initiatives critical to Kansas' future such as education, health care or services to seniors.

### **VIRTUAL SCHOOLS GET FUNDING**

Senate Bill 669 created a funding formula for virtual schools. Virtual schools are schools within a public school system that provide students with educational services primarily by internet and electronic communication. Virtual School aid would be calculated by multiplying the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in a virtual school times 103.5 percent of the unweighted Base State Aid Per Pupil (BSAPP).

Under the bill, virtual schools would receive either a non-proficient weighting of 4.65 percent or an at-risk student weighting of 45.6 percent multiplied by the full-time equivalent enrollment of either non-proficient or at-risk pupils in approved at-risk programs at a virtual school. Advanced placement course funding of 16 percent of the BSAPP would be paid to virtual schools for each pupil enrolled in an advanced placement course if the enrolled pupil's resident school district does not offer advanced placement courses, contains more than 200 square miles and has an enrollment of at least 260 pupils.

This bill is the result of a legislative audit that uncovered issues concerning whether virtual schools funding exceeds their costs. To enable the Legislature and Department of Education to track virtual school spending, the bill requires that moneys received as virtual school state aid be deposited in a virtual school fund. Expenses of the virtual school would have to be paid from this fund.

Testimony in committee showed that the virtual schools in Kansas have grown from 4 in 1999 to 34 this year. The students receiving virtual school instruction, with enrollment growth from 1998-99 school year, about 60 full-time-equivalent students to more than 2,000 students today. Even so, virtual students still represent only about 1 percent of Kansas' total student population.

## **KANSAS ACADEMY OF MATH AND SCIENCES GETS HOUSE APPROVAL**

In 2006, lawmakers established the Kansas Academy for Mathematics and Science (KAMS) in an effort to prepare Kansas students for the demands of a global economy. Two years after its creation by the Legislature, KAMS officially received funding last week from both House and Senate chambers to continue its work.

Preparing Kansas students for 21<sup>st</sup> Century jobs requires a stronger commitment to developing a well-educated and well-trained workforce, especially in math and science. Housed at Fort Hays State University, KAMS provides an accelerated, residential, academic program for Kansas high school juniors or seniors who excel in these subjects. The two-year curriculum completes requirements for both high school graduation and requirements for an associate of arts or associate of science degree.

The Board of Regents oversees the Academy, setting guidelines for admission, faculty, research, laboratory and field trip activities, college and career counseling services and college credit. Forty students are admitted annually from across the state, with twenty selected based on residence (no more than five residing in a single congressional district) and 20 chosen at-large.

The Board of Regents requested funding \$4.3 million over the next six years for its operational costs. If state funding continues to be available, KAMS is expected to be open by fall 2009. Fort Hays State University FHSU officials estimate the Academy, upon completion, will cost approximately \$1.7 million to operate, about half of which is expected to come from the state.

## **TITLE LOAN BILL BLOCKED IN COMMITTEE**

Throughout the session, legislators have worked to cap interest on car title loans as a way to help prevent people from falling into uncontrollable debt. House Bill 2245 would cap interest on the loans at 36 percent annually and allow borrowers to renew a loan only twice. The bill also focuses on consumer education, requiring borrowers to receive more information about their loans and the danger of attempting to use them as a long-term solution to debt.

Opponents of the bill believe the legislation is not needed. They contend that short-term loans are not “predatory loans” and instead offer people more options in times of financial hardship. In addition, requirements to educate borrowers about the risks and possible consequences associated with title loans is already a part of the process. Fees tied to title loans are intended to fund administrative costs, not to take advantage of borrowers.

Proponents of the bill argue that borrowers frequently end up making “upside down payments,” meaning they pay more in fees than they originally borrowed, plus the amount of the original loan. This seriously hinders the same population title loans suggest that they are in business to help.

This is an important piece of legislation that deserves full consideration by the House of Representatives. Unfortunately, the bill was blocked from moving out of committee. The issue will now have to wait another year before it can be reviewed again.

