

Representative Bivens— State budget becomes law Responsible spending, making state government better at serving Kentuckians



State Representative Ryan Bivens

The 2026 General Assembly has now concluded, marking the end of a busy legislative session in Frankfort. During this year's 60-day legislative session, lawmakers filed a total of 1,291 bills and, as of April 15, 171 have become law. Lawmakers will not return for a regular session until January 5, 2027, but work will continue throughout the year as the interim period begins in June. During that time, House and Senate members will review how recently enacted legislation is being implemented across state government and study new issues to prepare for the 2027 session.

Among those measures passed into law is HB 500, a \$32.4 billion, two-year budget that reflects the simple but significant idea most families already live by: spend responsibly, set priorities, and live within your means. State government should do the same and has a responsibility to focus on core needs and look constantly for ways to operate more efficiently.

HB 500 prioritizes the basics: public education, public safety, veterans' services, and maintaining higher education facilities.

However, the bill also pushes state government agencies and programs to tighten operations and eliminate waste. That includes reducing or ending outdated programs, scaling back expansions made during the pandemic, and cutting duplicate or unnecessary spend-

ing. To further incentivize these efforts, the budget reduces spending across many cabinets and programs and includes a 4% base reduction in executive branch spending in the first fiscal year and an additional 3% cut in the second fiscal year. The budget proposal gives agencies flexibility in determining individual program funding to identify the best areas to make reductions. Agencies are being encouraged to find efficiencies within their own budgets and focus dollars where they have the most impact.

That effort is especially important given what oversight reports have shown. The state auditor has identified more than a billion dollars in questioned costs, waste, and mismanagement across state government in recent years, including areas like Medicaid, transportation, and state travel. Those findings underscore the need for ongoing scrutiny and stronger accountability, and they position Kentucky as one of the first in the nation to actively pursue stronger government accountability – not because we face shortfalls but rather because it is the right thing to do.

At the same time, funding for K-12 education, Medicaid, corrections, juvenile justice, and veterans' programs remains intact and, in many cases, received a modest increase. The goal is not to weaken essential services, but to make sure they are supported in a more sustainable way. In fact, we increased funding for K-12 education, as well as other areas that required it. We also provided for a 2% raise across state government and fully

funded the Kentucky Employee Health Benefit plan's increased costs, as well as continuing our efforts to shore up public pensions.

Even with these protections, the budget also highlights the significant scale of ongoing spending. Medicaid alone accounts for roughly \$6 billion in spending over the biennium, underscoring the importance of long-term reforms aimed at improving both outcomes and efficiency. Across state government, health-care obligations and program costs continue to rise, requiring constant evaluation of how services are delivered and funded.

The bottom line is straightforward: taxpayer dollars should be treated with care. Just like Kentucky families, state government has to make choices, set priorities, and avoid waste. We have to make sure every dollar is spent as wisely as possible.

In addition to HB 500, lawmakers approved nearly a billion dollars in funding for the judicial branch (HB 504) and \$182 million in allocations for the legislative branch budget (HB 503). The legislature also passed a \$7 billion operating budget for the Transportation Cabinet (HB 501); a \$4.6 billion road construction and maintenance plan (HB 502); and \$70 million in funding for local road projects (HJR 76).

As always, I can be reached anytime through the toll-free message line in Frankfort at 1-800-372-7181. You can also contact me via email at Ryan.Bivens@kylegislature.gov and keep track through the Kentucky legislature's website at legislature.ky.gov.

THE DATES



ATTENTION GREEN COUNTY VOTERS

The online portal to request an absentee ballot can be found at vrsws.sos.ky.gov/abrweb/. It opened on April 4 and will close on May 5. If you are unable to mark a paper ballot due to disability, contact the county clerk's office to request an accessible absentee ballot. All mail-in absentee ballots must be received at the county clerk's office by 6 p.m. on Election Day.

In-person excused absentee voting will be available May 6 through May 13. (Certain eligibility requirements must be met to qualify for this)

Early in-person voting will be held at the courthouse from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on May 14 to May 16. **Any registered Green County voter is eligible to cast their vote during this time.**

No in-person voting will be available on **MONDAY, MAY 18.**

Election day voting will occur from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on May 19.

