



Legislative UPDATE

News & Information for the 29th District

January 24, 2019

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2019 SESSION CONVENES

The 2019 Legislative Session is officially underway!

This year I was elected as the Assistant Minority Leader. I am serving on the Corrections & Juvenile Justice Oversight, Local Government, Ethics & Elections, Administrative Rules & Regulations, Federal and State Affairs, State Board of EMS, State USE Board and the Joint Committee on Economic Development.

Legislators ceremoniously convened Monday afternoon after observing the swearing in of our new governor, Governor Laura Kelly and Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers. After celebrating at the Inaugural Ball Monday night, legislators awaited the annual State of the State message on Wednesday and Gov. Kelly's budget proposal on Thursday.

In the meantime, committees began meeting. Many heard informational briefings on topics related to issues the Legislature faces this session while others began reviewing proposed legislation. Similar work in committees will continue in the coming weeks.

Daily calendars, committee and district information, and full text and summaries of bills are all available online at www.kslegislature.org. To hear legislative proceedings, just click on "Listen in Live" on the homepage.

I am honored to serve as your Senator. My office is located in Room 135E. Please feel free to visit or to contact me at 785-296-7387 or at oletha29th@aol.com, if you should have any questions or concerns.



I would like you to meet my new administrative assistant, Trudy Kelly. She was a paralegal in the Topeka area for 30 years and retired four years ago. She and her husband, Kirk, have two children and 3 grandchildren. They enjoy attending their grandchildren's sporting events, playing darts, going to auctions and are fans of the KU Jayhawks, Kansas City Royals and Kansas City Chiefs.

CHANGES IN THE SENATE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

With the election of Governor Laura Kelly and Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers, both former Democratic Senators, the Senate Democratic caucus had vacancies to fill. Precinct committee-people appointed Senator Mary Ware, of Wichita, to replace Senator Lynn Rogers in Senate District 25; and Senator Vic Miller, of Topeka, to replace Senator Laura Kelly in Senate District 18.

The caucus held an election in December to fill the Assistant Democratic Leader position vacated by now-Governor Kelly. They elected Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau of Wichita (Senate District 29), who had previously served as Minority Whip. Senator Faust-Goudeau is the first African American woman to serve as Assistant Democratic Leader in Kansas history. Senator Pat Pettey of Kansas City (Senate District 6) was then elected as Minority Whip.

Senator Anthony Hensley of Topeka (Senate District 19) remains the Senate Democratic Leader. Senator Tom Hawk of Manhattan (Senate District 22) remains the Caucus Chair and Senator Marci Francisco of Lawrence (Senate District 2) remains the Agenda Chair.

Additionally, the caucus welcomes two new members. Senator Barbara Bollier of Mission Hills (Senate District 7) and Senator Dinah Sykes of Lenexa (Senate District 21) changed parties, becoming Democrats shortly after the November election.

Be sure to follow the Senate Democratic Caucus on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).



The 2019 Senate Democratic Caucus.

Front Row: Sen. Marci Francisco, District 2 (Agenda Chair); Sen. Oletha Faust-Goudeau, District 29 (Assistant Senate Democratic Leader); Sen. Anthony Hensley, District 19 (Senate Democratic Leader); Sen. Pat Pettey, District 6 (Minority Whip); and Sen. Tom Hawk, District 22 (Caucus Chair)

Back Row: Sen. David Haley, District 4; Sen. Mary Ware, District 25; Sen. Barbara Bollier, District 7; Sen. Tom Holland, District 3; Sen. Dinah Sykes, District 21; Sen. Vic Miller, District 18.

GOVERNOR DELIVERS INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Governor Laura Kelly and Lieutenant Governor Lynn Rogers were sworn in Monday morning on the south steps of the Capitol in front of three banners that read: Equality, Education, Opportunity.



Kelly is the 48th Governor to lead the state of Kansas. Shortly after being sworn in, she delivered an Inaugural Address ([click here for the full transcript](#)) inspiring hope for the future of our state now that the eight years of the Brownback era is finally over, and the state is starting a new chapter. The speech included a theme of unity and civility, setting the tone for her first year.



“Public service began to give way to partisanship. And the voices of Kansas families were not heard. Kansas lost its sense of self. Its sense of community,” said Kelly. “We can’t let that happen again. We must be bigger than that. We must be guided by the values we share.”

“We must work together in the spirit of putting the collective good ahead of any individual ambition or agenda. We must seek to lift up all Kansans regardless of whether they look like us, think like us, worship like us, love like us or vote like us.”

GOVERNOR DELIVERS STATE OF THE STATE

Governor Laura Kelly delivered her first State of the State message ([click here for the transcript](#)) Wednesday before a joint session of Senate and House members, cabinet secretaries, and Supreme Court Justices.

In her speech, Governor Kelly urged caution and restraint with the budget noting that while the state is recovering from the destructive economic policies of Governor Brownback, it is still very fragile. Kansas has been through a lot in the last eight years. The dust needs to settle before we make any additional changes to the tax code and we must ensure budget stability.

