

www.connectingpt.org

Community Connections

Early Childhood Mental Health

Kid Talk

Resources for Parents

Early Childhood Advocacy Tools

Helpful tool and links for effective advocacy.

Children's Initiative Fund Keeping The Promise to Kansas Kids

Kansas Coalition for School Readiness Talking Points

- Join with other parents and grandparents on the Coalition's Parent Advocacy Council

How to Know When a Parent is Ready to Step Into a Leadership Role

Tips For Testifying (Dodie Wellshear)

March 8, 2011 is tiny-k Day

FY 2012 Governor's Budget Report - The Governor's Budget Report is the administration's recommendation to the legislature. The legislature will use it as a starting place for discussion during the legislative session and will arrive at the final FY 2012 state budget around the end of April.

The Governor's recommendation for the Children's Initiative Fund

Kansas Action For Children Advocacy Toolkit

Track a Bill in Kansas

Find your elected officials and their contact information. A short note, an e-mail or a phone call from you can make a difference in the lives of Kansas children and families.

- Sedgwick County's 22 Representatives and 8 Senators

Register to Vote

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[Screen for Success](#)

[Coordinating Council](#)

[Steering Committee](#)

[Links](#)

[Male Focus Coalition](#)

[Advocacy](#)

Contact

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Wichita, KS 67220
(316)267-3535
connectingpt@rui.org

(underlined are links)

TALKING POINTS



- Investing in early childhood education is a fiscally responsible way to reduce deficits and create surpluses in the long-term.
- 90% of brain architecture is formed before a child even reaches kindergarten. And, everything that's learned — during childhood as well as adulthood — is built upon that foundation.
- Quality early childhood development is essential for reducing social costs. In fact, early childhood programs provide the best return on our education dollars. For every \$1 invested in early childhood education, the state saves at least \$7 down the road from reduced special education, welfare and criminal justice costs.
- The Children's Initiatives Fund (CIF) was established by the Legislature in 1999 as part of the state's master tobacco settlement, and those dollars were dedicated to research-based, quality children's programs.
- The majority of early childhood programs in Kansas depend upon funding from the CIF. Those programs — such as Early Head Start and Parents As Teachers — benefit approximately 200,000 Kansas children and families.
- During these difficult economic times, we can't slash our way out of a deficit any more than we can spend our way out of it. The only way to climb out of deficit is by investing in cost-efficient and effective solutions that build self-sufficiency, productivity and upward mobility. Investing in early childhood education is one such solution. It's how we build a better state for tomorrow, today.

Intro to Advocacy

Understanding the process, relationships and communications necessary to be an effective voice for Kansas children.

WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Simply put, advocacy is the foundation for our democracy. It is an attempt to influence public policy, by a person or group, in a way that brings about legislative action or change.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Mead

The concept of fair representation depends on citizens letting their elected officials know how they want to be represented. And, for those people with little or no political voice of their own, such as children, it's up to all of us to speak on their behalf. Legislators are not experts (nor mind readers), but rather they are people like us who have accepted the challenge and responsibility of representing their communities. They look to you, their constituents, to bring important information to their attention and let them know how you want to be represented.

When you're passionate about an issue and ready to take action, it's important to understand the legislative process. Additionally, you should be strategic in the relationships you develop and communications you utilize to effectively communicate your position or cause.

Lobbying is a more direct and formalized appeal to lawmakers about a specific issue or piece of legislation. However, unlike general advocacy, lobbying has specific rules surrounding what an organization can and cannot do. For more information on nonprofit lobbying limitations, please see the "Resources" section on page four.

