

“ THE PECK PERSPECTIVE ”

(From the Capitol)

February 12, 2024

Some things in life just aren't equal. After the Chiefs' won Super Bowl LVII in 2023, I sent a text to my sons (each had an 18-year-old son) stating that I had to live 60 years to see the Chiefs win two Super Bowls (1970 & 2020), but their sons only had to live 18 years to experience the same thrill (2020 & 2023). The two grandsons living in Kosovo enjoyed two Chiefs Super Bowl wins at even younger ages, 11 and 9 – but I couldn't send their mother a text like I could the boys in the United States. And now, with another Chiefs' Championship in Super Bowl LVIII (on Sunday the 11th), my youngest grandson, who is two, has been alive for two Chiefs' Championships – he likely won't remember either.

I use the Chiefs' Super Bowl wins to remind us that, although each person is created special, life deals each of us different challenges and opportunities. Some have a larger income than others, some grasp mechanical details better, some are better at math, science or English, some are taller, some are stronger, the list goes on and on. It's important for all of us to remember that when God created us, He gave differing talents and abilities to each. Therefore, although we should strive to be the best we can be, it is not beneficial to constantly compare ourselves to, or be jealous of, others with more money, talent, physical abilities, etc.

New Distinctive License Plate (SB 359): Staying with the topic of the Kansas City Chiefs. Last month I joined 18 other Senators in sponsoring SB 359 – creating the Kansas City Chiefs distinctive license plate. The bill allows Kansas residents who own a passenger vehicle or truck with a gross weight of 20,000 pounds or less, or motorcycle, to pay a fee and be issued a Kansas City Chiefs distinctive license plate for each vehicle. To receive the special plate a vehicle owner must pay a \$40 application fee and, if they want it personalized, pay the \$40 personalized plate application fee. In addition to the above fee(s), a vehicle owner must pay a fee set by the Kansas City Chiefs Football Club, Inc. of not less than \$25 or more than \$100 as a logo use royalty payment for each license plate. The logo use royalty payment will be collected by the County at the time the plate is applied for. Due to the logistics of issuing such plates, they would first be available in January 2025.

Standing With Texas and Protecting Kansas (SR 1737): Immigration is an issue that impacts every citizen in every city in every state, especially those states along the I-35 corridor, which runs north and south through Kansas. A porous and lawless border is dangerous for every American, no matter where they live. That's why I joined 23 other Senators in introducing SR 1737 affirming Texas Governor Greg Abbott's right to defend the state of Texas from unrestrained illegal immigration.

Although some will say we should stay out of the squabble between the Biden Administration's open borders policy and Texas' fight to defend against the deluge of illegal aliens pouring into their state, this is not an issue Kansas should remain silent on. As SR 1737 rightfully points out, there are mounting concerns for the safety of Kansas citizens not only from illegal aliens' open disregard for the rule of law, but also the rapidly growing fentanyl crisis. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation has provided statistics showing there has been a 3,000% increase in positive fentanyl tests.

The issue of states' right is another reason Kansas must join with the 25 governors from across the country in support of Texas and Governor Abbott in asserting that, as a state governor, he has a right to defend his state and its citizens against the unrestrained illegal immigration policies of President Biden.

SR 1737 starts with the words, "*WHEREAS, The state of Kansas continues to embrace the benefits of legal immigration and applauds the achievements and contributions of those who have become citizens through legal means.*", making it clear that we understand the benefits legal immigrants bring and invite them here. I expect SR 1737 will be debated and voted on this week by the Senate.

Update on Tax Cut Veto Override: Last week I reported that I expected the House to take a vote on overriding Governor Kelly's veto of the "tax cut for everyone" bill, HB 2284. Due to the sickness of some members, the vote was not taken. If the ill members can return, and others aren't absent, it is expected that the House will take a vote soon.

The House has 30 days from the date the vetoed bill was returned to them from the Governor to take a vote. The return date was January 26th, so the House has until February 25th to take the vote. It is widely believed that the House has sufficient votes (a minimum of 84) for the override. If they are successful, the Senate will then have 30 days from the date we receive notice of the veto override to take a vote. We're currently working with senators who have indicated that they're on the fence to understand the benefits to all Kansans of HB 2284 becoming law.

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

Virgil Peck
State Senator