



2015 Kansas Legislative Session Final Report and Voting Record

- Produced by the Government Affairs Committee -

Dear Chamber Member,

Many issues that impact your business, both positively and negatively, are decided at the Capitol in Topeka. You have told us that advocacy is one of the most important services the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce provides our community. It may come as a surprise to you that we are the only chamber of commerce in the state that publishes a summary of a number of those important legislative votes cast in Topeka so that you can be an informed voter each time you visit the ballot box.

No voting record can tell the entire story of a legislator's attitude and actions on issues of importance to business. Each year, legislators cast votes on hundreds of proposed laws. Many anti-business bills were rejected by legislators in policy or fiscal committees, thus stopping proposals before they reached the floor for a recorded vote. This Voting Record does not capture those or any other unrecorded votes.

What the 2015 Voting Record does provide you with is a valuable tool for evaluating our Johnson County legislators' performances on business-centric and quality of life issues and a guide for acknowledging votes favorable and unfavorable relative to the Chamber's legislative agenda. Remember, this is a legislative agenda based on those issues that you, our members, have told us are important to your businesses, and it has been carefully reviewed and discussed by our Government Affairs Committee as well as our Board of Directors' Executive Committee. Please read this record carefully and thoroughly - let it spur continued dialogue with your elected officials and help guide you in your decision-making process at election time.

The 2015 legislative session was the longest in state history, lasting 113 days as legislators grappled with many difficult and complex issues, most notably those involving taxes and balancing the budget. On behalf of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce and its members, we want to thank all of the members of the Johnson County Delegation for their hard work and dedication this legislative session. They often are required to make difficult decisions and experience personal sacrifice to fulfill the responsibilities of their elected offices.

If you would like additional information on the Chamber's advocacy efforts, or if you are interested in participating in our Government Affairs Committee, please contact Tom Robinett, Vice President of Government Affairs, at (913) 766-7602 or t robinett@opchamber.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brad Stratton'.

Brad Stratton, **Overland Park Wealth Management**
2015 Chair, Government Affairs Committee

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Hess'.

Mike Hess, **HNTB Corporation**
2015 Co-Chair, Government Affairs Committee

2015 Government Affairs Committee

Committee Chairman:

Mr. Brad Stratton
Overland Park Wealth Management

Committee Co-Chairman:

Mr. Mike Hess
HNTB Corporation

Mr. Christopher Aikin
Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.

Ms. Kate Allen
**Johnson County Community College
Foundation**

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Olathe Unified School District #233

Ms. Rita Ashley
Commerce Bank N.A.

Mr. James Bartling
Atmos Energy

Dr. Marlin Berry
Olathe Unified School District #233

Ms. Mary Birch
Lathrop & Gage LLP

Ms. Mikaela Blocher
First National Bank

Ms. Joy Bondurant
Olathe Unified School District #233

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Capital City Bank

Mr. Chris Carroll
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Mr. Toby Crouse
Foulston Siefkin LLP

Ms. Allison Darling
GoalGETTERS

Mr. Kirby Deeter
Varnum/Armstrong/Deeter, L.L.C.

Mr. Michael DeMent
HNTB Corporation

Sen. Jim Denning
Discover Vision Centers

Mr. Jarad Falk
Time Warner Cable Business Class

Mr. Owen Faulkner
Service Experts Heating & Air Conditioning

Mr. Patrick Fucik
Sprint

Mayor Carl Gerlach
City of Overland Park

Ms. Kristin Givens
State Farm Mutual Auto Insurance Company

Ms. Molly Haase
Representative Kevin Yoder's Office

Dr. Al Hanna
Blue Valley School District

Mr. Brian Harrold
Cornerstone Financial Group

Mr. Paul Hink
SPX Cooling Technologies

Mr. Michael Hockley
Spencer Fane Britt & Browne, LLP

Mr. Bob Holcomb
Empower Retirement

Ms. Dorothy Hughes
The University of Kansas Hospital

Mr. Beatriz Ibarra
Home Builders Association of Greater KC

Mr. Mark Johnson
BHC RHODES

Mr. Scott Jones
Kansas City Power & Light

Rep. Marvin Kleebl
Allied Staffing

Mr. Joshua Lewis
Renaissance Financial

Mr. Zachary Luea
National American University

Mr. Brent McCune
COBLE MCCUNE Wealth Management

Ms. Lurena Mead
Johnson County Developmental Supports

Ms. Darci Meese
WaterOne

Mr. Ronnie Metsker
Parakaleo Group

Mr. Gus Meyer
Rau Construction Company

Mr. Jason Meyers
Burns & McDonnell Engineering

Ms. Katie Misukanis
Rasmussen College

Mr. Greg Musil
Douthit Frets Rouse Gentile & Rhodes

Dr. Leigh Anne Neal
Shawnee Mission School District

Mr. Gary Nevius
MOMENTA

Mr. Neal Nichols
Overland Park Host Lions Club

Mr. Ed O'Connor
PC Partners, Inc.