How Lexie's Law Came to Be

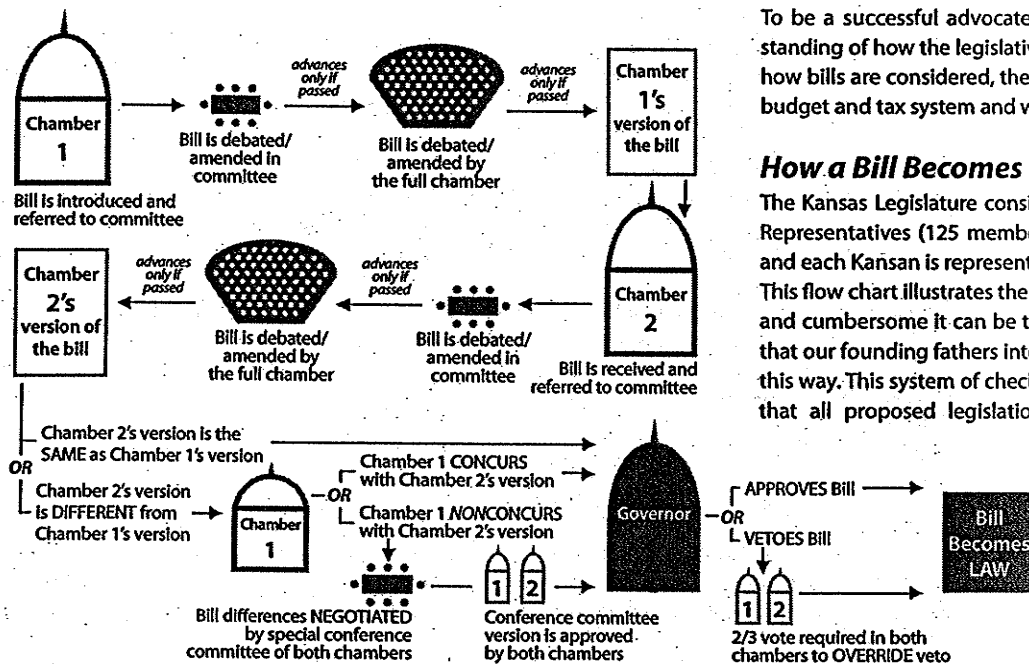
When 13-month-old Lexie was left unattended by her child care provider, a tragically fatal accident occurred; one that was completely preventable had basic child care supervision standards been in place.

When Lexie's parents, Kim and Bryan learned that Kansas ranked 47th in the country for child care standards and in the past three years, nearly 30 children had died in child care, they began advocating for policy change. They joined forces with Alecia and Steve, parents of 18-month-old Ava who also died tragically in a child care facility, and with Kansas Action for Children.

The parents turned their pain into resolve and began to organize, raise awareness, and fight for the 135,000 kids still in Kansas child care. Understanding that the process was neither swift nor easy, they were consistent with their message, persistent in their efforts and unwavering in their mission to spare other parents the same loss.

At 2:30 a.m. on May 11, 2010, the parents' long fight came to an end when the Legislature passed Lexie's Law providing comprehensive child care and inspection standards.

THE KANSAS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS



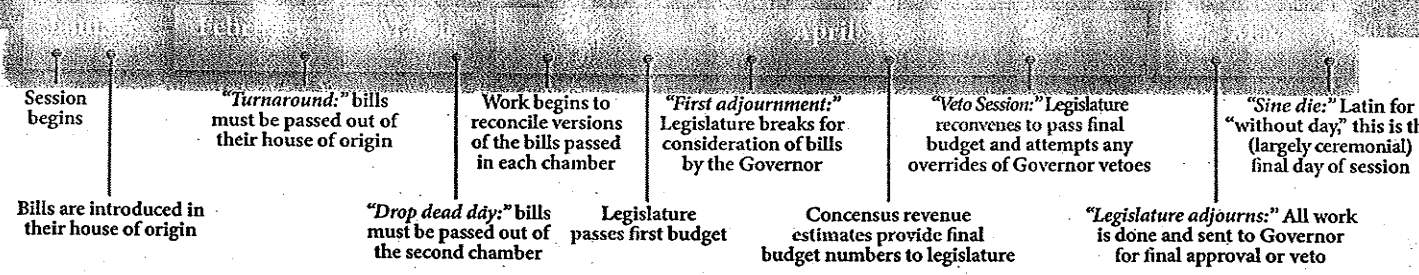
To be a successful advocate, you first must gain a basic understanding of how the legislative process works in Kansas, including how bills are considered, the annual timeline, the structure of the budget and tax system and who the key players are.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

The Kansas Legislature consists of two chambers – the House of Representatives (125 members) and the Senate (40 members) – and each Kansan is represented by one member in each chamber. This flow chart illustrates the legislative process and how complex and cumbersome it can be to pass a law. It is important to know that our founding fathers intentionally designed our system to be this way. This system of checks and balances is complex to ensure that all proposed legislation receives thorough consideration before being implemented.

