

# Week six of the 2026 Regular Session

**E**ditor's Note: This legislative update was submitted on Friday, Feb. 13. As we wrap up week six of the 2026 Legislative Session, the pace of work in Frankfort continues to accelerate. Committees are meeting daily with fuller agendas, legislation is moving to the floor and priorities are advancing with thoughtful debate. At this point in the session, more than 100 pieces of legislation have officially passed at least one chamber. This is a clear sign that the General Assembly is actively working to address issues important to Kentucky families.



STEPHEN MEREDITH

While there is still critical work ahead, this milestone reflects meaningful progress on policies focused on strengthening our economy, addressing affordability, supporting our communities, protecting taxpayers, bettering education and ensuring government operates efficiently and transparently.

This week, I filed **SENATE BILL (SB) 175**, legislation to establish the Kentucky Health Command and position our state at the forefront of responsible healthcare innovation. As a former rural hospital CEO, I know the strain provider shortages place on families across our region. SB 175 would create a secure, artificial intelligence-assisted virtual health platform designed to offer nonclinical support such as preventative health education, care navigation, appointment scheduling assistance, and telehealth access, without practicing medicine or replacing licensed providers. The goal is simple: use modern technology to better connect patients with local healthcare professionals, strengthen rural systems,

and ensure Kentucky is prepared to compete for future federal rural health funding opportunities. This week, the Senate approved the following measures, which now move to the Kentucky House of Representatives for consideration:

**SB 2** ensures administrator pay increases do not exceed the average percentage raise given to classroom teachers within the same district. The bill maintains existing waiver flexibility while updating and cleaning up outdated statutory language.

**SB 4** creates a statewide leadership development program for new principals beginning in the 2027-2028 school year. First- and early-career principals would participate in a structured practicum focused on instructional leadership, school safety and accountability, with most costs covered by the state.

**SB 45** protects agritourism and working-animal operations from unreasonable local regulations while preserving existing health, safety and animal welfare standards. The measure supports family farms and rural economies.

**SB 71** expands required training for local school board members, with a focus on finance, ethics, open meetings and superintendent evaluation. The measure strengthens oversight and promotes greater consistency and accountability in district governance.

**SB 118** strengthens consumer protections for credit personal property insurance sold with closed-end loans. It limits coverage terms, requires clear disclosure, prohibits cost-inflating practices and ensures refunds of unearned

premiums. **SB 136** streamlines unemployment insurance fraud procedures by requiring suspected cases to be referred directly to federal and local authorities within 30 days. The bill clarifies accountability and protects due process standards.

**SB 141** modernizes Kentucky's public notice laws by clarifying where and how required notices must be published while preserving transparency and controlling taxpayer costs. The bill establishes objective standards for qualifying newspapers, updates timelines, allows limited digital publication standards and ensures public agencies receive fair advertising rates while maintaining print requirements and expanding statewide online access.

**SB 145** modernizes alcoholic beverage catering laws and streamlines licensing at the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. The bill removes outdated restrictions and requires timely approval or denial of license applications.

**SB 153** strengthens protections for homeowners by targeting fraudulent contractor practices, particularly after natural disasters. The measure enhances disclosure requirements and enforcement tools to safeguard families during recovery.

**SB 155** establishes a framework for responding to animal health emergencies, authorizing coordinated action to protect livestock, agriculture and food supply chains.

**SB 158** sets transparency standards for optional financial products tied to vehicle purchases, ensuring they are clearly disclosed, separately priced and not required as a condition of financing.

**SB 160** improves oversight of child care centers by

clarifying corrective action standards, ensuring fair review processes and maintaining strong safety protections for children.

**SB 172** promotes electric rate stability by allowing regulators to extend the recovery period for utility fuel costs, helping reduce sudden rate increases for households and businesses.

**SB 183** requires proxy advisory firms to base shareholder voting recommendations on financial factors and disclose when non-financial considerations influence their advice. Violations are treated as deceptive business practices under Kentucky law.

As we move into week seven, floor action will continue to increase and our attention will begin turning more toward budget discussions and key priority legislation.

I remain committed to working hard on behalf of the people of the 5th District. Thank you for allowing me to serve you.

I look forward to keeping you updated as the work of the 2026 Regular Session continues. If you have questions or ideas, feel free to contact my office at 502-564-8100 or email me at Stephen.Meredith@kylegislature.gov. You can learn more about bills, committees, and other updates from the Kentucky General Assembly at www.legislature.ky.gov.

Sen. Stephen Meredith, R-Leitchfield, represents the 5th Senate District, encompassing Breckinridge, Butler, Grayson, Ohio, and Meade counties. Meredith serves as chair of the Senate Health Services Committee and co-chair of the Government Contract Review Committee. He is also a member of the Senate Committees on Education; Families and Children; and Veterans, Military Affairs, and Public Protection.