POLLING LOCATIONS ON ELECTION DAY GREEN COUNTY VOTING CENTERS INCLUDE:

EAST & SOUTH PRECINCTS
Green County Fire Dept., 105 Dakota Meyer Dr., Greensburg

WEST & NORTH PRECINCTS
Green County Ext. Office, 298 Happyville Rd., Greensburg

NORTH SUMMERSVILLE
Summersville Fire Dept., 6054 Hodgenville Rd., Summersville

ALLENDALE PRECINCT
Allendale Vote Building, 9015 Hodgenville Rd., Summersville

PIKEVIEW PRECINCT
Ebenezer Presbyterian, 4172 Blowing Springs Rd., Greensburg

EXIE PRECINCT
Exie Fire Dept., 8629 Edmonton Rd., Greensburg

DONANSBURG PRECINCT
Grab Fire Dept., 401 Grab Rd., Greensburg

PIERCE PRECINCT
Pierce Vote Building, 5125 Hwy. 218, Greensburg

YOU MUST VOTE AT THE PRECINCT IN WHICH YOU LIVE.

More information relating to the Green County primary election, including a sample ballot, will be published in the coming weeks. For questions or more information in the interim, contact Green County Clerk's Office at 203 W. Court Street, Greensburg, KY 42743 or call 270-932-5386.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Sean and Elizabeth Varga 2613 Meadow Dr., Louisville, KY 40220 have filed an application with the Energy and Environment Cabinet to place a 32 x 14' cabin with a 32 x 6' porch on the property located at 204 S. 1st St., Greensburg, KY. The nearest intersection is Columbia Avenue and S. 1st St. It will be located approximately 12 feet from unnamed stream. Any comments or objections can be submitted via email to: DOWFloodplain@ky.gov Kentucky Division of Water, Floodplain Management Section 300 Sower Blvd., Frankfort, KY 40601. Call 502-564-3410 with questions.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The Green County Fiscal Court will be accepting SEALED bids on the following road supplies and equipment to be furnished to the County of Green for Fiscal Year July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027.

ALL ITEMS MUST MEET STATE SPECIFICATIONS

1. GASOLINE (REGULAR AND SUPER)
2. DIESEL FUEL (NO. 2 DYED GRADE AND ROAD FUEL)
3. CRUSHED STONE (ALL SIZES AND GRADES)
4. ROAD TILE (VARIOUS SIZES PLASTIC AND METAL)
5. ASPHALT (HOT MIX F.O.B. PLANT AND HOT MIX HAULED AND LAID IN GREEN COUNTY) — MUST MEET STATE SPECIFICATIONS
6. ROAD OILS (RS-2, SS-1H, HFRS-2, PRIMER L, AE-200)
7. PUG MILL RENTAL
8. CONTRACT TO CHIP AND SEAL COUNTY ROADS
9. COLD MIX (PRODUCT 110)

More detailed specifications on the above supplies may be obtained between the hours of 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Central Time, Monday through Friday, at the office of the Green County Judge/Executive, John H. Frank, 203 West Court Street, Greensburg, KY 42743. Phone No: (270) 932-4024. **SEALED Bids must be submitted to the aforementioned office no later than 4:00 P.M., Central Time, Monday, May 18, 2026, with specifications included. Envelopes should be clearly marked as to what items you are bidding on. Bids will be opened at the Regular Monthly Green County Fiscal Court Meeting, which begins at 5:00 P.M., Central Time, on Thursday May 21, 2026, at the Green County Courthouse.** The Court may award contracts on the bids received at the aforesaid meeting or, in the event further deliberation is warranted, designate a date certain for awarding same.

The Green County Fiscal Court reserves the right to: (a) accept the best and lowest bid, (b) accept more than one bid per item, and/or (c) reject any and all bids received. The Fiscal Court further reserves the right to waive any informality in any bid received and in the bidding process.

DID YOU KNOW?

Almost 9 out of 10 newspaper readers vote in local elections.

	Ky adults	Newspaper readers	Non-newspaper readers
Vote in state/national elections	69%	71%	60%
Vote in local/school board/city elections	84%	86%	72%

We Are Proud To Be
Your Local Newspaper
Greensburg
Record-Herald

Source: The Kentucky State Study 2023: Conducted by Coda Ventures, Base: Total adults