For advocates, it is important to be patient and not get frustrated with the process. It is not unusual for a piece of legislation to take multiple years to pass.

Kansas Legislative Session



Timeline

Kansas has a "part-time" legislature, which means that our citizen-legislators spend 90 days working in Topeka, from January to early May, in what is called "Legislative Session." By having a part-time legislature, lawmakers are able to continue to live, work and stay connected with their local communities and constituents. An example of a "full-time" legislature would be the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C., which works throughout the year.

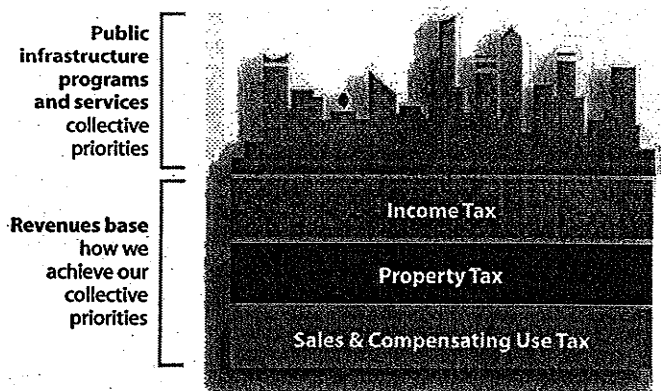
A general timeline of what occurs during session can be found at the top of this page. However, for specific dates and deadlines, please visit the Kansas Legislature's website at www.kslegislature.org.

Following the completion of the session, legislators return to their home communities and their "day jobs" until the following January. If it's an election year (even numbered years), they will spend their off-session months preparing for the primary election in August followed by the general election in November. The entire Kansas House stands for election every two years, and the entire Kansas Senate stands for election every four years.

Budgets & Taxes

The Kansas fiscal process is comprised of two components: budgets and taxes. The budget determines our state's spending priorities and taxes generate funds to pay for them. While our personal finances and the U.S. Congress can rely on credit, the Kansas Legislature is barred from deficit spending. The state must generate enough revenue to pay for priorities such as public infrastructure, education, programs and services.

One of the first questions lawmakers often ask is, "how much does this cost?" Therefore, it is important to understand (prior to advocating for your cause) that financial resources are limited and what, if any, fiscal impact your legislation may have on the state budget. It is also important to understand that in economic down years, programs and services are more likely to be cut rather than expanded.



Key Players

Prior to advocating on any issue or legislation it is important to know who the key players are that can assist you in being more strategic with your resources and, ultimately, successful. First, you should know and build a relationship with your own elected officials. After you have reached out to your own lawmakers you should identify other key legislators that can be helpful, such as committee members who will be hearing the bill.

Each bill is assigned to a committee, so even though there are 165 members of the Kansas Legislature, each House committee has up to 24 members and each Senate committee has up to 12 members. The first step is to convince the committee that will hear the bill. Without the committee's support, your legislation will not reach the full House or Senate to be voted upon. In other words, your local legislator may be supportive of your cause but if they are not assigned to the committee hearing your bill, their ability to assist you may be limited.

Each committee has a chair, vice chair and ranking minority party member. It is important to reach out to each of these lawmakers to build support for your legislation. To get a full list of committee assignments, visit the Kansas Legislature's Web site at www.kslegislature.org.

ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES

Building relationships and effective communication are the keys to successful advocacy.

