



March 15, 2024

Legislative Report No. 12 2024 Kentucky General Assembly

Today marked the fifty-second legislative day of the 2024 Session of the Kentucky General Assembly. There has been 601 senate and 977 house bills and resolutions introduced in the first fifty-two legislative days.

Some Bills of Interest:

On Thursday, the Senate passed their version of the state budget ([HB 6](#)) on a vote of [37-1](#). The budget will now go to a conference committee to work out the differences in the House and Senate budgets.

Below are the details of HB 6 as amended in the Senate:

- Agricultural Development Funds: \$38.9 million in FY25 and \$39.9 million in FY26. Of that, \$12.9 million in FY25 and \$13.2 million in FY26 was allocated to the county funds account;
- Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost-Share program \$2,000,000 in each fiscal year;
- Division of Conservation to provide direct aid to local conservation districts \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year;
- UK Veterinary Diagnostic Lab \$4,034,200 in each fiscal year;
- Breathitt Veterinary Center \$4,034,200 in each fiscal year;
- \$1,750,000 to Western Kentucky University for the Kentucky Mesonet;

- Adult Agriculture Education Program \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year;
- Veterinary Medicine Contract Spaces \$5,659,000 in FY25 and \$5,800,400 in FY26 for 164 veterinary slots;
- Kentucky Rural Veterinarian Loan Repayment Program \$1,093,800 in FY25;
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture is allocated \$21.8 million of general fund dollars in FY25 and \$22.8 million in FY26;
 - Kentucky Rural Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, and Farm Safety program \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year;
 - Farms to Food Banks program \$900,000 in FY25 and \$1,000,000 in FY26;
 - County Fair Grants program \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year;
 - KDA Division of Emergency Preparedness \$153,900 in the current budget year (FY24) and \$443,900 in each fiscal year for the next biennium;
 - KDA Division of Regulatory Field Services, \$553,700 in FY25 and \$987,100 in FY26;
- Broadband Equity, Access and Development (BEAD) Program is allocated \$217,234,500 in FY25 and \$868,938,200 in FY26 in federal funds.

2024 KFB Priority Issues:

"Maintain allocating 50% of the Master Settlement Agreement funds to the Agricultural Development Board, and funds be spent for the purpose of improving the net farm income of individual farmers in production agriculture."

"Support continued funding of the Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost-Share Program."

"Support an efficient, well-administered and adequately financed Kentucky Department of Agriculture."

"Support funding for the broadband deployment fund."

"Support efforts and incentives to improve and provide all telecommunications in rural Kentucky."

KFB Policy:

"We support the national 988 suicide hotline for farmers and agricultural workers, and encourage Kentucky Farm Bureau to promote its availability."

"We recommend the KDA Office of the State Veterinarian have adequate amount of funding for the Division of Emergency Management for trained subject matter experts for prompt disease response."

"In an effort to address the shortage of large and food animal veterinary services in Kentucky, we support:

- Incentive programs for veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians and technologists to practice large and food animal veterinary medicine in rural Kentucky;*
- Maintaining funding for existing slots while seeking additional slots for Kentucky students at established veterinary schools;"*

HB 1: J. Petrie – AN ACT relating to government agencies, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring an emergency.

This bill will appropriate General Fund moneys from the Budget Reserve Trust Fund Account in fiscal years 2023-2024, 2024-2025, and 2025-2026.

Below are some items of interest:

- \$3,500,000 in FY24 and \$15,000,000 in FY25 to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to improve public river ports within Kentucky;
- \$21,900,000 in FY25 to the Department for Local Government budget unit to be distributed to the Kentucky Cattleman's Association for the construction of the Livestock Innovation Center at the University of Kentucky C. Oran Little Research Farm;
- \$5,000,000 in FY25 and \$45,000,000 in FY26 to the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA) loans for upfront financing assistance to eligible loan recipients located in a rural community, this provision shall be known as the Kentucky Building and Job Creation Lending Program for Rural Communities;
- \$10,000,000 in FY25 and \$50,000,000 in FY26 to Murray State University to construct a facility for the veterinary technician program.

This bill was amended in the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee and passed the Senate [38-0](#). This bill will now go to a conference committee to work out the differences in the House and Senate versions of the bill.

2024 KFB Priority Issues:

"Support increased funding for Kentucky riverports to upgrade their agricultural infrastructure."

