

FROM THE CAPITOL

News for the 96th District

By Representative Phil Hermanson

March 23, 2010 Volume 1, Number 3

Here is the latest of what is happening at the Capitol.



Coming Soon: Budget Debate

The Appropriations Committee has been working for weeks to craft a responsible policy that curbs government spending and restores the balance between the private and public sector while maintaining critical services. The budget plan offers a combination of new budget policies with a positive fiscal note to the state combined with cost saving measures within the largest parts of our budget. The plan reduces spending, promotes job growth, protects education and core services for the disabled and public safety and avoids the Governor's proposed record-breaking statewide tax increase. Through good policy, further efficiencies, and better money management, the Appropriations Committee has identified more than enough in savings and recovered revenue to span the gap without damaging our economy with statewide tax increases. The House is expected to debate the budget next week.

K-2 Ban signed into Law

This week Governor Parkinson signed HB 2411, making synthetic marijuana illegal. K-2 is an herbal substance that has a chemical additive that mimics the affects of marijuana on the brain. We heard testimony in committee and debate on the House floor that this substance is beginning to show up in schools with increasing frequency. While other states are considering the ban, Kansas is the first in the nation to pass such a bill.

47th Street Bridge Update

I understand the hassle the construction is causing. KDOT is reporting that demolition of the south side of the bridge over I-135 is expected to begin in April. Once this project is finished, hundreds of jobs will be available and we will have pulled more than 300 homes out of the flood plain. For more information on this visit (<https://www.ksdot.org/WichitaMetro/default.asp>)

Energy Efficiency Programs

The Kansas Corporation Commission sent me more details regarding New Energy Efficiency Programs for Local Governments. I would be very interested in hearing how you feel about these programs and the initiatives mentioned in this and the last newsletter.

As part of its statewide strategy to promote energy-efficiency retrofits in public buildings, the State Energy Office has established two new grant programs to assist cities and counties—the Public Projects Grant Program and the Energy Manager Grant Program. The programs are funded with \$5.7 million in federal funds received from the Department of Energy as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The **Public Projects Grants** are designed to supplement the existing Facility Conservation Improvement Program (FCIP) by focusing on energy efficiency projects in public buildings that are either too small for FCIP or include specific improvements that exceed FCIP's 30-year statutory payback period. Examples of improvements funded through these grants include lighting, heating and cooling equipment, energy management controls, and insulation or other envelope measures. The application deadline for this program is July 15, 2010. For eligibility requirements and additional information, see the State Energy Office web site (<http://www.kcc.state.ks.us/energy/arra/publicproj.htm>) or contact Peter Armesto (785-271-3241; p.armesto@kcc.ks.gov).

The **Energy Manager Grants** provide coalitions of local governments (cities, counties, school districts) with an annual stipend of \$50,000 for up to two years to hire an energy manager. Energy managers will develop both short- and long-term plans for each of the coalition members, with the goal of reducing energy usage in both the public and private section. The application deadline for this grant is April 15, 2010. For eligibility requirements and additional information, see the State Energy Office web site (www.kcc.ks.gov/energy/arra/energymgr.htm), or contact Stuart Yoho (785-271-3352; s.yoho@kcc.ks.gov).

Please visit the State Energy Office website (<http://www.kcc.state.ks.us/energy/index.htm>) for more information about these new grant programs and all the programs administered by the State Energy Office.

Health Coverage and Assistance

- If you need information on affordable health coverage dial 211 or visit www.sedgwickcounty.org
- To see if your children are eligible for public health coverage (Medicaid-Healthwave) Call 1-800-792-4884.

Prescription Cost

- Sedgwick County Prescription Discount Card is FREE. Call (316)660-7673
- Partnership for Prescription Assistance. Call 1-888-4PPA-NOW
- \$4 Prescriptions: Try Dillon's, K-Mart, Target, and Wal-Mart for these.
- Medical Services Bureau (MSB) has three prescription programs, the Voucher Program, Prescription Drug Program, and the Non-Profit Pharmacy. Individuals can qualify for one or all three depending on the poverty level assessment. Eligibility is determined by visiting a (MSB) representative. They are located at: 1148 S. Hillside Suite 105 or call (316)683-7559.

My committee assignments:

Commerce and Labor

Health & Human Services

Financial Institutions

Insurance

Contact Me

It is a great honor to be your State Representative, and I thank you for that privilege. Please contact me with your questions and concerns:

At Home:	5338 S. Mosley Wichita, Kansas 67216 316-516-2324 (cell)	In Topeka:	State Capitol Building 300 SW 10 th Street Topeka, KS 66612 785-296-7696
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Toll-free Hotline: 1-800-432-3924

(If you would like me to attend a meeting, function, or event do not hesitate to contact me.)

Having problems with your unemployment benefits? E-mail me for help.

Email addresses still wanted

If you received this communication I obviously already have your email address. However I would like to expand my email mailing list. Please feel free to forward this newsletter to others, or send their email addresses directly to me. (Please include your home address.)

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phil.hermanson@house.ks.gov

NOTICE: This electronic newsletter is intended as a service to constituents and supporters. If you wish to be removed from the mailing list, please contact me at either email address listed above.
