

Legislative Update, Sine Die

April 15, 2020

2020 Regular Session of the Kentucky General Assembly

The General Assembly adjourned Sine Die late Wednesday night, bringing to a close the memorable 2020 session. The session ended up being 53 legislative days long, as the House and Senate abbreviated the session amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to the Capitol was limited to essential personnel, and legislators and staff attempted to observe social distancing to limit any viral exposures among those in the Capitol and Capitol Annex.

The week began when the Governor issued vetoes to several bills, including the budget bill for state agencies, the Road Plan, and the 'revenue bill.' On the last two days of the session, April 14th and 15th, the House and Senate in turn voted to override the Governor's vetoes, and passed their version of the austere 1-year budgets and other bills intact.

On top of overriding vetoes of the budget bills on the last days, the House and Senate took action on a number of other initiatives, including reducing vaping device taxes, updating interlocal agreement statutes, and passing a bill to allow the collection of tissue samples of certain deceased children to be used for research.

The General Assembly also enacted a bill meant to strengthen and more clearly define Legislative and Executive branch ethics rules. SB 157, the ethics bill, passed both chambers on the final day of the session, updating the statutes governing the ethics of lobbyists, legislators and state staff. Many supporters of the bill in the House lamented that the final version did not include any language governing sexual harassment between legislative members and/or staff.

The Kentucky House worked on a bill meant to give guidance to Kentucky businesses and health care providers on when to begin reopening. Senate Bill 136, originally dealing with home health aides, became the House's vehicle for an effort to address the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The amended bill passed the House late on the final day with a large majority vote, but ultimately did not get a vote in the Senate.

In the last hours of the session, the Majority party in both chambers passed a pair of bills relating to abortion, some defining abortion as an elective procedure, and another transferring some oversight authority over abortion clinics to the Attorney General's office.

Bills that passed both chambers for the first time on the last two days will go to the Governor for review. Any he vetoes he issues on those bills will not be subject to legislative override, since the session has concluded.

The bills that the Governor vetoed earlier in the week, but were overridden by the General Assembly, become law after the Secretary of State signs them. Those bills do not require any further action from the Governor to become law.

Laws enacted during the 2020 session become effective 90 days after they adjourn Sine Die. The actual date will be determined by the Attorney General's office. The Budget and revenue bills become effective at the start of the state's fiscal year, July 1, 2020. Any bills with an Emergency Clause become effective immediately upon being signed by the Governor.

The General Assembly is adjourned until Tuesday, January 5th, 2021, unless otherwise called into Special Session by the Governor.

Vetoed Overridden:

HB 150 – HB 150 Specifies that ‘a statement or restatement of the law’ in textbooks, scholarly publications, *et al* shall not constitute the law in Kentucky.

HB 195 – House Bill 195 lessens transparency requirements for some local government in an effort to save bigger cities and counties money.

HB 336 – House Bill 336 pushes back the date at which a candidate for Governor must select a Lieutenant Governor, and establishes a procedure to follow in the case of a vacancy in a candidacy for Lt. Gov.

HB 351 – The Revenue Bill.

HB 352 – Kentucky’s executive branch budget.

HB 353 – KY Transportation Cabinet operating budget.

HB 354 – The 2-year Road Plan that defines priorities for construction and maintenance of the state’s roadways.

SB 2 – Senate Bill 2 requires voters to present an official photo-ID before being allowed to vote.

SB 5 – Senate Bill 5 requires that any special district or other unelected special purpose governmental entity to submit any new fees or taxes they intend to raise to the local legislative body.

List Bill Enrolled and Delivered to the Governor (or Sec. of State in certain circumstances)

[List of all enrolled or acted upon legislation by date](#)