Ms. Tamara O'Connor
State Farm Mutual Auto Insurance Company

Mr. Steve Peppes
Delta Dental of Kansas

Ms. Margot Pickering
Pickering Law Firm

Mr. Dallas Polen
Children's Mercy South

Ms. Penny Postoak Ferguson
Johnson County Government

Mr. Clint Robinson
Black & Veatch

Mr. Tony Rupp
Foulston Siefkin LLP

Mr. Nick Sanders
Wallace Saunders

Ms. Stephanie Seger
Children's Mercy South

Ms. Carrie Sherer
Black & Veatch

Mr. Neil Shortlidge
Stinson Leonard Street

Councilmember John Skubal
Kaw Valley Engineering, Inc.

Mr. Cris Smith
Central Bank of the Midwest

Councilmember Fred Spears
Leadership Systems

Mr. John Stanfield
VSR Financial Services, Inc.

Mr. Michael Steiner
Saint Luke's Health System

Mr. Alan Stetson
Children's Mercy Hospitals & Clinics

Mr. Dennis Swan
Kincaid Coach Lines, Inc.

Mr. Greg Swarens
TranSystems

Mr. Tom Swenson
TranSystems

Mr. Dave Trabert
Kansas Policy Institute

Mr. Mick Urban
Kansas Gas Service

Mr. Tim Van Zandt
Saint Luke's Health System

Sen. Robert Vancrum
Vancrum Law Firm, LLC

Sen. John Vratil
Blue Valley School District

Mr. Mike Waters
QC Holdings, Inc.

Mr. Paul Weida
Black & Veatch

Mr. Richard Wetzler
Martin, Pringle, Oliver, Wallace & Bauer, LLP

Councilmember Dave White
Foland, Wickens, Eisfelder, Roper & Hofer, PC

Mr. Ryan Wiens
Waddell & Reed, Inc.

Mr. Larry Winn, III
BHC RHODES

Mr. Dennis Wolf
Wells Fargo Advisors

Mr. Greg Wolf
Dentons

Mr. Josh Woolard
HNTB Corporation

Mr. Rick A. Worrel, P.E.
Affinis Corp

Ms. Karen Wulfskuhle
United Community Services

Ms. Kendra Wyatt
New Birth Company

Ms. Deb Zila
Shawnee Mission School District

SENATE

Percentage of Votes with Chamber Position			70%	50%	30%	40%	44%	80%	40%	40%	100%
Senate Issues Bill Number & Descriptions		OP Chamber Position	Baumgardner	Denning	Lynn	Melcher	Olson	Petty	Pilcher-Cook	Smith	Wolf
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - GOVERNANCE											
2/25/15 23-17-0-0	SB 34 - Vote #46 - Final Action - Prosecutorial authority for election crimes; penalties for voting crimes	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
5/13/15 22-13-3-2	HB 2104 - Vote #271 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Moves local elections to fall of odd-numbered years; filling candidate vacancies; elimination of presidential primary	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - EDUCATION											
3/16/15 25-14-0-1	H Sub for SB 7 - Vote #123 - Concur in House Amendments - K-12 block grant funding; repeals existing school finance formula	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - TAXATION											
5/31/15 9-30-0-1	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #314 - Abrams' Floor Amendment - Sunset sales and property tax exemptions; establish tax study commission	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N
6/2/15 29-9-1-1	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #321 - LaTurner Floor Amendment - Impose local property tax lid	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N
6/7/15 21-17-0-2	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #331 - Adopt June 7 Conference Committee Report - Senate comprehensive tax plan	N	N	Y	Y	Y	NV	N	Y	Y	N
6/12/15 21-19-0-0	H Sub for SB 270 - Vote #334 - Adopt June 10 Conference Committee Report - Comprehensive tax plan "trailer bill" modifying S Sub for HB 2109	N	N	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	N
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST FUND											
4/30/15 29-11-0-0	SB 154 - Vote #241 - Final Action - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Replaces existing arrayed unemployment insurance system with fixed system; caps maximum weekly unemployment benefit at greater of \$474 or 55% of average weekly wages paid to employees for previous calendar year	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT											
5/14/15 35-3-0-2	H Sub for SB 91 - Vote #285 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Changes renewable energy standards from mandatory to optional; clarifies property tax exemptions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE STANDING PRIORITY - REGULATION OF FIREARMS											
3/25/15 31-8-0-1	SB 45 - Vote #206 - Concur in House Amendments - Allows concealed carry without requiring a license (constitutional carry)	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N

NV = Not Voting, which means the Senator was not present in the Senate Chamber for this vote.

