



KPHA E-NEWS UPDATE

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Legislative Update



Highlights of last Thursday's activities at the Kansas Legislature for Sine Die (final day of the 2006 Session):

Anti-abortion senators failed to override Gov. Kathleen Sebelius' veto of an abortion records bill. The Senate vote was 23-12, or four votes short of the two-thirds majority necessary. A House committee met for the first time to investigate a Kansas Supreme Court justice's conversation about school finance with two senators. Legislators approved a bill fixing a flaw in the recently enacted three-year, \$541 million school finance plan. The votes were 32-2 in the Senate and 77-34 in the House. Lawmakers also passed a bill reconciling two different measures they passed on court fees. The votes were 26-9 in the Senate and 102-9 in the House. Rep. Patricia Kilpatrick, R-Overland Park, announced she will not seek re-election because she's taking a job with a foundation promoting tougher state laws against sex offenders. Kilpatrick sponsored a successful bill on the subject.

Also of interest to health advocates:

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius signed a bill this week to provide financial support to grandparents who have custody of their grandchildren. This highlights a little known and important resource. The number of grandparents raising children is amazing. In Kansas, about 18,500 grandparents are raising 12,000 children. The size of the child-welfare system, about 5,000 children in foster care, pales in comparison. Some foster children are living with their grandparents. Child-welfare agencies have discovered the advantage of placing children with extended family. These agencies have found children placed with relatives to be safe and nurtured, and to feel more like they are at home than in foster care. Currently, the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services reports that about 25 percent of children in foster care are placed with relatives; the majority likely are grandparents. With many more children being cared for by grandparents than in foster care, it seems as if the much-maligned family is strong. The Census Bureau doesn't even count the number of aunts, uncles or other extended family members who assume the caregiving role. The family is particularly strong in the African-American community, where grandparents step up to the parenting challenge at a high rate. While African-Americans represent 12 percent of the Kansas population, 21 percent of caregiving grandparents are from this community. Grandparents are not just providing short-term care. Three-fourths of Kansas caregiving grandparents have cared for their grandchildren for more than one year, and more than one-third have assumed this role for five years or more. The image of grandparents being older and having free time does not fit this group. Most Kansas caregiving grandparents are younger than 60 (68 percent) and in the labor force (69 percent). These grandparents are once again struggling with the multiple demands of work and children. Many also are struggling economically. According to census figures, there are 2,456 Kansas caregiving grandparents with incomes below the poverty line. The new state program is an important support to caregiving grandparents. This program limits eligibility to low-income grandparents who have legal custody of the child and are older than 50 years of age, but this is an important support for Kansas children. [Back to top](#)

Job Openings

Geri Summers, MSW, Executive Director, Douglas County AIDS Project asked KPHA to advertise the following position:

Douglas County's Aids Project Client Care Coordinator: Well-organized, committed individual needed to provide strengths-based case management and community advocacy services for persons infected/affected by HIV/AIDS. Responsibilities include intake and psychosocial assessments, referrals, crisis intervention, budgetary counseling, and various forms advocacy within the community. Salary: upper 20s. Requirement: Bachelors Degree in Social Work, Nursing, or other related field. MSW preferred.

To Apply:

Please send resume and cover letter to:

Douglas County AIDS Project

dcaped@sunflower.com

Fax: 785-843-2669

Employment opportunity listing from Carol Borger, Butler County

The Butler County Health Department and the South Central Metro Region is accepting applications for the

following full-time grant funded position:

Program Coordinator II: Public Health Preparedness Specialist

Two years of Public Health experience in an agency setting is required. A Bachelor's Degree in Health Care Administration, Business or other sciences or a Registered Professional Nurse education is required. Must have a current valid Kansas Driver's license and a valid Kansas license as a Registered Professional Nurse, if applicable. The person in this position will work 50% of time in the Butler County Health Department and 50% of time in the South Central Metro Region counties, Butler, Cowley, Harper, Harvey, Marion, Reno, Sedgwick and Sumner counties in South Central Kansas.