"Support efforts that will retain and attract new business and industry to rural areas of Kentucky."

KFB Policy:

"We support the concept of an ag research and innovation center inclusive of all commodity groups."

HB 418: M. Pollock – AN ACT relating to agricultural districts.

This bill will decrease the minimum number of acres to qualify as an agricultural district from 250 acres to 50 acres and add cities that are within one mile of the agricultural district to the list of entities to be notified of the proposal, approval, and withdrawal of property from, an agricultural district. The bill will also allow a district board of supervisors to consider possible dissolution of an agricultural district if an owner's withdrawal of property results in the remaining land no longer qualifying as agricultural land. This bill passed the Senate Agriculture Committee and now heads to the full Senate for their consideration.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

"Support lowering the acreage requirement for establishing an agricultural district."

HB 8: J. Petrie – AN ACT relating to fiscal matters, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring an emergency.

This is the revenue bill of 2024. This bill makes several changes to Kentucky's tax code. Notable to KFB policy is the creation of a new section of KRS Chapter 141 to allow an income tax credit for the sales and use tax paid on a qualified broadband investment in this state. This will ensure broadband equipment is purchased at a lower rate so providers can continue to deploy broadband throughout the Commonwealth. This bill passed the House 73-11 and now heads to the Senate for their consideration.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

"Support efforts and incentives to improve and provide all telecommunications in rural Kentucky."

SB 356: J. Howell – AN ACT relating to riverports and making an appropriation therefor.

This bill will direct the state portion of property taxes on commercial watercraft to the riverport financial assistance trust fund, which provides matching funds to public riverports. This bill has been assigned to the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

"Support increased funding for Kentucky riverports to upgrade their agricultural infrastructure."

HB 267: J. Petrie – AN ACT relating to providing for the authorization of the Office of Broadband Development to implement the federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) Program and declaring an emergency.

This bill will establish the Broadband Equity Access and Development Program (BEAD) within the Office of Broadband Development, define terms, and require the Office of Broadband Development to create and administer the BEAD Program. This bill will also establish program application requirements and create the BEAD fund. The bill was amended in committee to prioritize BEAD Program funds for delivery to the last mile of unserved areas consistent with the federal requirements. This bill was amended and passed in the Senate Economic Development, Tourism, and Labor Committee and now heads to the full Senate for their consideration.

2024 KFB Priority Issues:

"Support funding for the broadband deployment fund."

"Support efforts and incentives to improve and provide all telecommunications in rural Kentucky."

HB 553: M. Koch – AN ACT relating to the Kentucky rural veterinary student loan repayment program and making an appropriation therefor.

This bill will establish the Kentucky Rural Veterinary Medicine Student Loan Repayment Program for an eligible livestock practitioner who engages in veterinary medicine in an underserved rural area or veterinary shortage area for five consecutive years. This bill will authorize the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority to promulgate administrative regulations and set forth program eligibility requirements. This bill will also authorize the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority to award loan repayment benefits to applicants selected by the Veterinary Student Loan Repayment Selection Committee, establish compliance requirements, and create the rural veterinary care trust fund. This bill was amended in the House Appropriations and Revenue Committee to allow a livestock practitioner in an underserved rural area to practice mixed animal medicine with a minimum of 30% work dedicated to livestock and defined "underserved rural area" as a city having a population of less than 25,000 and more than 20 miles from a city having a population of more than 50,000. This bill passed the House [88-4](#) and now heads to the Senate for their consideration.

KFB Policy:

"In an effort to address the shortage of large and food animal veterinary services in Kentucky, we support: incentive programs for veterinarians and licensed veterinary technicians and technologists to practice large and food animal veterinary medicine in rural Kentucky."

SB 16: J. Schickel – AN ACT relating to agricultural key infrastructure assets.

This bill will amend KRS 511.100, relating to trespass upon key infrastructure assets, to add commercial food manufacturing or processing facility, animal feeding operation, and concentrated animal feeding operation to the definition of "key infrastructure assets". This bill will penalize those who operate an unmanned aircraft system, video recording device, audio recording device, or photography equipment on or above the assets without consent and penalize those who record or distribute unauthorized images or material of a concentrated animal feeding operation, animal feeding operation, or commercial food manufacturing or processing facility. This bill was amended in the House Agriculture Committee to allow a federal, state, or local government law enforcement or regulatory officer or employee to operate any unmanned aircraft system, video or audio recording device, or photography equipment on or above a concentrated animal feeding operation, animal feeding operation, or commercial food manufacturing or processing facility without the consent of the owner or authorized representative of the facility while engaged in his or her official duties. This bill passed the House Agriculture Committee and now heads to the full House for their consideration.

