



February 16, 2024

Legislative Report No. 8 2024 Kentucky General Assembly

Today marked the thirty-third legislative day of the 2024 Session of the Kentucky General Assembly. There has been 366 senate and 665 house bills and resolutions introduced in the first thirty-three legislative days.

Some Bills of Interest:

[HB 6](#), the state budget, has been assigned to the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee and is awaiting action.

Below are the details of HB 6:

- 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 each fiscal year for 164 veterinary slots;
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture is allocated \$21.5 million of general fund dollars in FY25 and \$22.4 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 \$850,000 in FY25 and \$1,000,000 in FY26;
 - County Fair Grants program \$455,000 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: 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 to the following: Kentucky Infrastructure Authority for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure grants; Department for Local Government to provide matching funds under the Government Resources Accelerating Needed Transformation Program; Kentucky Public Pensions Authority to be applied to the unfunded liability of the State Police Retirement Systems and the Kentucky Employees Retirement System Nonhazardous pension funds; Teachers' Retirement System to be applied to the unfunded actuarially accrued liability; Cabinet for Economic Development to support the KEDFA loan pool and development projects; Department of Kentucky State Police for lab equipment; **Transportation Cabinet to improve public riverports**, to implement the Short Line Infrastructure Preservation and Industrial Access and Safety Improvement pilot projects, and support grants to each General Aviation airport.

- \$3,500,000 in FY24 and \$15,000,000 in FY25 to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet to improve public river ports within Kentucky.

This bill has been assigned to the Senate Appropriations and Revenue Committee and is awaiting action.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

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

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 House Agriculture Committee and now heads to the full House for their consideration.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

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

HB 524: J. Blanton – AN ACT relating to the establishment of a grant program to promote investments in Kentucky businesses, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring an emergency.

This bill will establish the Kentucky Rural Jobs Act of 2024. This bill will allow the Cabinet for Economic Development to begin accepting applications from entities seeking approval as a growth fund and will allow no more than \$50 million of grants to be awarded as state matching capital for investments in growth businesses. This bill will establish the Rural Jobs Development Fund and will appropriate \$50 million in fiscal year 2024-2025 to the Rural Jobs Development Fund.

2024 KFB Priority Issue:

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

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."

HB 217: D. Hale - AN ACT relating to hunting and fishing licenses and declaring an emergency.

This bill will remove the requirement that resident owners of farmlands must own five or more acres of land in order to be exempt from sport hunting and sport fishing license requirements when hunting or fishing on their own farmlands. The bill has been assigned to the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee.

SB 5: G. Williams – AN ACT relating to hunting and fishing licenses and declaring an emergency.

This bill will remove the requirement that resident owners of farmlands must own five or more acres of land in order to be exempt from sport hunting and sport fishing license requirements when hunting or fishing on their own farmlands. The bill has been assigned to the House Tourism and Outdoor Recreation Committee.

KFB Policy:

"We oppose a minimum acreage standard below which landowners must obtain a hunting or fishing license for lawful activities on their own property."

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 passed the Senate 30-6 and now heads to the 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. SB 189 has not yet been assigned to committee. HB 400 passed the House 82-6 and now heads to the Senate for their consideration.

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.

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

- February 19..... President's Day Holiday
- February 26..... Last Day for New House Bills
- February 28..... Last Day for New Senate Bills
- 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.