Wage: DOQ

Salary range - \$31,325 - \$42,182

Application forms and complete job description are available in Butler County Administration office located on the fourth floor of the Butler County Courthouse, 205 W. Central, El Dorado, KS. Applications can also be obtained online at www.bucoks.com. Applications accepted until May 31, 2006. This position requires a pre-employment drug screening. Butler County is an Equal Opportunity Employer. [Back to top](#)

Report from Martha Froesthner, Immunize Kansas Kids

KPHA was asked to sit on this Immunization Steering Committee to help identify mechanisms to improve the immunization rates of Kansas children. Kansas is ranked 42 out of 50 currently. The Healthy People 2010 goal is for all states to be at or above 90%. The group is represented by KPHA, KALD, Physician Specialty groups, Medicaid, KFMC, KU School of Medicine, Kansas Health Foundation, KDHE and others. I forwarded a request to KPHA Infectious Disease Section members to determine if they have an interest in serving on one of the task groups of the IKK committee. (If there are other members interested in also serving on the task groups, please let the KPHA office know of your interest. Click [here](#) to see the task groups and assignments.)

Martha Froetschner, BSN, RN
KPHA via Shawnee County Health Agency

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Congress Adjourned and Home through June 2



APHA Government Relations Staff sent us the information below

RE: District Visit Materials for the Memorial Day Congressional Recess

As we have discussed in recent legislative update calls and related materials - the Memorial Day Congressional Recess is fast approaching. Members of the House and Senate will be home from Friday,

May 26th - Saturday, June 3rd. This is a great opportunity for you and your fellow constituents to meet with your members of Congress while they are in their district offices and participating in events in the community like town hall meetings. During this recess, we need your help advocating on the following priority public health issues pending in Congress:

1. **Funding Public Health:** With the budget and appropriations process still underway, it is vitally important for your members of Congress to hear from you about the devastating impact of the proposed budget cuts to public health programs - and why they must support restoring the budget to FY05 levels. As you know, in addition to last year's devastating cuts, the President's 2007 budget proposed cutting funding for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) by more than 2% and the Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) by almost 5%. The budget currently being considered in the House eliminates or entirely cuts several important public health programs like the National Children's Study, the Preventive Health & Health Services Block Grant, HRSA Health Professions Grant Programs, and those that address chronic disease prevention.

2. **Support Initiatives to Improve Health and the Built Environment:** The Healthy Places Act of 2006, introduced during National Public Health Week this year by Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) and Representative Hilda Solis (D-CA), brings together all levels of government to address environmental health issues that adversely affect health by: (1) establishing and supporting health impact assessment programs to proactively examine the potential health effects of major policy or programmatic changes, (2) creating a grant program to assist states and local communities to address environmental health hazards, particularly those that contribute to health disparities and (3) accelerating research on the relationship between the environment and health. Please ask your Senators and Representative to cosponsor this bill.

We have developed materials on both of these issues (including sample meeting request letters, advocacy tips, talking points, and fact sheets to leave behind) on this site www.apha.org/legislative/walkhill/. Please visit this site and let us know if you have any questions.

This recess will be shortly followed by one during the July 4th holiday, and a month long August Congressional Recess. We view these sequential recesses as an opportunity to build upon our messages, and ultimately, our impact and ability to protect public health.

Thanks,

APHA Government Relations Staff,
Susan L. Polan, Ph.D.
Associate Executive Director, Public Affairs and Advocacy
American Public Health Association
www.apha.org

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APHA Wants Input on National Public Health Week Activities

TO: Past Partners of National Public Health Week

FR: American Public Health Association

RE: Online survey re: National Public Health Week 2006: Designing Healthy Communities: Raising Healthy Kids

Please send this link out to your contacts. Thanks!

