

Kentucky General Assembly Weekly Report

Week 1

January 7 - January 10, 2020 (Days 1-4)

Week 1 of the 2020 General Assembly is in the books. Per usual, the opening week was characterized more by organization than legislative activity, with members canceling all scheduled committee meetings to accommodate mandatory ethics training sessions on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. The slow week was punctuated by a lively Kentucky Chamber of Commerce annual dinner in Lexington on Thursday night. More than 1,600 attendees from across the state heard from Governor Beshear and the four respective legislative caucus leaders. Short on policy proclamations but high on vision, the speakers struck a general tone of collaboration. Republicans touted the economic development successes during their time as supermajorities, and Democrat leaders noted that the prosperity is only shared in a few pockets of the Commonwealth. In his first major address since his Inauguration, Governor Andy Beshear articulated a five-point "WHERE" mission of his gubernatorial term: W(ages) H(ealth) E(ducation) R(etirements) E(xample).

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives made substantive changes to the rules governing the procedures of the 2020 session. Among those is the elimination of the House "Consent Calendar." At least for this year, the House will no longer exercise their prerogative to pass large batches of non-controversial bills with a single vote. That process expedited clearing bills off the docket, but exposed members to the risk of a 'Yes' vote on a bill the details of which they may not have paid much attention. The other changes are largely time-saving measures - reducing floor speeches to two minutes from three, and no longer routinely allowing memorial resolutions to be read in their entirety. Such memoria will be in the form of citations, not simple resolutions.

Nearly 240 House Bills were filed over the short work week, although House Majority Leadership has not yet filed the caucus's "priority bills" - typically reserved for low bill numbers (HB1 through HB5). School safety funding will likely make an appearance among those. While not assigned a low bill number, Speaker Osborne is sponsoring an initiative that would infuse public cash into the University of Louisville's effort to take over assets of the failed Jewish Hospital in downtown Louisville. During the week, the University reduced their ask to \$35 million from \$50 million.

House Majority Floor Leader Bam Carney remains hospitalized and seriously ill. Speaker Pro Tem David Meade has run the House floor in his absence. Carney was able to file for re-election before the deadline, but the timing of his return remains uncertain. House Majority Leadership has already waded through one session with only four members, and they will likely do the same in 2020.

The Senate, in contrast to the House, wasted no time in filing and publicly defending their priority bills. SB1, sponsored by Danny Carroll and co-sponsored by eleven other Republican Senators, is a "sanctuary cities" bill that has drawn the ire of pro-immigration advocates and raised concerns that public sector employees will be tasked with enforcing immigration law. On Thursday morning, the bill sponsor joined freshly minted Attorney General Daniel Cameron in defense of the measure, claiming that it simply ensures coordination among law enforcement agencies, rather than being inherently anti-immigrant. SB2 is a voter-ID requirement sponsored by Henderson Republican Robbie Mills. Reaction to SB2 has not been as vocal as the sanctuary cities legislation, presumably because Kentuckians are accustomed to presenting an ID at polling locations anyway, and there are a multitude of locations to procure one. SB3 (McDaniel) is a constitutional amendment proposal to move statewide elections to presidential election years in 2028. SB4 (Higdon) changes the governance structure of the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. SB5 (Alvarado) would require taxing districts gain approval from the city or county legislative body when attempting to raise taxes. All five bills were given

their first reading on Friday.

With the filing deadline passing on Friday (1/10) at 4:00pm, the General Assembly is poised to hit the ground running next week. The special election to replace Senator Dan Seum take place on Tuesday, January 14th. That district includes Bullitt and parts of southern Jefferson County. Governor Beshear will offer the first of two addresses to a joint session of the General Assembly. The State of the Commonwealth occurs on Tuesday evening. Two weeks later, on Tuesday, January 28, he will return and give his Budget Address.

Bill Tracker Live Link- http://www.hannah-ky.com/Report_Custom.aspx?sid=CLM%2bYvnHfOY%3d&rid=IHLxCPH%2fd4%3d&oldFormat=False

(You will be able to track the progress of your bills anytime. This link will always remain active)

Kentucky Travel Industry Association

*931 East Main Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601
Phone: 502.223.8687 | ktia.com*