## **FUNDING FOR VETERANS COMMISSION RESTORED**

The last week before break the House used the annual Claims Against the State bill as a "vehicle" to restore the base funding for the Kansas Commission of Veterans Affairs and a mobile unit to serve veterans outside the metro areas in the state. Earlier in the session, the House Appropriations Committee stripped all of the funding for this important state veterans agency because of some legislators expressed dissatisfaction with the agency. The Kansas Commission of Veterans Affairs provides an invaluable service to our state's heroic former servicemen and women. I was thrilled to see these funds restored. Senate Bill 534 contains the funding for the Commission, and was approved at a vote of 96-26.

## **BILL WOULD STRENGTHEN KANSAS AVIATION INDUSTRY**

The House considered legislation the last week before break designed to convince Cessna Aircraft to build a new assembly plant in Wichita. Under a similar Senate proposal, this project could also be used to attract other future aviation projects, allowing up to \$33 million in bond funding per project for research, development, engineering or manufacturing. There is a cap of \$150 million for all projects.

Under the House bill, the state would issue bonds and Cessna could use the withholding taxes of current employees to pay off the loan. In 2003, the Legislature approved issuing bonds to help Boeing secure work on the 7E7. Cessna has said it needs \$25 million in cash from the state to build a new plant, which would create approximately 1,000 jobs in Kansas for its new \$27 million Citation Columbus business jet, the largest of its kind to date. Cessna is also investing \$800 million to develop the project.

Cessna Aircraft hopes to finalize a plant location by mid-May. Other states are bidding for the project, but lawmakers hope this legislation will keep Cessna in Kansas. The aviation industry is vital to the Kansas economy. If it continues to grow, it will help protect our state from the recession that is impacting other areas of the country.

Other states maintain pools of money that can be tapped when trying to attract large scale manufacturing projects. If House Bill 2006 passes, Kansas would also have a mechanism in place for offering incentives when opportunity arises. This is just the beginning of the next generation of planes being developed and built by aircraft manufacturers. To move forward, Kansas must obtain contracts for the other new projects.

## **TAX PREPARATION ASSISTANCE FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES:**

Below are several resources and organizations who offer assistance for individuals who may still need assistance with their tax forms, which can sometimes be confusing and overwhelming. All of these resources are available to Kansas residents.

**[CompleteTax](#)**: Free federal tax preparation and e-file if your Adjusted Gross Income is \$32,000 or less. Extensions available. Website: [www.completetax.com](http://www.completetax.com)

**[TaxSlayer Free Returns.com](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your Adjusted Gross Income is \$54,000 or less and you are 25 years old or younger or 68 years old or older or active military. Also, your return is free if you qualify for EITC or your AGI is \$10,000 or less. Extensions are also free. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.taxslayerfreefederalandfreestate.com](http://www.taxslayerfreefederalandfreestate.com)

**[TurboTax® Freedom Edition](#)**: Free tax return preparation and e-file if your Adjusted Gross Income is \$30,000 or less or you will claim EITC, or you are active duty military with an AGI of \$54,000 or less. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.taxfreedom.com](http://www.taxfreedom.com)

**[TaxSimple - Deluxe Version](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 65 years old or younger. Website: [www.taxsimple.org](http://www.taxsimple.org)

**[Online Tax Pros](#)**: Free tax return preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is between \$11,000 and \$54,000. Also provided en Espanol. Website: <http://onlinetaxpros.com>

**[efiletaxreturns.net](#)**: Free federal tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is between \$5,000 and \$54,000. Website: [www.efiletaxreturns.net](http://www.efiletaxreturns.net)

**[1040NOW.NET](#)**: Free federal tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 72 or under. Website: [www.1040freeonline.com](http://www.1040freeonline.com)

**[eSmartTax By Liberty Tax Service](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 50 or under. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.esmarttax.com](http://www.esmarttax.com)

**[H&R Block's TaxCut Free File](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 50 or under. Website: [www.hrblock.com/taxes](http://www.hrblock.com/taxes)

**[Online Taxes @ OLT.com](#)**: Free tax return preparation and e-file if your Adjusted Gross Income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 50 or younger. Extensions available. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.olt.com](http://www.olt.com)

**[FileYourTaxes.com](#)**: Free Federal online tax preparation and e-File if you are age 25 and under with an Adjusted Gross Income between \$10,000 and \$50,000, or your Adjusted Gross Income is \$50,000 or less. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.fileyourtaxes.com](http://www.fileyourtaxes.com).

