

“ THE PECK PERSPECTIVE ”

(From the Capitol)

April 24, 2023

Governor Kelly used her veto pen a lot last week, vetoing eight bills and using her line-item veto authority on the budget bill, HB 2184, 28 times. Vetoed legislation is subject to a motion (by any member) to be overridden and several of the eight bills, plus a couple of the line-item vetoes, could possibly still become law. For a veto override to be successful, it takes a two-thirds majority vote in both chambers. That's 27 votes in the Senate and 84 in the House. Here's a list of the vetoed bills.

SB 26 – The Kansas Child Mutilation Prevention Act, bans “gender reassignment” surgery for children aged 17 and younger by requiring the State Board of Healing Arts to revoke the license of a physician performing such surgery on a minor. It also creates a civil cause of action against a physician who performs such gender reassignment surgery. SB 26 passed 23-12 in the Senate and 70-52 in the House. I strongly support SB 26, but the reality of a veto override is slim.

SB 180 – Would establish a Women's Bill of Rights and provide a definition of biological sex in Kansas statutes. Additionally, the legislation contains a provision to protect women from having men intrude into spaces designated for biological females, such as fitting rooms, restrooms, locker rooms, etc. SB 180 passed by wide majorities, 28-12 and 83-41, so a veto override is very possible.

SB 209 – Would move the deadline for advance voting ballots to be in the county elections office to 7:00 on election day, rather than the Friday following election day. The change would apply to advance voting ballots received by mail, a satellite election office, any polling place, or a county-maintained drop box. SB 209 passed by a slim margin in the Senate, 23-14, so a veto override probably won't happen.

SB 228 – A bill with several updates to County Jail Statutes. However, one provision was apparently objectionable to Governor Kelly. She continues to dislike special protections for biological females – like the requirement in SB 228 to house men and women inmates in separate locations.

A July 19, 2022, *NBC News* story shows how out of touch the Governor is on this issue. The first sentence in the story reads: “A transgender inmate has been transferred out of the only women's prison in New Jersey after impregnating two female inmates.” The story reports that the inmate, who goes by Demi Minor, was first transferred to the women's facility after New Jersey reached a settlement in a lawsuit with the ACLU over housing of “transgender” inmates.

After “her” transfer back to the men’s prison, Minor wrote in a blog: *“As a woman who is transgender, I truly fear what lies ahead for me. It’s clear that staff have looked for some kind of security reason to kick me out of the only female correctional facility. They have thrown me to the wolfs and expected for me to just give up. I am baffled and disgusted by this use of power, and I can only ask that the Commissioner and Governor’s Office please send me back. I don’t deserve to be treated like this.”*

You just can’t make stories like that up. The dude, who says he’s a woman, actually wrote those words. Clearly, he wants to go back to the women’s facility and continue to have sexual relations with women.

SB 228 passed with veto-proof majorities in both chambers, 33-3 and 86-37, so an override is very likely.

HB 2138 – Passed the Senate 28-10 and the House 84-39 and says, *“The board of education of each school district shall adopt a policy requiring that separate overnight accommodations be provided for students of each biological sex during school district sponsored travel that requires overnight stays by students.”* Any normal-thinking person knows that not allowing boys and girls to sleep in the same room (or bed) on school trips is a no-brainer. However, forcing girls to stay with a boy (who says he’s a girl) has happened in Kansas, so legislation had to be passed.

HB 2264 – Passed with strong majorities, 26-11 and 80-38, but shy of having enough for a veto override. HB 2264 amends the Woman’s-Right-to-Know Act to add a requirement that a notification be posted in abortion clinics informing women about reversal of abortion options with certain medications. The bill also provides clarity as to what medical procedures and methods of contraception are not considered an abortion. This is a bill I certainly hope we can override.

HB 2304 – Legislation urging local school boards to implement gun safety courses in schools. HB 2304 passed 31-8 in the Senate and 78-43 in the House. We’ll know this week if a motion for a veto override is made in the House.

HB 2344 – Is a 20-page bill designed to help families with childcare needs by providing options for more spaces at daycares. HB 2344 would establish and update law regulating childcare centers or homes by changing definitions in license capacity, staff-to-child ratios, and staffing requirements – including professional development training. HB 2344 narrowly passed the Senate, 21-17, so a motion for a veto override is not likely to be made.

Until next time, may the blessings of God be yours.

Virgil Peck
State Senator