P = Present, which means the Senator was present in the Chamber for the vote but chose not to take a position.

Only votes in opposition to the Overland Park Chamber's position reduce the % rating.

HOUSE

	Percentage of Votes with Chamber Position		78%	50%	63%	70%	50%	40%	40%	80%	43%	43%	57%	44%	30%
	House Issues Bill Number & Descriptions	OP Chamber Position	Bollier	Bruchman	Campbell	Clayton	Davis	Dove	Esau	Gallagher	Grosserode	Hildabrand	Kiegerl	Kleeb	Lunn
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - GOVERNANCE														
5/21/2015 67-55-0-3	SB 34 - Vote #199 - Final Action - Prosecutorial authority for election crimes; penalties for voting crimes	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5/21/15 64-58-0-3	HB 2104 - Vote #203 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Moves local elections to fall of odd-numbered years; filling candidate vacancies; elimination of presidential primary	N	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - EDUCATION														
3/13/15 64-57-0-3	H Sub for SB 7 - Vote #92 - Final Action - K-12 block grant funding; repeals existing school finance formula	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - TAXATION														
6/5/15 27-82-0-16	H Sub for SB 270 - Vote #224 - Adopt June 5 Conference Committee Report - House comprehensive tax plan	Y	NV	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N
6/11/15 63-44-0-18	H Sub for SB 270 - Vote #232 - Adopt June 10 Conference Committee Report - Comprehensive tax plan "trailer bill" modifying S Sub for HB 2109	N	N	Y	NV	N	Y	Y	Y	N	NV	NV	NV	Y	Y
6/10/15 20-95-0-10	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #230 - Adopt June 7 Conference Committee Report - Senate comprehensive tax plan	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	NV	NV	NV	Y	Y
6/11/15 63-45-0-17	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #233 - Reconsider adoption of June 7 Conference Committee Report - Senate comprehensive tax plan coupled with Trailer Bill	N	N	N	NV	N	Y	Y	Y	N	NV	NV	NV	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST FUND														
4/2/15 85-36-0-16	SB 154 - Vote #153 - Final Action - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Replaces existing arrayed unemployment insurance system with fixed system; caps maximum weekly unemployment benefit at greater of \$474 or 55% of average weekly wages paid to employees for previous calendar year	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NV	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT														
5/14/15 105-16-0-4	H Sub for SB 91 - Vote #187 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Changes renewable energy standards from mandatory to optional; clarifies property tax exemptions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE STANDING PRIORITY - REGULATION OF FIREARMS														
3/25/15 85-39-0-1	SB 45 - Vote #137 - Final Action - allows concealed carry without requiring a license (constitutional carry)	N	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N	Y

NV = Not Voting, which means the Representative was not present in the House Chamber for this vote.

P = Present, which means the Representative was present in the House Chamber for the vote but chose not to take a position.

Only votes in opposition to the Overland Park Chamber's position reduce the % rating.

HOUSE

	Percentage of Votes with Chamber Position		70%	40%	40%	40%	70%	40%	70%	40%	30%	22%	40%	40%
	House Issues Bill Number & Descriptions	OP Chamber Position	Lusk	Macheers	McPherson	Merrick	Ousley	Powell	Rooker	Rubin	Ryckman	Schwab	Sutton	Todd
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - GOVERNANCE													
5/21/2015 67-55-0-3	SB 34 - Vote #199 - Final Action - Prosecutorial authority for election crimes; penalties for voting crimes	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
5/21/15 64-58-0-3	HB 2104 - Vote #203 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Moves local elections to fall of odd-numbered years; filling candidate vacancies; elimination of presidential primary	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - EDUCATION													
3/13/15 64-57-0-3	H Sub for SB 7 - Vote #92 - Final Action - K-12 block grant funding; repeals existing school finance formula	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE TOP PRIORITY - TAXATION													
6/5/15 27-82-0-16	H Sub for SB 270 - Vote #224 - Adopt June 5 Conference Committee Report - House comprehensive tax plan	Y	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
6/11/15 63-44-0-18	H Sub for SB 270 - Vote #232 - Adopt June 10 Conference Committee Report - Comprehensive tax plan "trailer bill" modifying S Sub for HB 2109	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
6/10/15 20-95-0-10	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #230 - Adopt June 7 Conference Committee Report - Senate comprehensive tax plan	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	N	N
6/11/15 63-45-0-17	S Sub for HB 2109 - Vote #233 - Reconsider adoption of June 7 Conference Committee Report - Senate comprehensive tax plan coupled with Trailer Bill	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST FUND													
4/2/15 85-36-0-16	SB 154 - Vote #153 - Final Action - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Replaces existing arrayed unemployment insurance system with fixed system; caps maximum weekly unemployment benefit at greater of \$474 or 55% of average weekly wages paid to employees for previous calendar year	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE IMPORTANT PRIORITY - ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT													
5/14/15 105-16-0-4	H Sub for SB 91 - Vote #187 - Adopt Conference Committee Report - Changes renewable energy standards from mandatory to optional; clarifies property tax exemptions	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	NV	Y	Y
	CHAMBER LEGISLATIVE STANDING PRIORITY - REGULATION OF FIREARMS													
3/25/15 85-39-0-1	SB 45 - Vote #137 - Final Action - allows concealed carry without requiring a license (constitutional carry)	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

