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2024 Kansas Legislative Session Kickoff

Lawmakers return to Topeka for the start of the 2024 Kansas Legislative Session today, Monday, January 8. This is the second year of Kansas' biennium session, so much of last year's legislation remains alive and ready for action.

Kansas currently has a \$2.8 billion ending balance in the state general fund, further strengthening Republican leadership's resolve to pass significant tax cuts this year. The plan is to assemble a tax package early – similar to last year's vetoed bill – despite Governor Kelly's unwavering opposition to a single income tax rate for all Kansans. While Republicans hold a supermajority in both chambers, the stars will have to align just right for the Legislature to successfully override another veto. If they can't, the early start on tax policy will at least give them time to pass a tax cut plan B.

The Governor's State of the State address will be on Wednesday, January 10 at 6:30 p.m., where she will outline her administration's policy priorities for this year. Kelly's recent tour across Kansas has been her strongest-yet push for Medicaid expansion. And while Republican Leadership continues to hold strong to their opposition, this issue is expected to be central to all other policy discussions in the Statehouse.

Governor Kelly's budget will be unveiled to the Legislature the following day.

Democrat leaders recently announced their top agenda items, which include increasing funding for special and early education and reinstating state appropriations to local governments for the purpose of lowering property taxes. Other issues sure to capture headlines this year include water conservation, workforce development, regulatory reform, energy, and school choice.

With all 165 Senators and Representatives up for reelection this year, legislators will cautiously avoid controversial votes while advocating for issues, such as tax reform, which they can return home and campaign on. Election years are typically shorter legislative sessions, and 2024 should be no different. After the April spring break, lawmakers will return for the Veto Session eager to finish their work and begin fundraising.

As we start 2024, we look forward to continuing to represent our clients under the dome and will keep you informed as these issues and more unfold throughout the session. Happy New Year!