

# Sen. Storm's legislative update for week six

As we wrap up week six of the 2026 Legislative Session, the pace of work in Frankfort continues to accelerate. Committees are meeting daily with fuller agendas, legislation is moving to the floor and priorities are advancing with thoughtful debate.



SEN. BRANDON STORM

At this point in the session, more than 100 pieces of legislation have officially passed at least one chamber. This is a clear sign that the General Assembly is actively working to address issues important to Kentucky families.

While there is still critical work ahead, this milestone reflects meaningful progress on policies focused on strengthening our economy, addressing affordability, supporting our communities, protecting taxpayers, bettering education and ensuring government operates efficiently and transparently.

This week, I was pleased to see two measures I sponsor advance. First, the Senate

passed Senate Bill (SB) 118, legislation to update Kentucky law and establish clear consumer protections and regulatory standards for credit personal property insurance sold with closed-end loans, including coverage for financed collateral. The bill limits the amount and term of coverage, requires insurers

to reflect a genuine risk of loss and prohibits bundling or pricing practices that increase borrowers' costs. It strengthens transparency by requiring timely disclosure of coverage and costs and ensures refunds of unearned premiums when policies are canceled early. SB 118 also requires insurers to file policy forms and rates with the Department of Insurance and clarifies that vehicle financial protection products are regulated separately.

In addition, Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 74 passed the Senate Judiciary Committee this week. The resolution addresses concerns within our justice system and provides direction for further review and

evaluation in a specific policy area. Advancing SJR 74 reflects our continued commitment to accountability, consistency and public safety as we examine ways to strengthen Kentucky law.

The Senate also approved the following measures out of the chamber this week:

SB 2 ensures administrator pay increases do not exceed the average percentage raise given to classroom teachers within the same district. The bill maintains existing waiver flexibility while updating and cleaning up outdated statutory language.

SB 4 creates a statewide leadership development program for new principals beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. First- and early-career principals would participate in a structured practicum focused on instructional leadership, school safety and accountability, with most costs covered by the state.

SB 45 protects agri-tourism and working-animal operations from unreasonable local regulations while preserving existing health, safety and animal welfare stan-

dards. The measure supports family farms and rural economies.

SB 71 expands required training for local school board members, with a focus on finance, ethics, open meetings and superintendent evaluation. The measure strengthens oversight and promotes greater consistency and accountability in district governance.

SB 136 streamlines unemployment insurance fraud procedures by requiring suspected cases to be referred directly to federal and local authorities within 30 days. The bill clarifies accountability and protects due process standards.

SB 141 modernizes Kentucky's public notice laws by clarifying where and how required notices must be published while preserving transparency and controlling taxpayer costs. The bill establishes objective standards for qualifying newspapers, updates timelines, allows limited digital publication standards and ensures public agencies receive fair advertising rates while maintaining print requirements and expanding statewide

online access.

SB 145 modernizes alcoholic beverage catering laws and streamlines licensing at the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The bill removes outdated restrictions and requires timely approval or denial of license applications.

SB 153 strengthens protections for homeowners by targeting fraudulent contractor practices, particularly after natural disasters. The measure enhances disclosure requirements and enforcement tools to safeguard families during recovery.

SB 155 establishes a framework for responding to animal health emergencies, authorizing coordinated action to protect livestock, agriculture and food supply chains.

SB 158 sets transparency standards for optional financial products tied to vehicle purchases, ensuring they are clearly disclosed, separately priced and not required as a condition of financing.

SB 160 improves oversight of child care centers by clarifying corrective action standards, ensuring fair review processes and maintaining

strong safety protections for children.

SB 172 promotes electric rate stability by allowing regulators to extend the recovery period for utility fuel costs, helping reduce sudden rate increases for households and businesses.

SB 183 requires proxy advisory firms to base shareholder voting recommendations on financial factors and disclose when non-financial considerations influence their advice. Violations are treated as deceptive business practices under Kentucky law.