Give and Take

The relationship between an elected official and a constituent is mutually beneficial, but requires flexibility on each side. While legislators can offer their support of a bill and influence their colleagues, advocates also bring something to the table that lawmakers need. In fact, advocates can provide things like information and data, stories of community impact, professional expertise, financial support to campaigns, hosting of a

Filing deadline
for candidates

Primary election
(first Tuesday in August)

General election
(first Tuesday in November)

fundraiser, providing public support in the way of yard signs, inviting a legislator to speak at a civic club or faith group, and most importantly... your vote! Cultivating a relationship and level of trust with your elected official(s) during their off-session months builds a good foundation for your efforts when they are in session and increases your ability to achieve results.

Communicating with Elected Officials

When communicating with your legislators, keep two things in mind: any communication is better than nothing at all, and putting a personal face on an issue is advantageous. The schedule during the legislative session is incredibly hectic and ever-changing so be prepared and be flexible.

Meeting. If you would like to set up a personal meeting at the Statehouse, be understanding of their changing schedules once you arrive and respectful of your legislator's time. Also, don't forget to make a specific ask: "Will you vote for House Bill 1000?" instead of "Will you support kids this year?" The more specific you get, the easier it is to hold lawmakers accountable. Also, be flexible. For example, while it may not be ideal, you may have to conduct your meeting while your lawmaker walks from one meeting to another. Remember, a quick meeting is better than no meeting at all.

Correspondence. A personal phone call or letter holds more weight than an email, but again, if time only allows for an email that is still better than no communication at all. Regardless of what type of correspondence you choose (sometimes maybe all three!) remember to keep your comments short, simple and to the point.

When communicating with your elected officials regarding a specific cause or bill, it's effective to include these four elements in a concise and personal manner: brief background about the issue (including the bill number if available) supporting data, story of personal or community impact, and a specific request (see example at right). It's also important to include your full name and address so they know how to reach you and whether or not you are a constituent from their district.

Follow Up. It is critical to follow up with your legislators after making a specific request. It increases their accountability and lets them know you are monitoring the issue. If the legislator did not support you after saying they would, send a message that you're disappointed in their lack of support, define the impact that their decision will have on your community and welcome further discussion. In some cases the bill may have changed significantly and a follow-up message allows for there to be clear communication on the issue and helps preserve the relationship you've established. If the legislator did support your issue and remained committed to the position they agreed to take, remember to say thank you, both personally and publicly!

Communicating with Peers

It's no secret that many voices are stronger than one, so increase your effectiveness by getting others to share your message. The social media platform (e.g. Facebook or Twitter) makes it simple to connect your network of peers to your issue and is the fastest way to disseminate information among them. Just as personal communication is the most effective with legislators, it is also critical when communicating your story with your friends, neighbors or your faith community/civic clubs. If your advocacy efforts advance to the stage of needing to mobilize even more people, then turn your attention to formal groups (e.g. Kansas Action for Children, Parents as Teachers or coalitions) and make sure your message is focused and coordinated.

Communicating with the Media

Your local newspaper, television and radio stations can be a useful and far-reaching medium to share your message through letters to the editor, editorials, nightly news coverage and morning shows. In the case of newspapers, choosing an unlikely messenger to pen a letter to the editor will carry significantly more weight and have a greater, broader impact. Readers expect that a working parent would be in support of afterschool programs, but having the local sheriff support the issue because of its impact on crime reduction or a local business owner support it because of its positive impact on workforce development are far more effective. Additionally, meet with the editor/editorial staff to discuss whether they'd consider an editorial in support of your issue.

Dear Rep. Doe,

SB 447 is a bill that touches home for me and my family. We know parents in your district who have gone through the pain of losing a child because of the lack of oversight of child care facilities in Kansas. As you may know, 1 in 3 child care facilities are not currently inspected in our state, and the supervision requirements in our child care system are lacking. In fact, our state ranks 47th in the nation - as one of the worst - when it comes to child care oversight. You have an opportunity this year to keep more Kansas families from having to endure the tragic loss of a child. I ask for your support of SB 447.