National Public Health Week (NPHW) 2006, Designing Healthy Communities: Raising Healthy Kids, focused on children's health and the built environment. The week was a great success- there were nearly 300 local, state and national partners and hundreds of events around the country to raise awareness about this important public health issue. Please take a few minutes to complete this online survey about your experiences with NPHW 2006. Your comments are invaluable and will help us with our efforts in 2007 and beyond.

Thank you for your time!

Please visit:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/recipient/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB225CRDVW6HW>

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Elmo, Rosita Join Sebelius in Urging Good Kids' Health



Elmo and Rosita, the popular Sesame Street characters, will be featured alongside Gov. Kathleen Sebelius in public service announcements to promote health and nutrition among children. A multiyear Healthy Habits for Life campaign, backed by Sesame Workshop, was filmed during the recent National Governors

Association Healthy America forum. Sebelius is one of 15 governors who participated in the project. The topics of the public service messages will range from the importance of health and nutrition to physical activity and personal hygiene. The announcements are scheduled to air throughout the summer on KTWU-TV, Topeka's public television station. The yearlong Healthy America initiative is designed to encourage governors to create statewide solutions to promote healthy eating habits and increased physical activity, and to prevent obesity-related diseases. Megan Ingmire, spokeswoman for Sebelius, said the governor "strongly supports taking actions that improve the health of our kids. Healthy habits start young, and this initiative supports healthy eating choices for kids." It might be an opportunity for KPHA members to join in on the activities in helping to promote good health in Kansas! If any of you have any ideas of how to do this, please notify your Board members or KPHA staff! [Back to top](#)

Surgeons' Practice Leaves Missouri for Kansas

Carondelet Orthopaedic Surgeons PC will move across the state line to escape Missouri's higher cost of medical malpractice insurance. The practice, including seven doctors and a total of 38 employees, said Thursday that it will move July 21 to a new 18,000-square-foot space in the Corporate Medical Plaza at Interstate 435 and Nall in Overland Park. "This move is not going to change how we practice medicine at Saint Joseph Medical Center," Dr. Brian Healy, president of Carondelet Orthopaedic Surgeons, said in a written statement. "This is a positive move done primarily for economic reasons. The cost of medical malpractice in Missouri has become prohibitive." Carondelet Orthopaedic Surgeons also will maintain affiliations with Menorah Medical Center and South Kansas City Surgery Center, of which it is a part owner. The practice was founded 45 years ago and has been in the Carondelet Medical Building for nearly 30 years. [Back to top](#)

Kansas Gets \$306,000 for Medical Record Privacy

Kansas has won a \$306,000 grant to help ensure the privacy of electronic medical record sharing, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius said Thursday. The grant, awarded by RTI International in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, comes a month after the state announced a new EMR-sharing pilot program. In April, Kansas, Cerner Corp. and FirstGuard Health Plan Inc. said they were piloting an initiative, called Community Health Record, with the Medicaid population in Sedgwick County. In a release Thursday, Sebelius said the RTI International grant would "help ensure Kansans' personal health information is kept secure and private while going through the health care system." The effort is part of a broad health information exchange initiative under way by the Governor's Health Care Cost Containment Commission. Partners in the public-private collaborative include the Kansas Health Institute, Kansas University Center for Healthcare Informatics, the Mid-America Coalition on Health Care, state agencies, provider associations, the business community and consumer groups. On May 2, the commission chose the Mid-America Coalition on Health Care, an employer-led Kansas City collaborative, to staff the state's new health insurance ID card task force.

Another goal is to provide consumers access to their own health care information so they can make informed choices." Kansas is among 34 states awarded grants through a competitive process. The grants will help the states assess how existing regulations, privacy and security policies and business practices might affect the creation and operation of interoperable health information exchange. The state assessment project is part of a national contract given to RTI in October 2005 by the Agency for

Healthcare Research and Quality within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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Visit our site at <http://ks.train.org>.



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