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Only votes in opposition to the Overland Park Chamber's position reduce the % rating.

Voting Record Bill Explanations

The Overland Park Chamber's legislative positions are shown in red italics.

SENATE

Chamber Legislative Top Priorities

FINAL ACTION ON SB 34 – Vote #46 (02/25/15), passed: Prosecutorial Authority for election crimes; penalties for voting crimes. Signed into law, June 6, 2015

GOVERNANCE: The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

This bill adds the Secretary of State to the officials with independent authority to prosecute any person for a Kansas election crime (prior to this bill, such authority was vested in the Kansas Attorney General and the district or county attorney where the violation occurred). It also creates a separate crime of intentionally voting or attempting to vote more than once (previously incorporated in the crime of voting without being qualified), amends certain other voting crimes and increases the severity level of certain voting crimes.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HB 2104 – Vote #271 (05/13/15), passed: Elections; relating to certain municipalities and special districts; relating to filling vacancies of nominees; relating to the presidential preference primary Signed into law, June 8, 2015

See House explanation

MOTION TO CONCUR IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS ON H SUB FOR SB 7 – Vote #123 (03/16/15), passed: Education; relating to the financing and instruction thereof Signed into law, March 25, 2015

See House explanation

MOTION TO ADOPT ABRAMS' FLOOR AMENDMENT ON S SUB FOR HB 2109 – Vote #314 (05/31/15), failed: Sunset sales and property tax exemptions; create the joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits.

TAXATION: Any comprehensive review of tax exemptions should include careful consideration of the economic development and employment consequences of eliminating such exemptions.

This amendment would have sunset most existing state sales tax exemptions and establish the joint tax committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits.

MOTION TO ADOPT LaTURNER FLOOR AMENDMENT ON S SUB FOR HB 2109 – Vote #321 (06/02/15), passed: Imposes local property tax increase limitation and election requirements.

TAXATION: The Chamber opposes tax, revenue and/or spending lids on state and local government, including any constitutional amendments, public referendums or statutes that restrict legislative authority to make decisions regarding taxing or spending.

GOVERNANCE: The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

This amendment would prohibit cities and counties from adopting appropriations or budgets with revenues from certain increases in property taxes that exceed the CPI without the proposed increases being approved at a regularly scheduled election.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JUNE 7th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON S SUB FOR HB 2109 – Vote #331 (06/07/15), passed: Taxation; relating to tax amnesty; sales and compensating use tax, rates, distribution thereof, food; income tax, subtraction modifications, credits, individual development accounts, low income scholarship program; motor vehicle taxation; taxation of cigarettes and electronic cigarettes; sales tax authority for Bourbon, Douglas and Thomas counties; property taxation, consolidated fire districts; rural opportunity zones; land banks,; creating the joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits.

TAXATION: The Chamber supports a balanced and reasonable approach to tax reform that provides a positive business climate. The Chamber recognizes the value and necessity for adequate state funds to provide essential government services that our businesses and citizens rely upon such as transportation, education, public safety and quality of life offerings. The Chamber recommends that the Legislature reconsider its plan for the predetermined, scheduled elimination of the state income tax. The Chamber is of the belief that the existing tax plan may have a negative impact on the key quality of life offerings identified by both business leaders and residents as fundamental.