Sincerely,

*Jane Johnson
1234 Maple Street
Wichita, KS 67202*

RESOURCES

Lobbying Limitations

Nonprofit organizations have a unique and essential role to play in the policy process. Advocacy allows organizations to serve their constituencies and promote their causes by educating the public and policymakers, conducting research, litigating, organizing, lobbying and more. All nonprofits can engage in advocacy, although the scope and extent of their lobbying activities vary according to the tax exempt status of the organization. For example, 501(c)(3) organizations can engage in a limited amount of lobbying, while 501(c)(4) organizations can engage in an unlimited amount of lobbying. For individuals lobbying on their own accord (not on behalf of an employer), there are no federal restrictions.

The Alliance for Justice provides numerous resources online and by phone regarding lobbying limitations and lobbying in general. For more information, contact:

Alliance for Justice | www.afj.org, click on For Nonprofits & Foundations | 866NPLOBBY (866-675-6229) | advocacy@afj.org

For specific information on what is required at the state level, please contact:

Kansas Governmental Ethics Commission | www.kansas.gov/ethics | 785-296-4219

Voter Registration

"People who don't vote have no line of credit with people who are elected and thus pose no threat to those who act against our interests." – Marian Wright Edelman, Founder of the Children's Defense Fund

Kansas elections are conducted by the counties with oversight by the Secretary of State's office. Through the Secretary of State's Web site, you can register to vote in Kansas, change your name or your address on your registration, affiliate with a political party, or change your party affiliation (a valid Kansas driver's license or state-issued ID is required). The deadline to register to vote is the 15th day before any election.

Online voter registration form | www.kssos.org, click on Elections & Legislative, then click on Registration & Voting

Data

Which is more compelling? Predatory lending is growing rapidly in Kansas, or there are more payday loan stores than McDonald's restaurants in Kansas. Similarly, many children are growing up in poverty, or 1 in 3 Kansas children lives at or near poverty. Statistics support our messages and add credibility, as well as help us identify and evaluate changes over time.

Following are some helpful resources for accessing Kansas-specific data and information:

Kansas KIDS COUNT Data Center | www.kac.org/datacenter

KU Institute for Policy & Social Research | <http://www.ipsr.ku.edu/ksdata/ksah/vital>

Kansas Department of Education | www.ksde.org, click on Data, Media and Reports

Extension Offices | <http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/Map.aspx>

State Library of Kansas | <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KSL>

American Community Survey | www.census.gov/acs

Fact Finder | <http://factfinder.census.gov>

Stay Informed

KanFocus (Formerly Vote Tracker) | www.votetracker.com (subscription based)

Kansas Legislature | www.kslegislature.org

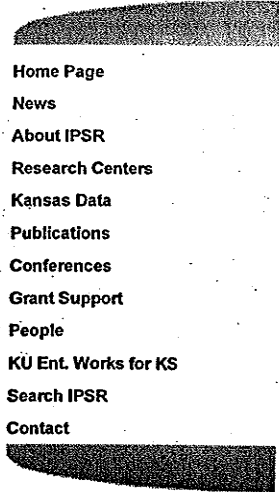
Kansas Action for Children | www.kac.org/signup

4



Kansas Action for Children is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to shaping health, education and economic policy that improves the lives of Kansas children and their families. Since 1979, KAC has worked to make Kansas the best state in the nation to raise a child.

720 SW Hudson, Suite 201 | Topeka, KS 66608 | 785-232-0550 | kac.org | www.kac.org



Butler County

Quick link to INFORMATION FOR A SINGLE ADDRESS.

Demographic Profiles and Maps are in PDF format and will require Adobe Acrobat Reader (Download Acrobat Reader).

The districts below are those enacted by the 2002 Legislature.

