

legislature gets tough on sex

Senate bill will make buying sex a felony on first offense; hikes fine

Tim Carpenter
The Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA - Prosecutors, law enforcement officers, nonprofit organizations and individuals Wednesday endorsed a Kansas Senate bill making the crime of buying sexual relations a felony on the first offense and mandating participation in an educational program

on commercial sexual exploitation.

Legislation endorsed by Attorney General Kris Kobach and Shawnee County District Attorney Mike Kagay would also raise the minimum fine to \$2,000. Elevating the crime from a misdemeanor to a felony on the first offense would move cases from municipal court to district court, where a more complete record could be made of plea bargains and diversion agreements.

“We face a modern form of slavery - human trafficking,” Kagay told

Andrea Carter, a Manhattan resident who said she was a sex trafficking survivor, said the legislation would hold buyers to a higher standard of accountability and potentially reduce the misperception sex trafficking victims were expendable.

members of the Senate Judiciary Committee. “In 2021, I first proposed this legislation to address the demand side of the sex marketplace.

“The marketplace where these crimes occur is fueled by buyers whose actions create the daily indignities and abuses suffered by victims in our communities.”

He said the state must

hold purchasers of sex accountable for their actions “because it is within our power - and our moral obligation - to stop this cycle of exploitation.”

Under Senate Bill 71, the attorney general’s office would select educational or treatment programs that would be available to district court judges when sentencing

offenders.

The crime of commercial sexual exploitation would be elevated to a Level 9 felony on July 1, 2026. The minimum fine would be raised from \$1,200 to \$2,000.

The bill would allow a person in Kansas to enter a diversion agreement for this crime once during his or her lifetime. The measure would prohibit a diversion for anyone who received one before July 1, 2025, even if that was approved in a municipal court.

Ed Klumpp, a lobbyist representing Kansas

police chief, sheriff and peace officer associations, said a significant element of the bill was removing sexual exploitation cases from municipal courts.

If the bill was signed into law, he said, information on all plea agreements, diversion deals and pending cases would be documented in the state court record and available to every prosecutor in Kansas.

“Currently, municipal violations are only recorded in a state system at time of arrest and

(See SEX on page 23)

Scott City Council Agenda Monday, February 3 • 6:30 p.m. City Hall • 221 West 5th Street

• Approve minutes of January 20 regular meeting and January 27 special meeting

• Approve mayor’s appointments to city offices and commissions

• Elect council president

• Designate official newspaper

• Designate depository of funds

• Discuss municipal government software option

• Discussion regarding temporary business license fees and procedures

• Review Scott County Law Enforcement Center occupancy agreement

• Approve KPWSLF loan and payment of principal and interest

Open agenda. Audience is invited to voice ideas and concerns. A time limit may be requested

• Pool Department
1) Hire lifeguards

• Building Inspector
1) Misc. business

• Police Department
1) Misc. business

• Parks Department
1) Palmer Park playground equipment options

• Public Works Department
1) Bid opening for roof at city shop
2) Update on crosswalk at 12th and Main Street

• Clerk’s Department
1) Second council meeting of month to be held on Feb. 18 due to Presidents’ Day
2) Registration reminder for League of Kansas Municipalities webinar: First Amendment in Action/Managing Disruptions at Public Meetings

• City administrator’s comments

• City attorney’s comments

• Executive session(s)
1) Non-elected personnel

• Mayor’s comments

• Adjournment

Agenda is subject to change between time of publication and time of meeting. Please visit <https://www.scottcityks.org/government/city-council/agendas-and-minutes> for updates.

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Plane from Wichita to Washington, D.C., crashes into Army helicopter, Potomac

Anna Kaminski
The Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA - A regional passenger jet traveling from Wichita to Washington, D.C., carrying 60 passengers and four crewmembers crashed midair into an Army helicopter Wednesday night as it attempted to land at Reagan Washington National Airport, according to a preliminary report

from the Federal Aviation Administration.

The flight left Wichita around 5:20 p.m., according to flight records. The jet, a Bombardier CRJ700, was operated by Pacific Southwest Airlines (PSA), a regional subsidiary of American Airlines.

It crashed into an Army Black Hawk helicopter shortly before 9:00 p.m. EST.

A camera at the

Kennedy Center showed a bright, fiery blast in mid-air before both aircraft plummeted. No deaths had been confirmed as of 10:00 p.m. CST.

American Airlines confirmed the crash and requested anyone who believes they had a loved one on board to call 800-679-8215.

Multiple people called law enforcement to report the crash at 8:53 p.m.,

according to a joint news release from the local police department, fire department and emergency services.

The three agencies and others were at the Potomac River conducting a search and rescue mission, the release said.

Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly said she was “actively in contact with authorities” about the crash.

Kansans urged to look for possible assets on National Unclaimed Property Day

TOPEKA - State Treasurer Steven Johnson urges all Kansas residents to take part in National Unclaimed Property Day on Sat., February 1.

The day is dedicated to raising awareness about billions of dollars in unclaimed property being held by state governments across the country.

Whether it’s an abandoned bank account, an uncashed check, or forgotten insurance proceeds, unclaimed property can be found in nearly every community.

Unclaimed property typically includes assets from dormant bank accounts, unpaid wages, life insurance policies, utility refunds, safe deposit box contents, and more.

Through the state’s unclaimed property program, funds are safeguarded until rightful owners step forward.

How to Check for Unclaimed Property:

1) Visit unclaimed-property.ks.gov.

This official website by the Kansas treasurer’s office is where the search begins for unclaimed property.

2) Provide basic information.

Searches only require minimal information, typically your name and county of residence.

3) Submit a claim if a match is found.

Follow the instructions for providing proof of ownership and identification.

Since unclaimed property is reported to the state by businesses and financial institutions, the amounts held can range from a few dollars to thousands.

“It only takes a few minutes to see if you or a family member might have unclaimed property,” adds Johnson.

Public Notice

(First published in The Scott County Record Thurs., Jan. 23, 2025; last published Thurs., Jan. 30, 2025)2t

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SCOTT COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

To all qualified electors residing within the boundaries of the Scott County Conservation District, notice is hereby given that pursuant to K.S.A. 2-1907, as amended, on the 6th day of February, 2025, at 2:00 p.m., the annual meeting of the Scott County Conservation District will be held at the Wm. Carpenter 4-H Building, 608 Fairgrounds Road, Scott County Fairgrounds, Scott City, Ks.

The meeting agenda will include the following business items:

One: The supervisors of the Scott County Conservation District shall make full and due report of their activities and financial affairs since the last annual meeting.

Two: The supervisors shall conduct an election by secret ballot of qualified electors, there present, of one supervisor to serve for a term of three years from date of said meeting.

The term of Larry Brown is expiring.

All in the County of Scott in the State of Kansas.

Luke Minnix, chairperson

Scott County Conservation District

Attest

Nichole O'Brien, district manager

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