

Education Committee Work

On a quiet day, the House Education Committee worked two bills today.

House Bill 2232 would have required a semester-long course in financial literacy for graduation from high school. This bill has been appearing for years but so far has not made it out of the legislature in its current form.

Questions were raised about the impact of the bill on students' courses of study. While no one disagrees with the idea that financial literacy is important to future success, adding another required course would put pressure on students' participation in arts or foreign language programs or even plans to take a fourth year of science and mathematics.

The Committee tabled the bill today while seeking amendments that would make it more workable in the schools.

They also worked HB 2078 which made some changes to plans school districts are required to have for emergency preparedness, safety and security. The Committee decided not to advance this bill as schools already have such plans in place under current law.

Bank of KDOT Getting Play in Budget Debate

In balancing the budget a favorite past time is taking money from the Kansas Department of Transportation that had been earmarked for road maintenance and construction. So common is the practice that the Department is openly referred to as the "Bank of KDOT" under the dome.

The Governor had proposed tapping the bank again to balance the budget. But last week a House subcommittee amended the bill and restored the money to KDOT on a motion by Rep. Russ Jennings (R-Lakin). This amendment brought problems back into the budget balancing proposal.

Today a meeting of that subcommittee was hastily called by chairman J.R. Claeys (R-Salina) at which the bill was recalled to committee and stripped of the Jennings

amendment on a motion by Rep. Mike Houser (R-Columbus). That action keeps the withdrawal from KDOT in the mix as the budget goes back to the Appropriations Committee.

And Tomorrow...

Up tomorrow is a hearing on HB 2199 in the House Education Committee, a bill to change sex education in schools from an opt-out program to an opt-in program - another of those annual bills. The House Education Budget Committee will get an informational briefing from Deputy Education Commissioner Dale Dennis as they begin three days of discussions on the education budget.

Links

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