

# 2026 KCMA Kentucky General Assembly military-veterans legislation tracker

## Working document

*Complete through January 7, 2026  
60-day "Budget" Session*

*Joint/Concurrent resolutions are those which must pass both chambers. Simple "resolutions" pass only one chamber, by voice vote, and do not have the effect of law.*

*NOTE: In the past, bills were only assigned to a committee if there was reasonable expectation they would be heard. Now, leadership has determined to assign all bills to a committee, and let committee chairs determine what will be heard. Bottom line, getting a committee assignment is no guarantee a bill will be granted a committee hearing.*

*While the primary purpose of the "Veto Session" is to consider overrides of Governor vetoes, the legislators may choose to address more legislation during these two remaining days. They simply will be unable to override any veto of that legislation.*

ADDITION – Bill actions highlighted in **GREEN** means final passage, **YELLOW** means progressing and under consideration, **RED** means defeated or simply out of time. No color code means no action to date.

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

#### **HB 26 (Burke)**

**AN ACT relating to workers' compensation for first responders.**

**Amend KRS 342.0011, relating to workers' compensation, to expand the definition of "injury" to include psychological injuries for police officers, firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, front-line staff members, or members of the National Guard; create a new section of KRS Chapter 342 to establish when psychological injuries are valid workers' compensation claims when not a direct result of a physical injury.**

- Adds psychological injuries such as Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) to workers' compensation coverage
- PTSD is very common in the veterans, military and first responder community - an almost inevitable consequence of combat deployment or front-line disaster response exposure
  - Even in garrison situations, such as an airfield, all forward-deployed personnel are exposed to mortar attacks and even greater risk during transportation operations, while first responders are subject to providing treatment behind the scenes and victim recovery operations
- Concern of legislature and state workers comp program is this adoption would likely create significant additional fiscal burden
  - Costs are difficult to quantify and could be quite significant in scale
  - This legislation was filed in as HB 363 in 2024 and as HB 420 in 2025, and failed to earn a hearing either time
- *Introduced January 6*

#### **HB 34 (Banta)**

**AN ACT relating to death benefits.**

**Amend KRS 61.315 to include additional cancers which, when they are the cause of death of a firefighter, would make the firefighter eligible for death benefits; make a technical correction.**

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- Adds the following cancer types: Hematopoietic, Mesothelioma, Esophageal cancer, Lung cancer, Rectal cancer, Thyroid cancer, Intestinal cancer, Multiple myeloma cancer, Buccal cancer, Pharyngeal cancer
- Filed as HB 323 in 2025; no action
- *Introduced January 6*

#### SENATE

##### **SB 13 (Deneen)**

###### **Ex-Officio Planning Commission Membership**

**Create a new section of KRS Chapter 100 to define terms; amend KRS 100.133 and 100.137 to allow the inclusion of a nonvoting ex officio member of a planning unit to be a representative of a military installation to advise on matters relating to national security and other concerns for the military installation; provide that the Act may be cited as the Military Installation Protection Act.**

- Titled the “Military Installation Protection Act”
- Authorizes local planning and zoning commissions to add a military installation representative as an ex officio member to planning and zoning commissions whenever they are adjacent to a military installation to allow for installation concerns to be addressed during the zoning process
  - In 10 U.S.C. sec. (c)(4), the term “military installation” means a base, camp, post, station, yard, center, or other activity under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of a military department or, in the case of an activity in a foreign country, under the operational control of the Secretary of a military department or the Secretary of Defense, without regard to the duration of operational control
  - This includes National Guard armories/training areas and Armed Forces Reserve Centers
- Intent is for the installation representative to advise on national security or other concerns relating to the installation
- The installation representative, at the discretion of the commander/director, may be a Department of Defense civilian employee (very common on installation staffs, often in a deputy commander or division director role) or a or a key retiree/veteran/volunteer who is a strong community advocate for that installation, such as a member of the (Fort) Knox Regional Development Alliance or the Christian County Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Committee
  - This gives the commander a better chance to provide long-term continuity
  - Sponsor acknowledges that local commissions cannot compel servicemember participation or an installation to host meetings (strongly discouraged under military ethics regulations)
- *Introduced January 6*

##### **SB 15 (Deneen)**

###### **AN ACT relating to the protection of veterans' benefits**

**Create a new section of KRS Chapter 40 to define terms; require any person seeking compensation for assisting with veterans' benefits to be accredited by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs; provide that the Act may be cited as the Veterans' Benefits Accreditation Act.**

- Titled the “Veterans' Benefits Accreditation Act”

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- This legislation very simply requires companies that do veteran advocacy work with the federal Veterans Administration (VA) here in Kentucky be accredited to perform that service by the VA
- Oversight of this requirement is not specified in the legislation and will likely be covered in an administrative regulation process, logically under the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA), which would then assume some type of administrative role
- Logical step to protect the interests of veterans, as the federal VA has a history of revisiting and revoking benefits awarded with the assistance of uncertified organizations, forcing affected veterans to return pay settlements awarded to them
- State Veterans Services Organizations and KDVA service representatives routinely make it their practice to be certified
- May receive opposition from affected companies/organizations that want to push back against this requirement
- *Introduced January 6*

#### **SB 28 (Higdon)**

**AN ACT relating to operating a motor vehicle.**

**Repeal and reenact KRS 189.292 to define "mobile electronic device"; prohibit the use of a mobile electronic device while operating a motor vehicle; establish exceptions; amend KRS 189.294 to define "mobile electronic device"; amend KRS 189.990 to establish penalties for violation of KRS 189.292 and 189.294; require that money from fines be deposited into the traumatic brain injury trust fund, the Kentucky trauma care system fund, and the veterans' program trust fund; provide that a courtesy warning and not a uniform citation shall be issued by a peace officer until October 31, 2026; provide that the Act may be cited as the Phone-Down Kentucky Act.**

- Titled the "Phone-Down Kentucky Act"
- Prohibits use of cell phones and other electronic devices while driving
- Will not assess the bill here other than to note that proceeds from associated fines will be deposited into the Traumatic Brain Injury Trust Fund, the Kentucky Trauma Care System Fund, and the Veterans' Program Trust Fund
  - Fines support veterans
- *Introduced January 6*