As we move into week seven, floor action will continue to increase and our attention will begin turning more toward budget discussions and key priority legislation.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you. I look forward to keeping you updated as the work of the 2026 Regular Session continues. Please contact my office at 502-564-8100 or Brandon.Storm@kylegislatre.gov if you have any questions, concerns, or ideas. Learn more about bills, committees, and the Kentucky General Assembly at www.legislature.ky.gov.

## House approves school bus safety, elections, and 'Food is Medicine' bills

The second week of February brought a steady rhythm of work in Frankfort, providing lawmakers the opportunity to consider a growing number of bills while continuing the careful task of crafting the state budget. As of Friday, February 13, more than 600 House bills and nearly 200 Senate bills had been filed, reflecting the wide range of priorities and concerns voiced by Kentuckians across the Commonwealth.



DANIEL ELLIOTT

The pace will only quicken as key deadlines approach: March 4 marks the final day for new House bills to be filed, and March 2 is the deadline in the Senate. As always, citizens can follow the progress of legislation, track bills, and watch committee meetings live by visiting legislature.ky.gov.

Here are a handful of the bills that cleared the House this week:

HB 7 would allow school districts to use camera monitoring systems on school buses to enforce a civil penalty against cars that are recorded passing a school bus with a deployed stop arm and allow school districts to contract with a private vendor or manufacturer to install, operate, and maintain them.

HB 44 would establish a robotics program trust fund in the State Treasury to award grants to programs promoting hands on learning, establishing community partnerships, highlighting career opportunities, and establishing connections to manufacturing, machining, and fabrication skills for high school students.

HB 139 would strengthen election integrity and clarifies key procedures. The measure

would allow the State Board of Elections to share data with other government agencies investigating election offenses; require voting systems to at least meet Election Assistance standards; and clarify candidate filing requirements for commonwealth's attorney races and special elections.

HB 253 would phase out the use of the "three-cueing" reading method in Kentucky schools and teacher preparation programs. The bill would prohibit three-cueing instruction by the 2029-2030 school year, instead emphasizing an evidence-based approach built around five key components: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

HB 264 would update existing statute to clarify that if someone lists or advertises a house, apartment, or commercial property for sale or rent without actually owning it or having permission from the owner, the law will assume they are trying to deceive people.

HB 266 would add speech language pathology or audiology license to the definition of eligible healthcare credential in the statute governing the healthcare worker investment fund.

HB 305 would strengthen procedures around grand jury proceedings by extending the statute of limitations applicable for knowingly recording the proceeding or disclosing any information gathered while present during a proceeding. The provisions do not apply to commonwealth's attorneys, their staff, or peace officers engaged in their official duties.

HB 313 would modernize the timeline by reducing the amount of time required for notification

when a city renews or resells a utility franchise agreement from 18 to six months. The update would allow cities to negotiate franchise agreements closer to their expiration, which allows better understanding of market conditions, utility performance, and community need.

HB 436 would allow free greens fees at state park golf courses to veterans who graduate from the PGA HOPE program and one guest.

HB 459 would strengthen Kentucky's health care workforce by requiring licensing boards to collect workforce participation data during license renewals, giving policymakers clearer insight into provider availability and shortages. The bill also allows the Kentucky Board of Licensure for Marriage and Family Therapists to grant licenses to qualified applicants already licensed in other states, helping attract experienced professionals while maintaining high standards of care.

HB 508 would create guidelines for private companies who charge a fee to help Kentucky veterans access benefits. The measure would not impact the free options available through non-profit veterans' service organizations and would require for-profit companies to provide written notification that there are free services available. The bill would limit the fees charged for advising or assisting with veteran benefits; ban deceptive or aggressive soliciting practices; provide notification that free services are available; and protect veterans personal, medical, and financial information. HB 508 would also require compensated advisors to file annual report with the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs and enforces violations under the Con-

sumer Protection Act. HCR 44 urges Congress to create an accreditation pathway for private companies that assist veterans in navigating the benefits system.

HJR 25 would declare Kentucky a Food is

Medicine state and encourage state agencies to expand programs that use nutrition as part of medical care and disease prevention.

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line

in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Daniel.Elliott@kylegislatre.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.



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