

Governor Kelly issues Executive Order launching Governor's Council on Tax Reform

Sep 9, 2019

Governor Laura Kelly today signaled the start of a comprehensive overview of state and local taxes by issuing Executive Order 19-11, which outlines her vision for establishment of a fiscally responsible, fair and sustainable tax structure.

The Governor's Council on Tax Reform will conduct an 18-month, in-depth study, and make specific statutory recommendations to state lawmakers. The first meeting of the full Council is set for Sept. 24-25 at the Statehouse. "While Kansas continues to recover from the tax experiment of the prior administration, there's a need for tax reform designed with adequacy, equity and stability in mind," Governor Kelly said. "I expect the bipartisan Council to deliver sound strategies and reforms that reflect my desire to keep the state tax burden as low as possible, benefiting all Kansans."

The governor recommends a return to the "three-legged stool" approach that relies on a sensible balance of income, sales and property tax revenue.

The Council will review aspects of state and local finances discussed in the 2019 legislative session as they relate to issues such as: how best to respond to federal tax law changes; the taxation of groceries as part of sales tax revenue; and how to best provide targeted property tax relief. The Council also is charged with determining how much room will be available in future budget projections for tax relief.

The governor selected a pair of former legislators she served with in the Kansas Senate to be co-chairs for her bipartisan Council on Tax Reform; Steve Morris, Republican from Hugoton, and Janis Lee, Democrat from Kensington. Morris served 20 years in the Senate, including eight as Senate president. Lee logged 22 years in the Senate, served as ranking Democrat on the Senate's tax committee and later was a hearing officer for the Kansas Court of Tax Appeals.

Source: <https://governor.kansas.gov/governor-kelly-issues-executive-order-launching-governors-council-on-tax-reform/> accessed 6/13/2024

“Steve and Janis understand how important it is to ensure that our tax code supports public investment in areas such as education, public safety and infrastructure needed to help Kansas prosper,” Kelly said.

Other members of the Council appointed by the governor include representatives of the business community, agriculture, economic development and governmental entities.

Also invited to participate were the following legislative leaders: Republicans Susan Wagle, Senate president, and Ron Ryckman, House speaker; and Democrats Anthony Hensley, Senate minority leader, and Tom Sawyer, House minority leader.

Following the first meeting of the Council Sept. 24-25, subsequent meetings in 2019 are set for Oct. 15-16, Nov. 14 and Dec. 3-4.

An interim report by the Council is planned for December 2019, in advance of the 2020 legislative session. A final report is due in December 2020, in advance of the 2021 legislative session.

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Kansas County Treasurers Association: Joe Grisolano, Pittsburg; Crawford County treasurer, former county appraiser and school board member.

Kansas Association of School Boards: Shannon Kimball, Lawrence; school board member and president of the Kansas Association of School Boards.

Kansas Association of Counties: Anthony Swartzendruber, Hesston, Harvey County administrator.

Kansas League of Municipalities: Susan Sherman, Olathe, assistant city manager of Olathe.

Business, Economic Development or Agricultural Communities (4):

- Dennis Hays, Kansas City, Kan., former county administrator for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/KCK, currently principal at Hays and Associates, LLC.
- Larry Weians, Lenexa, vice president of finance for Sprint
- Lon Frahm, Colby, CEO of Frahm Farmland, Inc.
- Carl Brewer, Wichita, retired operations manager at Spirit AeroSystems, former mayor of Wichita

Additional members:

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- Duane Goossen, Topeka, former state budget director, secretary of administration, member of the Kansas House
- Audrey Langworthy, Prairie Village, former state senator who served as chair of the Senate Tax Committee.
- John Wilson, Lawrence, Kansas Action for Children vice president of advocacy and former Kansas House of Representatives member

Agencies (all ex-officio members):

- Mark Burghart or designee — Secretary of Revenue
- David Toland or designee — Secretary of Commerce
- Larry Campbell or designee — state budget director
- Julie Lorenz or designee — Secretary of Transportation

Legislative leaders (invited):

- Susan Wagle, Wichita, Senate president
- Ron Ryckman, Olathe, House speaker
- Anthony Hensley, Topeka, Senate minority leader
- Tom Sawyer, Wichita, House minority leader