**[Free Tax Return](#)**: Free federal tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less. Website: [www.free-tax-return.com](http://www.free-tax-return.com)

**[Free TaxACT](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 19 through 54 years old. Extensions e-filed for free. Includes Form 982 (Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief). Website: [www.freetaxact.com](http://www.freetaxact.com)

**[CitizenTax](#)**: Free federal online tax preparation and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less, and you are age 55 or under. Website: [www.citizentaxfree.com](http://www.citizentaxfree.com)

**[Free1040TaxReturn.com](#)**: Free Federal online tax preparation and e-File if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less and you are age 76 or under. Website: <http://ffa.free1040taxreturn.com>

**[FreeTaxUSA.com](#)**: Free federal online tax prep and e-file if your adjusted gross income is \$54,000 or less. Website: [www.freetaxusa.com](http://www.freetaxusa.com).

## USEFUL STATE NUMBERS AND RESOURCES:

The following list of numbers will lead you to a variety of state and federal resources. You can find these- as well as many others- online at <http://da.state.ks.us/phonebook>.

<b>Adjutant General:</b> 785.274.1001	<b>Department on Aging:</b> 800.432.3535	<b>Attorney General:</b> 785.296.2215
<b>Better Business Bureau:</b> 785.232.0454	<b>Child/Adult Abuse Hotline:</b> 800.922.5330	<b>Child and Family Services:</b> 785.296.4653
<b>Commerce &amp; Housing:</b> 785.296.3481	<b>Consumer Protection:</b> 800.432.2310	<b>Crime Tip Hotline:</b> 800.572.7463
<b>Crime Victim Assistance:</b> 800.828.9745	<b>Driver's License Bureau:</b> 785.296.3963	<b>Gov. Kathleen Sebelius:</b> 800.748.4408
<b>Kansas Health Wave:</b> 800.792.4884	<b>Highway Road Conditions:</b> 800.585.7623	<b>Housing Hotline:</b> 800.752.4422
<b>Insurance Hotline:</b> 800.432.2484	<b>Kansas Lottery:</b> 785.296.5700	<b>Legislative Hotline:</b> 800.432.3924
<b>Mental Health Services:</b> 888.582.3759	<b>Department of Revenue:</b> 877.526.7738	<b>School Safety Hotline:</b> 877.626.8203
<b>Social Security:</b> 800.772.1213	<b>State Capitol Tours:</b> 785.296.3966	<b>Taxpayer Assistance:</b> 800.259.2829
<b>Tax Refund Status:</b> 800.894.0318	<b>Teacher Certification:</b> 785.296.2283	<b>Unclaimed Property:</b> 800.432.0386
<b>Unemployment:</b> 785.296.5074	<b>Vital Statistics:</b> 785.296.1405	<b>Voter Registration:</b> 785.296.4561
<b>Welfare Fraud Hotline:</b> 800.432.3913	<b>Workers' Comp:</b> 800.332.0353	<b>Workforce Center:</b> 785.235.5627

## Keep In Touch

Please feel free to contact me with your additional comments and questions. My office address is Room 49, Docking State Office Building, Topeka, KS 66612. You can reach me at (785) 296-7698 or call the legislative hotline at 1-800-432-3924 to leave a message for me. Additionally, you can e-mail me at [rdardin@house.state.ks.us](mailto:rdardin@house.state.ks.us). You can also follow the legislative session online at [www.kslegislature.org](http://www.kslegislature.org).  
**For back issues of my 2008 Renews, call my office, 785-296-7698**