The Chamber opposes (i) tax policy changes and unfunded mandates that simply shift the tax burden to other areas of state government or to other levels of government, (ii) tax policies that redistribute locally raised sales tax revenues to the state or other local jurisdictions, and (iii) the

use of “sweeps” to move funds from “dedicated funds” to the state general fund to be used for other than their intended purpose. The Chamber opposes tax, revenue and/or spending lids on state and local government, including any constitutional amendments, public referendums or statutes that restrict legislative authority to make decisions regarding taxing or spending. The Chamber opposes any change in tax law that would apply a sales tax on services thereby negatively impacting our competitiveness with neighboring states. Any comprehensive review of tax exemptions should include careful consideration of the economic development and employment consequences of eliminating such exemptions; and

GOVERNANCE: *The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.*

This bill is the basic Senate comprehensive tax plan after being negotiated by the conference committee. It would raise an estimated \$422.9 million in FY 2016 and \$365.3 million in FY 2017 and includes the following provisions:

- Authorizing a 6-week tax amnesty period in the fall of 2015 for penalties and interest on certain delinquent taxes payable on or before December 31, 2013;
- Taxing guaranteed payments for certain pass-through non-wage business income;
- Freezing scheduled income tax rate reductions at 4.6% and 2.6% beginning in 2018;
- Beginning in 2019, buy down income tax rates if growth in SGF receipts exceeds 3.0%, excluding Medicaid and KPERS;
- Modifying itemized deductions on individual income taxes – charitable at 100%, mortgage interest and property tax payments at 50%, and repealing all others;
- Repealing individual low income food sales tax rebate;
- Increasing sales tax rate to 6.55% effective July 1, 2015; reducing sales tax rate on food to 4.95% effective July 1, 2016;
- Repealing most sales tax exemptions effective December 31, 2019; establishing the joint tax committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits;
- Increase cigarette tax by \$0.50 per pack effective July 1, 2015; and
- Prohibiting cities and counties from adopting appropriations or budgets with revenues from certain increases in property taxes that exceed the CPI without the proposed increases being approved at a regularly scheduled election.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JUNE 10th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON H SUB FOR SB 270 – Vote #334 (06/12/15), passed: Taxation; relating to income tax, food sales tax credit; sales and compensating use tax, exemptions; joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits; property tax, elections by cities and counties. Signed into law, June 16, 2015

See House explanation

Chamber Legislative Important Priorities

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SB 154 – Vote #241 (04/30/15), passed: Amending unemployment insurance benefits determination; employer classification and contribution rates. Signed into law, May 18, 2015

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY TRUST FUND: *The Chamber supports an appropriate fund balance in the Employment Security Trust Fund to maintain its solvency, while balancing the cost to employers and reducing the unpredictability and volatility of employer contributions.* This bill replaces the existing arrayed unemployment insurance contribution system with a fixed system as currently used by a majority of the states. It also caps the maximum weekly unemployment benefit payable at the greater of \$474 or 55% of the average weekly wages paid to employees for the previous calendar year.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON H SUB FOR SB 91 – Vote #285 (05/14/15), passed: Renewable energy standards act and property tax exemptions for renewable energy resources. Signed into law, May 28, 2015

See House explanation

Chamber Legislative Standing Priorities

MOTION TO CONCUR IN HOUSE AMENDMENTS ON SB 45 – Vote #206 (03/25/15), passed: Authorizing the carrying of concealed handguns without a license under the personal and family protection act. Signed into law, April 4, 2015

STANDING PRIORITIES: *The Chamber supports the right for local units of government and businesses to regulate the carrying of firearms (open or concealed) on their premises.*

This bill adds language to existing law to allow the concealed carry of a firearm without a concealed carry license issued by the state, as long as that individual was not otherwise prohibited from possessing a firearm under either federal or state law. It also amends existing law to clarify that it is not legal for anyone under the age of 21 years of age to carry any firearm on such one’s person, except when on or in such person’s land, abode or fixed place of business.

HOUSE

Chamber Legislative Top Priorities

FINAL ACTION ON SB 34 – Vote #199 (05/21/15), passed: Prosecutorial Authority for election crimes; penalties for voting crimes (*Signed into law, June 6, 2015).

See Senate explanation

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON HB 2104 – Vote #203 (05/21/15), passed: Elections; relating to certain municipalities and special districts; relating to filling vacancies of nominees; relating to the presidential preference primary Signed into law, June 8, 2015

GOVERNANCE: The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve, including, but not limited to, determining the timing of local elections (i.e., spring or fall and even- or odd-numbered years).

This bill moves all elections for office holders of local governments (including, but not limited to, cities, consolidated city-county governments, school districts, community colleges, water districts, and the Kansas City BPU) currently held in the spring of odd-numbered years to the fall of odd-numbered years. The elections would remain non-partisan, although the local units could choose to make its elections partisan.