# Education, property bills advance in committee

**W**hile many imagine legislators spending their days delivering dramatic speeches beneath the bright lights of the House and Senate chambers, the reality is far less theatrical and far more constructive. In fact, to put it in quintessential Kentucky terms, the show horses rarely get as much accomplished as the workhorses. In fact, most of the meaningful work of the Kentucky General Assembly happens in committee rooms, where members sit around a table, ask detailed questions, hear testimony, and work through concerns line by line. It is there that legislation is carefully vetted,

amended, and improved. Though debate can be spirited, the process is typically respectful, with members focused on solving problems and ensuring bills are ready for consideration by the full chamber.

Here are a few examples of the bills that cleared a House committee this week; they now await consideration by all 100 members of



JOSH CALLOWAY

the House: HB 6 would modernize Kentucky's child care system while helping address ongoing workforce shortages that affect families and employers alike. The bill focuses on expanding access and

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# Donovan Scholarships at risk

I will turn 65 this month, which, believe it or not, is something that I've been looking forward to. Turning 65 is like being able to vote, or turning 21 and being able to buy a beer at dinner. Property taxes change at 65, which is cool. And Social Security, oh boy! But the coolest thing for me is the opportunity to be a Donovan Scholar.

In 1976, the Kentucky General Assembly passed legislation (KRS 164.284) which created a waiver that allows Kentuckians 65 and older to attend a state supported institution of high learning free of tuition and other fees.



JOHN WHIPPLE

This is a great opportunity for older people who have spent their lives

SEE DONOVAN/PAGE B3

## CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
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17					18								19	
20									21				22	
23						24				25			26	
				27			28	29	30					
31	32	33			34					35			36	37
38					39					40			41	
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49	50									51		52	53	54
55					56		57	58	59		60			
61					62					63				
64					65								66	
67					68								69	

### CLUES ACROSS

- Cut quickly
- A way to state clearly
- River in NE Scotland
- Expansive
- Lacking social polish
- Amount of time
- Frame
- Automobile
- Toadstools
- High school dances
- Utilize
- Experimented with
- One-sided
- Acquisitive
- Potted plants
- Everyone has one
- Kalahari Desert lake
- Unidentified flying object
- People 65 and over

- Small amount
- Daughter of Acrisius
- Ornamental box
- Government agents
- Uncertain
- A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
- Treeless plains
- One's sense of self-importance
- Consumer advocate
- Type of lounge
- Body part
- Can be persuaded
- Woman (French)
- Ready and willing to be taught
- Arab ruler title
- Unhappy
- Gradually went away
- Able to think clearly

### CLUES DOWN

- Brushed
- Small water spirit (Germ.)
- Heroes
- Monetary units
- Some don't want to share theirs
- Free-swimming invertebrate
- Litigates
- Outer
- Parallelograms
- Uneasy feelings
- Cross
- A way to remove
- Pages can be dog-\_\_\_
- Ukrainian city
- A citizen of Denmark
- Month
- Hindu queens
- Group of chemicals
- Rider of Rohan
- Wet dirt

- Southwestern Russia city
- Observed
- Angry
- Drivers' licenses
- Musical composition
- Auction
- They \_\_\_
- Women
- Be filled with love for
- Thick-soled sock
- Appears
- Old World lizard
- The leading performer
- Protein
- "Gunga Din" script writer
- Art \_\_\_ around 1920
- Blyton, children's author
- Abnormal breathing
- A place to rest

## KIDS' CORNER

**Fun FACT:** Although the claims cannot be confirmed, some link this device to an early Chinese philosopher.

ANSWER: Kite

**NEW WORD**

**TAIL**

a part of a kite that improves stability and adds color

	5	4			2	9		
		2		3				6
8	3		5		9	2		4
4				8		7		
9			7	4				
	1	6	2	5				
				7		1	8	
3						6	2	
5		1	6				4	

Level: Beginner

## SOLUTIONS

E	N	V	S		D	E	D	O	H	E		D	V	S	
H	I	W	E		E	T	I	O	O	D		E	W	M	
A	L	I	T	I	B	V	N	E	W	V		R	V	E	
V	O	R	V	B		H	E	D	V	N		O	G	E	
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D	V	L		S	H	O	I	N	E	S		O	F	N	
I	M	V	G	N	E	M	V	N				S	M	U	M
I	M	V	G	N	E	M	V	N				S	M	U	M
D	E	S	V	I	B			D	E	L	S	E	L		
E	S	N		S	W	O	H	P		I	E	T	I	P	
H	V	C		N	O	L	E	T	E	K	S	O	X	E	
V	R	E		E	H	O	N	V	G	E	D	I	M		
E	E	D	E		T	H	E	S	V		P	I	N	S	

6	4	3	8	2	9	1	7	5
7	2	9	5	6	1	8	4	3
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8	6	4	3	5	2	9	1	7
2	9	5	1	4	7	3	6	8
1	3	7	9	8	6	5	2	4
4	1	2	6	9	5	7	3	8
9	5	8	7	3	4	2	6	1
3	7	6	2	1	8	4	5	9

**How they say that in...**

English: Windy  
Spanish: Ventoso  
Italian: Ventoso  
French: Venteux  
German: Windig

**Get the PICTURE?**

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: Kite

**Did You Know?**

Guinness World Records says Australian Robert Moore's Kite reached the highest altitude by a single kite in 2014. Moore's kite reached 16,009 feet, or 4,879.84 meters.