KFB Policy:

"We support requiring the operator of the UAS to gain the written consent of the landowner and/or farm operator if the UAS will be surveying or gathering data above private property."

"We recommend anyone, group or organization that video tapes or records images on a farm with the intent of using them in an anti-farming or animal welfare campaign, without the permission of the land/farm owner, be charged with a criminal offense and subject to a reasonable fine and/or other punishment."

HB 400: R. Heath AND SB 189: J. Howell – AN ACT relating to veterinary medicine programs at comprehensive universities.

These identical bills will amend KRS 164.295 to permit Murray State University to offer doctor's degrees required for professional practice and licensure in veterinary medicine.

HB 575: R. Heath – AN ACT relating to the acquisition of agricultural land.

This bill will prohibit a nonresident alien, foreign business, foreign agent, trustee, or fiduciary associated with the government of any proscribed country referenced in 22 C.F.R. sec. 126.1 from the purchase, lease, or acquisition of agricultural land in Kentucky or participation in programs administered by the Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Development Board, and Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation. This bill will allow an existing foreign-owned business to purchase adjacent agricultural land to expand the operations of the business and will exempt foreign ownership or leasing of up to 350 acres for research purposes. This bill will establish the Kentucky Foreign Investment Review Board to review applications for appeal for those on the prohibited countries list wishing to purchase, lease, or acquire agricultural land, set forth requirements of the board to approve or deny an application for appeal, establish a process for an application for appeal, and authorize the board to promulgate administrative regulations. This bill will also allow an applicant who is denied an appeal to purchase agricultural land to appeal the final decision in Circuit Court. This bill will require a county clerk to record an affidavit on any deed that conveys agricultural land and report the affidavit recordings monthly to the Kentucky Foreign Investment Review Board, require the Kentucky Foreign Investment Review Board to report to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States each month. This bill will also set forth requirements to divest land that has been purchased, leased, or denied without approval of the Kentucky Foreign Investment Review Board, and direct the distribution of sale proceeds. This bill has been reassigned to the House Rules Committee and now awaits action by the full House.

Special Elections:

The special elections to fill the vacancies in State House Districts 24 and 26 are set for next week, Tuesday, March 19.

The candidates for House District 24 which includes Green, Hart, and Larue counties are:

- Republican Courtney Gilbert, Democrat John Pennington, and Write-In Craig Astor

The candidate for House District 26 which includes Bullitt County (part), and Hardin County (part) is:

- Republican Peyton Griffiee

HOW TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

During the week, you may reach your representative and senator in Frankfort by calling 502.564.8100.

If you do not desire to talk to your state legislator immediately or you just want to leave a message, you may dial toll-free 800.372.7181. An answering service will take your message for your representative or senator. The legislative calendar information line is 800.633.9650, the bill status line is 866.840.2835, and the Governor's office number is 502.564.2611.

If you desire to e-mail your representative or senator, [click here](#) for a list of e-mail addresses for members of the Kentucky General Assembly. Find your legislator and click on his or her name to access their e-mail address.

YOUR LOBBYISTS

The following are registered to lobby for Kentucky Farm Bureau for the 2024 session: Kyle Kelly, Public Affairs Director, extension 37417; Ericka King, extension 35220; and Drew Graham, extension 35121. If you would like to call your lobbyists during the evening, call 502.495.5000 and key in their extensions.

If you would like to contact one of your lobbyists during the day, please call Katie Weatherholt at 502.493.7669 and she will put you in touch with one of them.

KEEP ALL LEGISLATIVE REPORTS FOR FUTURE USE

We suggest that you keep a record of the Legislative Reports on file because, on occasion, we may refer to a previous report as a source of more details regarding an issue.

FUTURE DATES OF INTEREST

March 27 & 28 Concurrence Only
March 29 - April 9 Veto Period
April 15..... General Assembly, Sine Die

The Legislative Report and KFB's Priority Issues are also on KFB's website at kyfb.com and the KFB app.