The bill also deletes the existing statutory language that allows a candidate to withdraw his or her candidacy after the primary election due to incapability of fulfilling the duties of office and replaces it with the ability to withdraw a nominee’s name for severe medical hardship to self or immediate family as certified by a doctor or because the nominee does not live in Kansas. It also makes changes to certain statutory provisions regarding the use of school district facilities as polling places, voter education and other language relating to elections.

Finally, it repeals the statute calling for a presidential preference primary election and replaces it with new law requiring each recognized political party to select a presidential nominee in accordance with the respective party procedures.

FINAL ACTION ON H SUB FOR SB 7 – Vote #92 (03/13/15), passed: Education; relating to the financing and instruction thereof.. . . . Signed into law, March 25, 2015

EDUCATION: The Chamber recognizes that high-quality public education, from pre-K through post-secondary, leads to a high-quality workforce. Educational excellence is one of the single most important reasons companies have selected Johnson County and Overland Park as their place of business, thus leading to the creation of jobs in our region and economic prosperity in Kansas. The Chamber supports fundamentally reforming the school finance formula by utilizing local authority to better relate to the actual cost of providing services, incentivizing operational efficiencies and expanding local flexibility over how education funds are raised and spent, and to maximize educational outcomes.

The Chamber supports policies, programs, and adequate funding that encourage the development of a world-class, robust P-20 public education system emphasizing a rigorous science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curriculum based on globally competitive standards that prepare students to be college and career-ready for the future and fosters a well-trained, productive, globally competitive workforce.

This is the House response to the Governor’s plan to fund public education for FY 2016 (school year 2015-16) and FY 2017 (school year 2016-17) through block grants and repeals the existing school finance formula (the School District Finance and Quality Performance Act). It appropriates \$2.751 billion from the State General Fund (SGF) as a block grant in FY 2016 and \$2.757 billion from the SGF in FY 2017. For FY 2015 (school year 2014-15), it also appropriates an additional \$27,346,783 in General State Aid, \$1,803,566 in Supplemental General State Aid (local option budget state aid), and up to \$2,202,500 for Capital Outlay State Aid.

The bill establishes the School District Extraordinary Need Fund in an amount of \$4,000,000 for FY 2015 and amounts not to exceed \$12,292,000 for FY 2016 and \$17,521,425 for FY 2017. School districts may apply to the State Finance Council for payments from this Fund to account for (i) any extraordinary increase in enrollment, (ii) any extraordinary decrease in the district’s assessed valuation, and/or (iii) any other unforeseen acts or circumstances substantially impacting the district’s general fund.

The provisions of the bill will expire on June 30, 2017.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JUNE 5th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON H SUB FOR SB 270 – Vote #224 (06/05/15), failed: Taxation; relating to income tax, food sales tax credit; sales and compensating use tax, exemptions; joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits; property tax, elections by cities and counties.

TAXATION: The Chamber supports a balanced and reasonable approach to tax reform that provides a positive business climate. The Chamber recognizes the value and necessity for adequate state funds to provide essential government services that our businesses and citizens rely upon such as transportation, education, public safety and quality of life offerings. The Chamber recommends that the Legislature reconsider its plan for the predetermined, scheduled elimination of the state income tax. The Chamber is of the belief that the existing tax plan may have a negative impact on the key quality of life offerings identified by both business leaders and residents as fundamental.

The Chamber opposes (i) tax policy changes and unfunded mandates that simply shift the tax burden to other areas of state government or to other levels of government, (ii) tax policies that redistribute locally raised sales tax revenues to the state or other local jurisdictions, and (iii) the use of “sweeps” to move funds from “dedicated funds” to the state general fund to be used for other than their intended purpose.

The Chamber opposes tax, revenue and/or spending lids on state and local government, including any constitutional amendments, public referendums or statutes that restrict legislative authority to make decisions regarding taxing or spending. The Chamber opposes any change in tax law that would apply a sales tax on services thereby negatively impacting our competitiveness with neighboring states. Any comprehensive review of tax exemptions should include careful consideration of the economic development and employment consequences of eliminating such exemptions; and

GOVERNANCE: The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

This bill is the basic House comprehensive tax plan after being negotiated by the conference committee. It would raise an estimated \$417.7 million in FY 2016 and \$406.9 million in FY 2017 and includes the following provisions:

