

Legislative Update January 20, 2014

The 2014 Kansas Legislature convened on Monday, January 13, 2014. The highlight of the week was the Joint Legislative Session convened to receive the Governor's State of the State address.

Governor Sam Brownback delivered his State of the State address and Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 budget recommendations to a joint session of the Kansas House of Representatives and Senate on Wednesday, January 15, 2014.

For Kansas higher education, Gov. Brownback specifically recommended restoration of the funds cut by the 2013 Kansas Legislature for a cap on salaries. This cap reduced the ability of the university in all budgets, including K-State Research and Extension and the College of Veterinary Medicine, to attract outstanding faculty, researchers and other much-needed staff positions.

In addition, Gov. Brownback made recommendations for enhancements at the state universities to support growing the Kansas economy or to acknowledge nationally ranked programs. The College of Architecture, Planning and Design new construction and renovation initiative recommended by the Governor has multiple nationally ranked programs.

The Kansas State University recommendations:

- Restore one-half funding in FY 2014 for the salary cap on the university imposed by the 2013 Kansas Legislature. This is a recommended restoration of \$949,829 for K-State and \$1,500,562 for K-State Research and Extension.
- Restore all funding in FY 2015 for the salary cap on the university imposed by the 2013 Kansas Legislature. This is a recommended restoration of \$1,196,484 for K-State and \$1,419,764 for K-State Research and Extension.
- Provide \$1.5 million for the College of Architecture, Planning and Design to begin the renovation and construction of Seaton Hall, with \$5 million to continue the funding in FY 2016 and beyond.
- Provide a 1.5% increase for a classified salaries. State universities are required to self-fund the increase.
- Continue \$10.5 million to address repair, rehabilitation and maintenance needs for campus facilities.
- Continue \$5 million for animal health initiatives on the campus.
- Continue \$5 million for the College of Veterinary Medicine.
- Continue \$5 million for launching NBAF related research at K-State.
- Continue \$3.5 million for the University Engineering Initiative Act.

In other legislative activity this week, Kansas State University College of Agriculture Dean/Director of K-State Research and Extension John Floros provided testimony to the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee. Dean/Director Floros provided the Legislative report and reviewed and highlighted successes which were achieved in the past year. He also discussed the impact of the budget reductions for both the current FY 2014 and next year's FY 2015 budgets. The total reductions over the 2 years passed by the Legislature last year is \$4.8 million (10.1%) for all of K-State Research and Extension.

In week two of the Kansas Legislature, Dean/Director Floros will present similar testimony to the Senate Agriculture and Senate Natural Resources committees per requests from those committees on Tuesday, January 21, 2014. In addition, Dean/Director Floros will provide a K-State Research and Extension update to the House Appropriations Committee on Thursday January 23, 2014.

Finally, Landon Fulmer, Chief of Staff to Governor Brownback will present an update on the National Bio and Agro Defense Facility (NBAF) project to the Senate Ways and Means Committee on Wednesday, January 22, 2014.

If you are interested in the timeline of the Kansas 2014 Legislature you can find it [HERE](#).