

Week-ending January 25, 2019

For the most part, it has been a slow week here in Topeka. Keep in mind, it was a really short week, the Capitol was closed on Monday (MLK Day), forced to close Tuesday (weather), started late on Wednesday (weather), and did not meet Friday (Proforma). Despite the lack of committee meetings, both Education and K-12 Budget committees found time to hear updates from KSDE and KPERS.

[HB 2078](#) was officially released this week. This bill will increase state aid to school districts by an additional \$93 million to meet the Constitution's adequacy requirements. It was introduced on Thursday in the House Appropriations and the Senate Ways and Means Committees. You might remember Governor Kelly asked the legislator to approve her K-12 education budget by February 28.

An issue that has been floated around the chambers the last few years looks like it is finally going to happen. The House tentatively approved rules that will require a sponsor's name to appear on bills and bills introduced at the request of special interests group will also be identified.

The House also passed a motion requiring 70 votes to pull a bill out of committee or to bring a bill "above the line" for House debate the following day. Over the last couple of legislatures it only took 63 house members to accomplish these tasks.

Committee Chairs have the power to decide which bills are given a hearing or brought to a committee vote. A favorable committee vote is required to send a bill to the House calendar for possible House consideration. If a chair does not like a bill, they have the ability to bury a bill in committee, meaning it does not receive a committee action for a chance to move forward. With the rules change, it would now take 70 votes from the House floor to pull a bill out of committee.

Bills can spend weeks or even an entire session in committee waiting for a hearing or vote while others get passed out of committee and wait on

general orders on the House calendar with the possibility of never receiving action.

Rep. [Jim Ward](#), D-Wichita, said the 70-vote rule gives committee chairs too much power and can prevent action on bills that might be passable by the full House. House Speaker pro tem [Blaine Finch](#), R-Ottawa, proposed the 70-vote rules amendment, and said that Kansas has historically given committee chairs a great deal of autonomy and power.

Finally, on Thursday, Governor Kelly signed an executive order forming her education council which will start meeting on January 30.

This year's committee will be Co-Chaired by Dr. Cindy Lane (retired KCK USD 500) and Dr. Fred Dierksen (Dodge City USD 443). Click on the following link to read more about [Executive Order NO. 19-03](#) and see a full list of committee members.