Governor Kelly also outlined her priorities for her first year. They include:

- School Finance – ending the cycle of litigation and meeting the needs of our students and teachers once and for all. The days of doing the bare minimum to fund our schools are over.
- Rural Communities – investing in rural communities is critical to Kansas. This means developing infrastructure, like roads and broadband, and addressing the shortage of affordable housing. It also means supporting agribusiness.
- Healthcare – expanding Medicaid to help keep important healthcare facilities open and provide affordable health care to 150,000 more Kansans, no matter where they live.

- Foster Care – addressing the crisis of our foster care system by hiring qualified social workers and reducing caseloads to provide the services needed by our most vulnerable children and families.

The State of the State address also echoed the theme of bipartisanship from her inaugural address. We must work together, regardless of party, to address these critical issues. Our crowning achievements have always been won on middle ground.

I am eager to get to work for the benefit of all Kansans.

SENATE BILL 43 – SAME DAY VOTER REGISTRATION

Myself along with Senators Pettey, Bollier, Doll, Francisco, Haley, Hawk, Hensley, Holland, Miller, Skubal, Sykes and Ware introduced Senate Bill 43 regarding same day voter registration, an act concerning elections, relating to voter registration and allowing voter registration on election days.

REPUBLICANS RESPOND

This year, Senate President Susan Wagle delivered a response to the State of the State address ([click here for a full transcript](#)). The response echoes similar themes from the Brownback era calling for limited government and irresponsible changes to tax law to mirror those of the President's.

“We believe Kansans should be able to deduct interest on their mortgages, property taxes, and health care expenses,” said Wagle. Yet, in 2012, she supported Gov. Brownback's tax experiment that relied on cuts to these very deductions. In fact, she voted multiple times to reduce or eliminate these important deductions. And, in 2017 she voted to maintain the reckless policies, despite the ongoing budget crisis and the continued growing burden on average, hardworking Kansans.

Senate President Wagle is also critical of Governor Kelly's proposals to expand Medicaid and fully fund schools. Yet, 77% of Kansans agree with expanding Medicaid and, arguably, just as many supports fully funding Kansas schools.

GOVERNOR ROLLS OUT BUDGET PROPOSAL

Governor Kelly released her budget proposal on Thursday. The proposal takes into consideration that recovery from the Brownback experiment is underway, but it is very fragile. There is no margin for error. After fighting so hard to stabilize our fiscal health in 2017, we must resist temptation to jump back into a hole. The proposal also makes it clear that Governor Kelly wants to work with the Legislature to find compromise and pass a balanced budget that will benefit all Kansans.

Governor Kelly's budget includes an ending balance that is higher than any ending balance offered in two decades. The budget is structurally balanced. It rebuilds state savings, and it reduces state debt, which ultimately saves the state money. Specifically, the budget includes:

- Restoring school funding by adopting the Kansas State Board of Education's recommendation to restore investment in Kansas classrooms by \$92 million, meeting state obligations to Kansas children and ending the cycle of litigation;
- Investing in the foster care system with funding for 55 additional child welfare positions;
- Providing \$7.4 million for the Family First Prevention Services Act, landmark federal legislation enacted last year that will draw down additional federal funds for services that prevent children from entering the foster care system;
- Adding \$14 million to expand critical health coverage to 150,000 low-income Kansans;
- Phasing out the practice of raiding the "Bank of KDOT" by reducing transfers by \$100 million;
- Adding \$3 million in funding for Kansas corrections officers; and,
- Increasing state employee base pay by 2.5%.

Democrats are ready to get to work to find a middle ground! I'll do my best to keep you up-to-date in the coming weeks as legislators begin to work through specific budget issues. In the meantime, to access the *Governor's Budget Report* in full, visit the Kansas Division of Budget's website at <http://budget.ks.gov>.

It's an honor to serve you.

Sincerely,

Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau

IMPORTANT STATE PHONE NUMBERS

Here is a list of numbers I often receive requests for during the Legislative Session. I hope you will find this information helpful.

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Attorney General (888) 428-8436 | (800) 572-7463 | Fraud Hotline (800) 432-3919 |
| Child Abuse Hotline (800) 922-5330 | Crime Victim Referral (800) 828-9745 | KPERS (888) 275-5737 |
| Consumer Protection (800) 432-2310 | Department on Aging (800) 432-3535 | Governor's Office (877) 579-6757 |
| Crime Tip Hotline | Driver's License Bureau (785) 296-3963 | |

Highway Conditions
(800) 585-7623

Housing Hotline
(800) 752-4422

KanCare Consumer
Assistance
(866) 305-5147

Kansas Jobs
(785) 235-5627
Kansas Lottery
(785) 296-5700

Kansas State Library

(800) 432-3924

Legislative Hotline
(800) 432-3924

School Safety Hotline
(877) 626-8203
Social Security
(800) 772-1213

DCF
(785) 296-1491

Suicide Prevention
Hotline
(800) 273-8255

Tax Refund Status Info
(800) 894-0318

Taxpayer Assistance
(785) 368-8222

Unclaimed Property
(800) 432-0386

Vital Statistics
(Birth Certificates)
(785) 296-1400

Victims of Human
Trafficking
(888) 373-7888