

THE PECK PERSPECTIVE

(From the Capitol)

January 26, 2026

The second week of the 2026 session is now in the books with progress having been made toward moving Kansas forward for the good of taxpayers. The Senate Tax Committee put its stamp of approval on SCR 1616—the proposed constitutional amendment aimed at addressing property taxes by placing a cap on assessed valuations (written about last week), and the House passed SCR 1604—making Kansas the 20th state to call for a Convention of States.

Watch the Legislature in Action: Interested parties can watch the Senate, House and legislative committees live or after the fact by going to: kslegislature.gov. This is especially helpful if you're curious about votes and what was or was not said during a committee hearing or floor debate. On the website, you can also find agendas for every committee and what bills will be debated on, or have passed, each chamber.

Property Tax Relief Program: Between now and April 15th senior citizens and disabled military veterans (50% or more) can apply for help with their property taxes. In 2025, the legislature passed legislation expanding who can qualify by now using the Kansas Adjusted Gross Income (KAGI), which excludes social security from the income formula. For 2025 the KAGI must be \$58,041 or less.

The *Property Tax Relief* claim form (K-40SVR) allows a refund of taxes paid by seniors, disabled veterans and the surviving spouse of a disabled veteran or a person at least 65 years of age. The refund will be the difference between a person's base year and the homestead property tax for the current year. Learn more at: <https://www.ksrevenue.gov/faqs-SVR.html>

Confirming Appointments: The Kansas Senate has the responsibility of confirming nominees by various state officers—most often the governor. Last week, the Senate cleared a total of 21 nominees for various boards and commissions. All were confirmed unanimously, 40-0. Among them were the Brigadier General of the Kansas National Guard, three to the Board of Regents, two to the KPERs Board of Trustees, two to the Racing and Gaming Commission, two to the Public Employees Relations Board, and one each to the Human Rights Commission and State Banking Board.

Joining the Call for a Convention of States: After several attempts over the past few years, on Thursday, January 22nd, Kansas became the 20th state to approve a resolution (SCR 1604) calling for a Convention of States (COS)

under Article V of the United States Constitution when the House passed the resolution by a vote of 80-42. The Senate passed SCR 1604 in 2025 by a vote of 29-11.

Under Article V of the U.S. Constitution, there are two methods of adopting an amendment to the constitution — Congress can by a 2/3 majority followed by ratification by 3/4 of the 50 state legislatures; or a convention of states, which is called when at least 34 state legislatures adopt a similar resolution. Any amendments proposed from a COS would also need to be ratified by at least 38 states (3/4) to become part of the U.S. Constitution. The current COS effort limits a convention to proposing amendments that impose fiscal restraints on the federal government (balanced budget) and term limits for members of Congress.

Special note: Several times in the past a COS had achieved a majority in one or both chambers but was declared failed due to a provision in the Kansas Constitution that required a 2/3 majority for Article V resolutions to be adopted. In 2025, a federal district court ruled that state Constitutional provision runs afoul of the U.S. Constitution, clearing the way for the House to pass SCR 1604 with a simple majority.

I know there are passionate conservatives on both sides of this issue, with those opposed concerned that the convention could get out of hand. However, following discussions with legal experts on the issue, I'm confident appropriate safeguards are in place and a convention with guardrails could help address some of the major problems with our federal government.

With 14 more states still needed to join the call for a COS, there is a long way to go in the process, but Kansas is doing its part to move this effort forward.

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

Virgil Peck
State Senator