Oxford's Monson Takes Three Firsts at Clearwater

Oxford High School Junior Brock Monson took 1st overall, 1st in squat, and 1st in clean at the Clearwater Powerlifting meet on Monday. Congratulations, Brock!
Courtesy Photo

Legal Notice
(Published in the Belle Plaine News / Oxford Register on Thursday March 19, 2026 and Thursday March 26, 2026)

NOTICE OF HEARING

State of Kansas, Sumner County, ss:

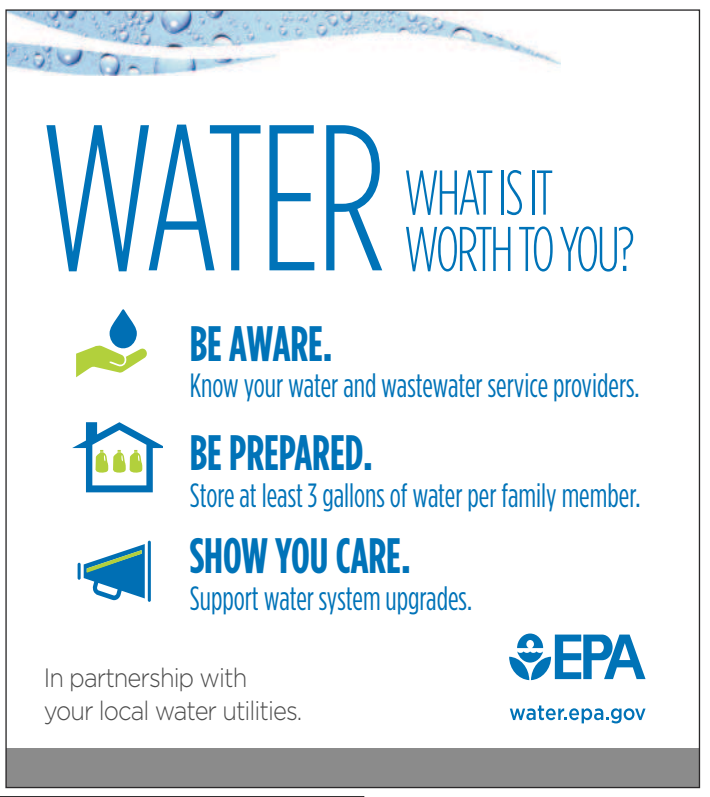
To Whom It May Concern:

TAKE NOTICE, that the Board of Sumner County Commissioners, pursuant to K.S.A. 68-102, at a regular meeting on the 7th day of April 2026 will hold a Public Hearing at 9:30 o'clock A.M. concerning the vacating of the following described road:

That portion of W. 140th St S (originally platted as Road No. 301), beginning at the Northeast corner of the West Half of the Northwest Quarter of the Northwest Quarter (W/2-NW/4-NW/4) of Section 21, thence running West along the section line between Sections 21 and 16, Township 34 South, Range 2 West of the 6th P.M., (Falls Township), Sumner County, Kansas to the Northwest corner of said Northwest Quarter. Said section line being the North boundary line of Section 21 and the center line of said road having a right of way of 50 feet.

ALL PERSONS desiring not to vacate said road and can show cause, have need to be present.

Debra A. Norris, Sumner County Clerk



Legislature approves plan for answering lawyer shortage in rural Kansas

Kansas lawmakers have approved a plan designed to address a growing shortage of attorneys in rural areas, sending the measure to Laura Kelly for final consideration.

The bill passed the House 119-3 on Tuesday and cleared the Senate earlier on a 34-6 vote. It creates financial incentives aimed at encouraging both law students and practicing attorneys to work in sparsely populated regions of the state.

Under the proposal, law students could receive a $3,000 annual stipend for up to three years to help cover tuition, books, and other expenses. In exchange, recipients must begin practicing law in rural Kansas within 90 days of being admitted to the bar and commit to working in those communities for each year they receive funding.

The bill also establishes a loan repayment program for attorneys already carrying student debt. Eligible attorneys could receive up to $20,000 per year, with a lifetime cap of $100,000, in exchange for practicing in a rural community for at least one year per year of assistance.

Lawmakers have proposed approximately $600,000 in the state budget to fund the initiative, though that funding is still awaiting final approval.

"It's a great day for rural Kansas and under-served areas," said Ken Rahjes, a Republican from Agra who helped guide the bill through the House. "Any Kansan regardless of where you live should be able to have counsel. You shouldn't have to drive hours to have that."

The legislation comes in response to a 2024 judicial task force report that warned the state's attorney shortage is approaching crisis levels. According to the report, more than 40% of Kansas counties have one or fewer attorneys per 1,000 residents, and some counties have none at all.

At the time of the report, 47 of the state's 105 counties fell into that category. Two counties — Wichita and Hodgeman — had no attorneys, while 16 counties had three or fewer and more than half had 10 or fewer practicing attorneys.

The report also highlighted an uneven distribution of legal professionals. While Kansas has more than 11,000 active attorneys, about 79% are located in urban counties, leaving only about 21% serving rural areas. In fact, the report found more attorneys work in Kansas City than in all of rural Kansas combined.

Judicial leaders say the shortage impacts a wide range of legal needs, from criminal defense and child custody cases to business and civil disputes.

"The Legislature's action on this bill reflects an awareness of how serious the attorney shortage is and its impact on our rural communities," said K.J. Wall.

Wall noted that student debt remains one of the biggest barriers to practicing in rural areas, where salaries can be less competitive.

"The loan repayment program addresses one of the biggest struggles for law school students and experienced attorneys, which is education debt," he said.

Rising education costs have made the issue more pronounced. According to the task force report, attorneys who graduated before 1980 reported average law school debt of about $9,000. For those graduating after 2011, that figure has climbed to more than $98,000, with total educational debt averaging over $124,000.

Kansas Supreme Court Chief Justice Eric Rosen also warned lawmakers earlier this year about the consequences of inaction.

"We currently have counties in Kansas with no attorneys," Rosen said. "And, in other counties, attorneys are serving as city or county attorneys, prosecutors or judges — meaning they are not taking on any additional casework."

The bill also creates the Law Student Training and Stipend Program for Rural Kansas, which would be administered by the Kansas Department of Commerce in coordination with Washburn University and the University of Kansas law schools. Preference would be given to Kansas residents.

Participants who fail to meet their service commitments would be required to repay the funds and could face additional penalties.

If signed into law, the program could begin as early as this fall and is currently set to run through July 1, 2031.

Answer to Puzzle on page 9

Answer to Sudoku Puzzle on page 9

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

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