



ORAL HEALTH KANSAS

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Kansas Advocates Network (KAN) along with [Alliance for a Healthy Kansas](#) were at the root of the Medicaid expansion hearings in February.

They coordinated [testimony](#) in support of the bill from 160 organizations. Thank you to our board member and advocacy Committee chair, Barb Conant, who helps lead the Medicaid expansion efforts for KAN.

"Turnaround" week/ Medicaid expansion/ Tax policy

This week, the Kansas Legislature has entered what is known as "Turnaround" week. By February 23, all bills must pass out of the chamber in which they were introduced in order to be considered this year. In other words, all Senate bills must pass out of the Senate, and all House bills must pass out of the House by the end of this week. Bills that are not passed this week will die. They may be considered again next year, but they cannot be considered this year. There are some exceptions, of course. Bills in the budget and tax committees, for example, can be considered at any time during this legislative session. After this week, we will have a good idea of which bills remain alive for consideration this year, and we will share those details in next week's Weekly Wednesday Update.

Two key issues are being hotly debated



Save the Date!

We are making plans for the November 2017 Oral Health Kansas Conference!

Mark the dates on your calendar and plan to join us on November 2-3 at the K-State Olathe building, 22201 Innovation Drive, Olathe, Kansas.



What is baby tooth decay?

Baby teeth are just as important as adult teeth. Baby teeth can help adult teeth come in correctly. Baby tooth decay can be caused by the child going to bed with a bottle or even the mother cleaning the pacifier with her own mouth. Here are some [ways](#) to prevent baby tooth decay:

- Brush the teeth with a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste from the ages of 3 to 6.
- If your child uses a pacifier, provide one that is clean-don't dip it

at this writing. The House is debating Medicaid expansion, and the Senate debated the major tax bill of the year.

Kansas remains one of 19 states that has not expanded its Medicaid program. States that have expanded Medicaid have seen decreases in the number of residents who are uninsured. They also have seen improved health outcomes among low-income residents. Kansas has forfeited over \$1.7 billion in federal money by not expanding Medicaid, and over 100,000 Kansans remain uninsured. The full Kansas House of Representatives is debating expanding Medicaid for the first time, and just the debate is a major step forward. Rep. Susan Concannon (R-Beloit) is leading the House debate. Rep. Concannon was a member of the seventh Dental Champions class. Oral Health Kansas has been a part of the coalition supporting Medicaid expansion since the beginning. Our testimony from 2017 can be found on our [website](#).



Last week, the Legislature passed a bill that would reverse most of the 2012 tax cuts that have been the source of the state's plummeting revenues. Among

- in sugar or honey
- Encourage your baby/child to eat and drink healthy options
 - After your baby/child is done eating or drinking, wipe his mouth or gums with a wash cloth or damp gauze pad.



Reserve a sugary drink display now!

February is almost over and our March slots are slowly starting to fill up! We have a limited amount of drink displays. Reserving yours ahead of time is crucial for a guaranteed slot. [Sign up now!](#)

Our sugary drink display contains 10 popular beverages and shows how much sugar is in each. The display is free to use, up to a month and we reimburse postage.



other provisions, the bill would reinstate the tax on LLCs and return the state to having three income tax brackets. The bill was sent to the Governor yesterday, and he vetoed it this morning. Two hours later, the House voted to overturn the veto by a vote of 85 to 40. The Senate passed the bill last week with a margin of 22-17, which was five votes short of the number needed to override the veto. When they voted this afternoon on overriding the veto, the margin increased to 24-26, but it was not enough to override the Governor's veto. The state's fiscal crisis remains without a solution, as we face a \$350 million shortfall in the fiscal year that ends in July 2017.

Oral Health Kansas supports increased state revenue through balanced, equitable and sustainable tax policy, and we supported this bill. We provided [testimony](#) in favor of balanced tax policy earlier this month.

Addressing social determinants in oral health

Social determinants in our community affects our oral health and access to health care. Where we live, learn and work affects our both our oral health and overall health. Oral health is affected by social determinants such as health insurance, access to healthy foods and lack of transportation. Addressing these determinants is important to reduce such disparities and ensure all people have access to good oral health.


What can you do in your community? Is



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there anything you CAN do? Of course there is! Find out if an organization or community members in your area are already working on addressing oral health as an issue.

[The Center for Health Care Strategies \(CHCS\)](#) provided a technical assistance brief describing a framework for assessing and creating partnerships to improve social determinants related to oral health.

Oral Health Kansas supports [Community Oral Health Coalitions](#) throughout Kansas working on promoting oral health in their communities. If you are interested to see if there's already one in your area, contact [Doug Bowman](#).



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