U.S. Congress

Congressional District 4 Congressman Mike Pompeo	Profile	Map
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Kansas Senate

Kansas Senate District 16 Senator Ty Masterson	Profile	Map
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Kansas House

Kansas House District 70 Representative J. Robert (Bob) Brookens	Profile	Map
Kansas House District 75 Representative John Grange	Profile	Map
Kansas House District 77 Representative J. David Crum	Profile	Map
Kansas House District 78 Representative Kenneth "Ed" Trimmer	Profile	Map
Kansas House District 99 Representative Dennis Hedke	Profile	Map

Kansas State Board of Education

District 10 David Dennis	Profile	Map
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Find Information for your (Butler County) Address

Suggestion: leave off prefixes and suffixes like "S" or "NW". This form will return a list of blocks from which to choose. Similarly, if you leave off the street type, any matching blocks will be listed.

For example, if you live at 4717 E. Jefferson Ave, enter 4717 Jefferson for the best results.

If no blocks matching the numeric address are found the program will try to return a list of all blocks matching just the street name.

Numeric part of address

Street name

(Reminder: Leave off street direction.)



En Español

Kansas Action for Children

- TAKE ACTION
- MAKE A DONATION
- STAY INFORMED
- KNOW THE FACTS

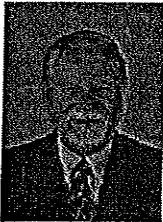
Kansas Officials	
<p>Ty Masterson State Senator for Kansas district 16 (R)</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Web: Home Page</p> <p>Email: Ty.Masterson@senate.ks.gov</p> <p>Phone: (785) 296-7388</p> <p>Fax: (785) 296-1153</p> <p>Address: Kansas State Capitol, Room 541-E 300 SW 10th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504</p> </div> </div>	<p>ZIP code 67133 is split across multiple districts.</p> <p>Please enter your ZIP code and 4 digit extension.</p> <p>67133 - <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <p>If you don't know your ZIP+4, enter your address below:</p> <p>Street1 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Street2 <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>City <input style="width: 100%;" type="text"/></p> <p>State <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/> ZIP code <input style="width: 40px;" type="text"/></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Find Officials</p>
<p>Dick Kelsey State Senator for Kansas district 26 (R)</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Web: Home Page</p> <p>Email: Dick.Kelsey@senate.ks.gov</p> <p>Phone: (785) 296-7367</p> <p>Fax: (785) 296-1153</p> <p>Address: Kansas State Capitol, Room 541-E 300 SW 10th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Mike Petersen State Senator for Kansas district 28 (R)</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Web: Home Page</p> <p>Email: Mike.Petersen@senate.ks.gov</p> <p>Phone: (785) 296-7355</p> <p>Fax: (785) 296-1153</p> <p>Address: Kansas State Capitol, Room 224-E 300 SW 10th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Dave Crum State Representative for Kansas district 77 (R)</p>	



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Ed Trimmer

State Representative for Kansas district 78 (D)



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 Fax: (785) 368-6365
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 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504

Pete DeGraaf

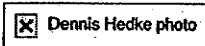
State Representative for Kansas district 81 (R)



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Dennis Hedke

State Representative for Kansas district 99 (R)



Web: [Home Page](#)
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 Fax: (785) 368-6365
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 300 SW 10th Avenue
 Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504

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Kansas Action for Children

- TAKE ACTION
- MAKE A DONATION
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<p>Carolyn McGinn State Senator for Kansas district 31 (R)</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Web: Home Page</p> <p>Email: Carolyn.McGinn@senate.ks.gov</p> <p>Phone: (785) 296-7377</p> <p>Fax: (785) 296-1153</p> <p>Address: Kansas State Capitol, Room 545-S 300 SW 10th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Bob Brookens State Representative for Kansas district 70 (R)</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;"> <div style="flex-grow: 1;"> <p>Web: Home Page</p> <p>Email: bob.brookens@house.ks.gov</p> <p>Phone: (785) 296-7636</p> <p>Fax: (785) 368-6365</p> <p>Address: Kansas State Capitol, Room 54-S 300 SW 10th Avenue Topeka, Kansas 66612-1504</p> </div> </div>	
<p>Don Schroeder State Representative for Kansas district 74 (R)</p>	



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