- Authorizing a 6-week tax amnesty period in the fall of 2015 for penalties and interest on certain delinquent taxes payable on or before December 31, 2013;
- Beginning retroactively in 2015, imposing income tax on qualified pass-through business non-wage income at the lowest individual income tax rate in effect for the relevant tax period;
- Decelerating the scheduled individual income tax rate reductions and fixed those rates at 4.3% and 2.3% effective in 2020;
- Providing an additional income tax exclusion beginning in 2017 for individual taxpayers with taxable income of \$5,000 or less and married taxpayers filing jointly with incomes of \$12,500;
- Beginning retroactively for 2015, modifies the scheduled individual income tax itemized deductions by limiting the deductions for mortgage interest and property taxes paid to 50%, retaining the deduction for charitable contributions at 100%, and repealing all others;
- Increases sales tax rate to 6.45% effective July 1, 2015 and reduces sales tax rate on food to 5.70% effective January 1, 2016;
- Increases state's cigarette tax by \$.50 to \$1.29 per pack; and
- Makes several other miscellaneous tax-related modifications.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JUNE 10th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON H SUB FOR SB 270 – Vote #232 (06/11/15), passed: Taxation; relating to income tax, food sales tax credit; sales and compensating use tax, exemptions; joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits; property tax, elections by cities and counties. Signed into law, June 16, 2015

TAXATION: The Chamber supports a balanced and reasonable approach to tax reform that provides a positive business climate. The Chamber recognizes the value and necessity for adequate state funds to provide essential government services that our businesses and citizens rely upon such as transportation, education, public safety and quality of life offerings. The Chamber recommends that the Legislature reconsider its plan for the predetermined, scheduled elimination of the state income tax. The Chamber is of the belief that the existing tax plan may have a negative impact on the key quality of life offerings identified by both business leaders and residents as fundamental.

The Chamber opposes (i) tax policy changes and unfunded mandates that simply shift the tax burden to other areas of state government or to other levels of government, (ii) tax policies that redistribute locally raised sales tax revenues to the state or other local jurisdictions, and (iii) the use of “sweeps” to move funds from “dedicated funds” to the state general fund to be used for other than their intended purpose.

The Chamber opposes tax, revenue and/or spending lids on state and local government, including any constitutional amendments, public referendums or statutes that restrict legislative authority to make decisions regarding taxing or spending.

The Chamber opposes any change in tax law that would apply a sales tax on services thereby negatively impacting our competitiveness with neighboring states. Any comprehensive review of tax exemptions should include careful consideration of the economic development and employment consequences of eliminating such exemptions; and

GOVERNANCE: The cornerstone of municipal and county government and public education is the belief that governance should be as close to the people as possible. The Chamber strongly supports the preservation of local control whereby local officials, elected through non-partisan elections, are accountable for the funding, regulation and provision of services to meet the needs of the communities they serve.

This bill is the basic House comprehensive tax plan after being further negotiated by the conference committee. It was referred to as the “trailer bill” and would make a number of changes in yet-to-be-enacted law in anticipation of passage of the then-pending conference committee report on S Sub for HB 2109 and would become effective only if that bill were enacted. Those changes include:

- Providing the additional income tax exclusion beginning in 2017 for individual taxpayers with taxable income of \$5,000 or less and married taxpayers filing jointly with incomes of \$12,500;
- Modifying the future formulaic income tax rate relief contained in S Sub for HB 2109 based on the extent to which revenue from a specified group of State General Fund (SGF) tax sources increased over the previous fiscal year to allow for 2.5% growth rather than 3.0%;
- Setting the sales tax rate for all transactions at 6.50% effective July 1, 2015;
- Restoring the income tax credit allowed for certain individuals to offset the amount of sales tax paid on food that was repealed under S Sub for HB 2109;
- Retaining all sales tax exemptions proposed to be sunset under S Sub for HB 2109 and repealing the Joint Committee on Tax Exemptions and Income Tax Credits created by S Sub for HB 2109; and
- Relaxing the local property tax lid imposed by S Sub for HB 2109 by including adding a number of other purposes for which property taxes could be increased before triggering the mandatory election requirement, including costs associated with new infrastructure, certain property taxes levied for bonds and interest, certain road construction costs, special assessments, costs associated with federal or state mandates, and payment of judgments.

MOTION TO ADOPT THE JUNE 7th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON S SUB FOR HB 2109 – Vote #230 (06/10/15), failed: Taxation; relating to tax amnesty; sales and compensating use tax, rates, distribution thereof, food; income tax, subtraction modifications, credits, individual development accounts, low income scholarship program; motor vehicle taxation; taxation of cigarettes and electronic cigarettes; sales tax authority for Bourbon, Douglas and Thomas counties; property taxation, consolidated fire districts; rural opportunity zones; land banks,; creating the joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits.

