

THE PECK PERSPECTIVE

(From the Capitol)

April 14, 2025

To borrow a phrase from the filmmaking industry, "That's a wrap".

Last week's veto session concluded in two days, allowing the 2025 legislative session to adjourn Sine Die – Latin for "without a future date being designated" – on Friday, April 11th, much earlier than the normal date, which is generally in early May.

During those two days, the Legislature voted on and successfully overrode 14 of the governor's 18 vetoes. Those 14 bills will now become law "notwithstanding the Governor's veto". Three of the other vetoed bills saw no action, while one, SB 79 – seeking a waiver from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture to exclude candy and soft drinks from the list of foods allowed to be purchased with food stamps – received plenty of votes in the Senate (29–11) but was ignored by the House. Another vetoed bill, SB 18 – authorizing issuance of the Hunter Nation distinctive license plate – was put into HB 2335, with a minor change, and passed both chambers.

In last week's article I wrote about several of the vetoed, now overridden, bills. Below is brief information regarding five more overridden bills.

SB 269 — As income and privilege tax revenue grows, the state income tax rate will gradually be reduced until it settles at 4%. States with low income tax rates have seen it benefit them by helping to bring individuals and job creators into their borders. Kansas will now be much more competitive.

HB 2062 — Will ensure that pregnant women receive child support during their pregnancy. The bill tells the courts to consider the cost of the baby in the womb (like health care expenses) as part of child support proceedings. Another provision benefits parents by requiring the Kansas Dept. of Revenue to issue a taxpayer identification number for unborn children, allowing parents to claim the child as a dependent for income tax purposes.

HB 2240 — Prohibits state agencies from seeking a public assistance program waiver from the federal government that would expand eligibility for any public assistance program or increase any cost to the State without the express consent of the Legislature.

HB 2311 — Protects the rights of foster and adoptive parents by prohibiting the Secretary for Children and Families from requiring the parents to affirm, accept, or support any government policy regarding sexual orientation or gender identity that conflicts with the person's sincerely held beliefs.

HB 2382 — Requires school districts that offer courses or instruction in human growth, development or sexuality to include a human fetal development presentation. The bill would also allow the State Board of Education to establish the rates of compensation they receive for meetings.

Then there were bills that the governor did not veto, but refused to sign, letting them become law without her signature. In addition to the five I wrote about last week, here are three more.

SB 250 — Creates the Right to Try for Individualized Treatments Act. The bill authorizes a manufacturer operating in an eligible facility to make available individualized investigative treatments and allow individuals with life-threatening or severely debilitating illnesses to request an individualized investigational drug, product, or device from such manufacturers.

HB 2263 — A bill passed by both chambers unanimously giving a special designation to several highways and a bridge. They are: designating a future interchange on K-10 at Lawrence as the Kris Norton Memorial Interchange; designating a part of U.S. Hwy 77 in Geary & Clay counties and a bridge in Clay County in honor of POWs and MIAs; naming a portion of US-160 in Sumner County as the CPL Monte Wayne Forrest Memorial Highway; and designating portion of K-5 as the Rep. Marvin S. Robinson Memorial Highway – the reason for her refusal to sign the bill. Many remember Representative Robinson as a courageous man who was willing to take political heat and do what he deemed best, including voting to override Governor Kelly’s vetoes.

HB 2056 — Amends provisions of the Kansas election laws concerning the crime of impersonation of an election official, nominations by political parties, and testing of voting equipment before an election.

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

Virgil Peck
State Senator