

Governor cuts \$44.5 million from education for this year!

Responding to more bad news about the impact of his tax cuts, Governor Brownback has issued additional cuts in an effort to balance the budget. Month after month of declining tax receipts continue to pressure the ability of the state to pay the bills and, unlike the federal government, the state cannot run a deficit.

The latest cuts are hitting directly at education with a 2% cut to higher education and a 1.5% cut to K-12 education to take effect on March 7. The combined cuts total \$44.5 million.

The House had recently passed a bill intended to deal with the initial deficit but in January revenue continued to drop necessitating the cuts announced by the Governor today. The Senate is debating that bill today.

The Senate Ways and Means Committee has been debating a change in the calculation of the Local Option Budget (LOB) that would cut K-12 funding by \$39 million in the current year and the prior allotments included reductions in state payments to KPERS.

The simple fact of the matter is that the tax cuts demanded by Governor Brownback and passed by the Legislature have decimated the state's revenue stream. The Kansas economy is lagging most other states including our neighbors, revenue collections continue to come in below expectations, and still the Legislature is hesitant to address the underlying problem of unsustainable tax cuts.

Tragedy

Very sad news came out of Wichita today. Rep. Dennis Hedke's wife, Annette, was tragically killed when she was struck by a vehicle in a parking lot after falling. Rep. Hedke is in his third term in the Kansas House. He serves as a member of the House Education Committee and as Chairman of the House Energy and Environment Committee.

We ask that everyone keep Rep. Hedke and his family in their thoughts and prayers at this time.

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