The 2023 Kansas legislative session came to a close Friday, April 29, one day shy of its statutorily allowed 90-day schedule. The legislature returned the last week of April after a short break. Budget conference committees met Monday and Tuesday to negotiate the last of the appropriation item. The full legislature reconvened Wednesday, spending the rest of the week debating conference committee reports, 19 attempts to override the governor’s vetoes and passing the final State budget. The week was marked with contentious floor debates as the legislature overrode 9 of Gov. Kelly’s vetoes, sustaining 10, and hotly debating the decisions of conference committees.

Not only did they adjourn the regular session, but they also adjourned sine die, meaning the regular session is over. Generally, both chambers will return several weeks after adjournment giving the governor an opportunity to act on the remaining legislation passed during the veto session. Unless a special session is called, the Kansas Legislature will not convene again until January 9, 2024.

Throughout the session, KABC continued its tradition of strong advocacy to protect the health, safety, and welfare of older adults across the state regardless of whether they choose to live in the community or in institutional settings.

KABC again this year introduced legislation to give residents of assisted living facilities the right to appeal an involuntary eviction. Companion bills were introduced in both the Senate (SB 191) and in the House (HB 2246). While both bills had hearings, the Senate bill wasn’t worked by the Senate Health Committee and the House Judiciary Committee removed the right to appeal causing KABC and our coalition partners to withdraw our support for the bill. However, both bills remain alive for consideration next session.

We strongly opposed a legislative attempt to reduce the hours required to train certified nurse aides. This bill set a dangerous precedent which would directly impact the quality of care provided to residents in nursing facilities. Thanks to a strong coalition of advocates testifying against the proposal, the committee did not work the bill. It too, remains alive for further consideration in 2024.

Included in the budget for FY 2024 which begins July 1, 2023, were the following appropriations impacting older adults:

- $1.5 million State General Fund (SGF) for nutritional programs for seniors to be distributed by the Kansas Area Agencies on Aging.
- $116,250 SGF and 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) to create a dementia services coordinator position.
- $4 million, including $1 million SGF, to support the implementation of a fully automated system for the Client Assessment, Referral and Evaluation (CARE) Program.
- Add $3.0 million, including $1.2 million SGF, to increase PACE reimbursement rates by 5%.
- $34.4 million, including $14 million SGF, to fully rebase the daily Medicaid rate for nursing facilities.
- $61.6 million, including $24.6 million SGF, to fund additional payments to nursing facilities based on the number of Medicaid residents served.
- $13 million, including $5.2 million SGF, for a 10% increase to the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Frail Elderly (FE) waiver reimbursement rates.
- $1.2 million, including $482,880 SGF, to extend Medicaid adult dental coverage to include dentures and partials.
- Created an interim committee to take a holistic look at the nursing facility reimbursement rate system, including cost center caps and an acuity-based add-on for FY 2024.