

# THE PECK PERSPECTIVE

(From the Capitol)

March 17, 2025

As I write this, a total of five bills have passed both the Senate and the House and have made their way to the governor's desk. The first, SB 63, was vetoed, but saw a veto override and is now law. SB 63, written about many times in many places, simply protects minors in Kansas from the false narrative that they can change their gender.

Three of the other four bills, SB 7, SB 8 and HB 2261, drew little-to-no opposition in either chamber, so they'll likely receive the governor's signature.

**SB 7** allows for an increase to the bonding cap on bonds issued by townships, with a population greater than 5,000, for repairs and equipment of township buildings.

**SB 8** requires drivers when approaching a stopped vehicle using its hazard warning lights, road flares, or caution signals, to proceed with caution and change lanes away from the stopped vehicle if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe to change lanes, the driver must slow down and proceed with caution.

**HB 2261** adds majors of the Kansas Highway Patrol as being in unclassified service under the Kansas Civil Service Act.

**SB 4** is the other bill (I've previously written about) and will end the 3-day grace period after election day for ballots to be received by county election officials. SB 4 was given to the Governor on March 14<sup>th</sup>, so we'll know in less than 10 days if she'll sign or veto the bill.

Over the next couple of weeks, many more bills will pass as conference committees meet and both chambers prepare for first adjournment – currently scheduled for March 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Supporting Pregnant Women (HB 2062):** On Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, the Kansas Senate took a bold step to ensure that pregnant women receive child support during their pregnancy. HB 2062 amends the law regarding child support guidelines established by the Kansas Supreme Court to require consideration of the direct medical and pregnancy-related expenses of the mother.

According to Kansas Vital Statistics, 12,000 unmarried women in Kansas gave birth in 2024 – which is out of order, as marriage is supposed to proceed a

pregnancy – but that’s another topic. Many of these women are part of child support proceedings and HB 2062 simply tells the courts to consider the cost of baby still in the womb as part of those proceedings.

Expenses for children begin early in a pregnancy, like doctor visits, that a women might need to undertake prior to the birth of the child. The fact is that pregnant women have health care expenses that women who are not pregnant do not. Common sense recognizes that fathers are still fathers even when a child is not born yet and that the father of these children needs to man-up and shares these expenses.

During floor debate on the bill, an amendment was offered by a democrat, and adopted, that I wish I had thought of. The amendment requires the Kansas Department of Revenue to issue a taxpayer identification number for unborn children, thereby allowing parents to claim the child as a dependent for income tax purposes. The exemption is the same (\$2,320) as any other dependent and starts with tax year 2025.

HB 2062 passed the Senate by a vote of 30–9. I voted yes. Although HB 2062 had previously passed the House, by an 85–34 vote, since it was amended, it will likely go to a conference committee – which means two more votes before it can become law.

**Preserving Waterfowl Hunting for Kansans (SB 213):** Over the past several years, Kansas has seen a huge uptick in the number of non-residents hunting, and harvesting, migratory waterfowl (ducks and geese) on public land. SB 213 prohibits non-residents from hunting migratory waterfowl during certain times and places and changes the fees for migratory waterfowl habitat stamps to \$20 for residents and \$100 for non-residents.

Non-resident hunters would be limited to hunting on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday if they’re hunting on lands or waters that are under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of Wildlife and Parks or federal lands and waters owned by the United States and administered by the Secretary of the Army, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, etc. Private property and property designated as walk-in hunting access areas are excluded from the limited hunting days. SB 213 passed 38–1 and is now headed to the House.

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

Virgil Peck  
State Senator