See Senate explanation

MOTION TO RECONSIDER ADOPTION OF THE JUNE 7th CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON S SUB FOR HB 2109 – Vote #233 (06/11/15), passed: Taxation; relating to tax amnesty; sales and compensating use tax, rates, distribution thereof, food; income tax, subtraction modifications, credits, individual development accounts, low income scholarship program; motor vehicle taxation; taxation of cigarettes and electronic cigarettes; sales tax authority for Bourbon, Douglas and Thomas counties; property taxation, consolidated fire districts; rural opportunity zones; land banks,; creating the joint committee on tax exemptions and income tax credits Signed into law, June 16, 2015

See Senate explanation

Chamber Legislative Important Priorities

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON SB 154 – Vote #153 (04/02/15), passed: Amending unemployment insurance benefits determination; employer classification and contribution rates.. .Signed into law, May 18, 2015

See Senate explanation

MOTION TO ADOPT THE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORT ON H SUB FOR SB 91 – Vote #187 (05/14/15), passed: Renewable energy standards act and property tax exemptions for renewable energy resources. Signed into law, May 28, 2015

ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT: The Chamber encourages investments in energy reliability and efficiency and supports policies that provide balance between public health and environmental protections without unreasonable economic burdens on industry/business. To ensure clean energy availability to meet future demands, the Chamber:

- Supports development and voluntary use of alternative, domestic, and renewable energy resources that are considered economical and environmentally friendly, without shifting costs between customers. This includes support for policies that expand and develop energy infrastructure, including transmission systems to deliver energy to the Kansas City region and other high demand areas.*
- Supports energy and environmental regulations based on sound, measurable, and defensible scientific data in an economically pragmatic manner that will not create unnecessary implementation and regulatory compliance costs.*

This bill repeals the renewable energy portfolio mandated requirements and replaces them with a voluntary renewable energy goal that 20% of a utility’s peak demand within the state be generated from renewable energy resources by 2020.

The bill also grandfathers existing property tax exemptions for the life of property that is actually and regularly used to generate electricity using renewable resources or technologies if the facility filed an application for an exemption or received a conditional use permit on or before December 31, 2016. Exemptions granted for which applications filed after December 31, 2016 are limited to ten years.

Chamber Legislative Standing Priorities

FINAL ACTION ON SB 45 – Vote #137 (03/25/15), passed: Authorizing the carrying of concealed handguns without a license under the personal and family protection act. Signed into law, April 4, 2015

See Senate explanation

Lifetime Voting Records

SENATE	First Term	2015	Lifetime
Molly Baumgardner	2014	70%	62%
Jim Denning	2013*	50%	55% ¹
Julia Lynn	2006	30%	54%
Jeff Melcher	2013	40%	41%
Rob Olson	2011*	44%	60% ²
Pat Pettey	2013	80%	71%
Mary Pilcher Cook	2008*	40%	46% ³
Greg Smith	2013	40%	45% ⁴
Kay Wolf	2013*	100%	92% ⁵

* Elected to the Senate after serving in the House

¹ Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2011-2012)

² Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2004-2011)

³ Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2004-2006)

⁴ Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2011-2012)

⁵ Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2006-2012)

HOUSE	First Term	2015	Lifetime
Barbara Bollier	2010	78%	83%
Rob Bruchman	2011	50%	65%
Larry Campbell	2013	63%	61%
Stephanie Clayton	2013	70%	83%
Erin Davis	2014	50%	60%
Willie Dove	2013	40%	55%
Keith Esau	2013	40%	48%
Linda Gallagher	2015	80%	80%
Amanda Grosserode	2011	43%	57%
Brett Hildabrand	2011	43%	48%
Mike Kiegerl	2014†	57%	63% ¹
Marvin Kleeb	2008	44%	67%
Jerry Lunn	2013	30%	55%
Nancy Lusk	2013	70%	71%
Charles Macheers	2013	40%	57%
Craig McPherson	2013	40%	45%
Ray Merrick	2011*	40%	65% ²
Jarrold Ousley	2015	70%	70%
Randy Powell	2015	40%	40%
Melissa Rooker	2013	70%	88%
John Rubin	2011	40%	82%
Ron Ryckman, Jr.	2013	30%	52%
Scott Schwab	2008†	22%	61% ³
Bill Sutton	2013	40%	51%
James Todd	2013	40%	57%

*Elected to the House after serving in the Senate.

†Second time serving in the House.

¹ Lifetime record includes previous sessions served in the House (2004-2012)

² Lifetime record includes sessions served in the House (2000-2010, 2013) and in the Senate (2011-2012)

³ Lifetime record includes previous sessions served in the House (2003-2006)



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**To view the Overland Park
 Chamber of Commerce's
 2015 State Legislative Priorities,
[click here.](#)**