



January 24, 2014

Legislative Report No. 4

2014 Kentucky General Assembly

Today marks the thirteenth legislative day of the 2014 session of the Kentucky General Assembly. To date there have been a total of 156 Senate bills and resolutions and 292 House bills and resolutions introduced.

On Tuesday, Governor Beshear presented his State Budget Address to a joint session of the General Assembly. The Governor's budget provides an additional \$189 million over the biennium for the SEEK formula and an additional \$95 million for textbooks, school safety and other K-12 services. While funding for education would increase under the Governor's plan many other state agencies would see a budget reduction of five percent, with state police and universities receiving a two and a half percent reduction in funding. Pertaining to our funding priorities Governor Beshear's budget provides:

- \$32.4 million for construction of a New Breathitt Veterinary Center.
- Agricultural Development Funds: \$18.3 million in FY 15 and only \$6.5 million in FY 16. Of these totals \$13.5 million in FY 15 and \$6 million in FY 16 are allocated to county funds. The amount in FY 16 would result in over a 50% reduction in county funds available for local projects.
- Environmental Stewardship Program: \$3 million in FY 15 and \$1 million in FY 16.
- The Kentucky Department of Agriculture received \$16.9 million in FY 15 and \$17.2 million in FY 16. The "Farms to Food Banks" program was appropriated \$500,000 in each fiscal year.

- The Kentucky Division of Forestry received \$10.7 million in FY 15 and \$11 million in FY 16.
- Rural, secondary, county road aid: Governor Beshear is proposing to restore the 1.5 cents to the gas tax that was lost on January 1, when the wholesale price of gas dropped.
- The 22.2% allocation for rural and secondary road aid programs is maintained.

The reduction of the FY 16 Tobacco Settlement Funds is a result of them forecasting a total payment of only \$72.4 million because of the "significant probability" the Commonwealth will receive a reduced payment.

Also on Tuesday, Governor Beshear again stated he would be coming forward with a tax reform package for the General Assembly to consider.

On Wednesday, Governor Beshear and U.S. Congressmen Hal Rogers announced a \$100 million high-speed internet expansion plan for Kentucky with Eastern Kentucky being the earliest emphasis.

[SB 44: P. Hornback, D. Parrett, D. Givens - AN ACT relating to motor vehicle weight tolerance.](#)

This bill would to provide a weight tolerance of 10% for commercial vehicles that are engaged in the transportation of agricultural products. This bill was assigned to the Senate Transportation Committee.

KFB Policy:

"We support the 10% weight exemption on farm trucks and trucks servicing farms hauling agriculture products, similar to the same benefits currently given to the transportation of primary forest products."

Action Request:

If your Senator is a member of the Senate Transportation Committee then please contact them and ask them to **SUPPORT SB 44**. For a list of committee members [click here](#).

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

YOUR LOBBYISTS

The following are registered to lobby for Kentucky Farm Bureau for the 2014 session: Jeff Harper, Public Affairs Director, extension 5104; Bryan Alvey extension 7218; Tony Sholar, extension 5121, Beth Wisman, extension 5105, and David S. Beck, extension 5101. If you would like to call your lobbyists during the evening, call 502-352-4280 at the Frankfort headquarters or call 502.495.5000 and key in their extensions.

If you would like to contact one of your lobbyists during the day, please call Sara Stivers at 502.495.5121 and she will put you in touch with one of them.

The Legislative Report and KFB's Priority Issues are also on KFB's website at kyfb.com and the [KFB app](#).