



I am honored and humbled to be a part of the legislative process. We have finished voting on our first set of House bills, and it is a relief to finally have a moment to get a newsletter out to you.

With Terrie Huntington's election as Senator following Sen. David Wysong's retirement, I was voted in by special election of District 25's Precinct Committee Chairmen on January 5th. Joining the legislature mid-session has been challenging, to say the least, but I am working diligently to conscientiously represent you. I thought it would be helpful to those of you who do not know me to have some background information; you can go to my new website, www.barbarabollier.org, to learn more. Stepping into the role of Representative has been one of the most challenging things I have done. The amount of information that we are expected to keep abreast of is voluminous. I am thankful for my excellent Kansas education. As you might know, budget issues are the overwhelming theme this year, and my fellow legislators have informed me that this is one of the most difficult sessions in history. The 25th District has a strong history of supporting public education, and I will continue to support funding for our children's futures.

As a newcomer, it is my observation that for the 2011 budget there are two approaches to our predicted economic shortfall: balance the budget by cutting \$400 Million, including cuts to K-12 and higher education funding, or raise taxes to make up the \$400 Million shortfall. The final budget plan will be presented later in the session and the decisions ahead of us are complicated. The majority of voters in our district favor maintaining current funding of most state programs, especially our schools. Most people who have contacted me to date have desired a commitment to education by raising taxes. Although the Governor recommended a 1% sales tax increase, other options that might be on the table include increased taxes on alcohol, tobacco products, removal of tax exemptions, and various other taxes. The bottom line: until a bill is in

front of the House, all options are on the table as we evaluate the boundaries of our budget limitations.

I would like to share with you some of what we voted on during this recent portion of the session, including how I voted and why. There are too many bills to discuss each individually in this newsletter, but if you would like to see any of them yourself, they can be accessed at www.kslegislature.gov, an excellent resource for those who are interested. I also want you to know that those in leadership (Speaker of the House Mike O'Neal and Majority Leader Ray Merrick) are responsible for what bills actually come to the floor of the House to be voted on. Committees (controlled by the chairman) are responsible for the initial hearings for bills, and if the group can reach consensus to pass a bill, it then goes before leadership who decide what bills get presented to the House.

After hours of debate on just over 50 bills, the Kansas Legislature reached the halfway point of the 2010 session on Friday, adjourning until Tuesday for a break after "Turn Around Day," the first major legislative deadline of the year. It's a whirlwind of activity, and the long hours are grueling—but it's also an exciting part of the process, and one of the more enjoyable times of the session. The 2010 rescission budget was the most important bill to clear the chamber, but we also cleared a critically important fix for small businesses facing drastic unemployment tax increases. (I voted yes on both bills) Aside from those two "time sensitive" matters, most of the bills we considered dealt with efficiency controls, statutory fixes, and any other budget neutral proposal.

The House wrapped up this past week with notable but narrow passage of two school measures. The first one requires school districts to adopt a formalized and identical system of reporting school expenditures. I voted against this bill because of the lack of clarity of the process required by the bill, as well as added expenditure to the schools; I believe that our education money should go directly into the classroom as much as possible. The second bill will allow districts to pull an estimated \$40 million out of capital outlay accounts and into their general fund. The capital outlay bill passed 65-57. It allows districts to move local property tax money not specifically authorized for capital improvements out of capital improvement budgets.

There is no provision to force districts to use their capital improvement funds for uncommitted money, but it opens the door for that move. I voted for this bill.

For your information, I have been assigned to the following committees: Education (9 AM most mornings), Aging and Long Term Care (3:30 PM T-TH), Vision 20/20 (1:30 PM M-W), and Veterans, Military, and Homeland Security (1:30 PM T-TH). The committee meetings frequently last an hour and a half, so you can see that my days go by quickly, including the daily session on the House floor at 11:00, plus a lunch meeting/presentation. I try to get to my office before 7 AM to quickly review and respond to e-mails. Following my final committee meeting of the day, I head back to my office to check General Orders and see what bills will be presented the next day to the House. I spend the evening reviewing those bills along with other information that has either been left at my office or presented in committee. I check e-mails one more time, grab a bite to eat somewhere in there, and head to my room in Topeka. A quick night of sleep gets me ready for the next day!

Contact me at any time; I am your Representative to serve as the voice of the majority in District 25. I am doing my best to vote accordingly, and welcome input on bills that you have interest in or expertise about. I am trying to personally answer e-mails, but the volume is steadily increasing and soon that will not be possible every time. It is a privilege to be representing such wonderful people, and I look forward to the rest of the session as your Representative.

Your address was shared by Senator Huntington. If you wish to have it removed please contact me by one of the ways given below.

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