



Photo by Sherman Smith/Kansas Reflector

Rep. Dan Osman, shown here during a January 26 hearing, raised concerns Monday about the cost of implementing a bill that changes bond requirements and how sentencing time is determined.

Bill imposes longer prison sentences in Kansas, with \$1.5M cost, need for more beds

By Morgan Chilson
Kansas Reflector

TOPEKA — A bill changing how courts impose jail time on consecutive sentences and limiting who will be released on bond passed the House despite concerns about how much it will increase costs and remove judicial discretion.

House Bill 2444 addresses multiple issues, including limiting how days spent in custody while awaiting trial are applied toward consecutive sentences, limiting judicial discretion to release a person on their own recognizance, and requiring bonds of specific dollar amounts based on the crime the person allegedly committed.

On Monday, the House passed the bill 85-37 along party lines, concurring with Senate amendments and sending it to the governor for consideration. The Senate passed the bill Thursday on a 34-6 vote.

Rep. Dan Osman, an Overland Park Democrat, opposed the bill's passage,

pointing to projected costs to the state general fund in excess of \$1.5 million each year.

The Kansas State Board of Indigents' Defense Services "is expecting that their costs are going to increase by \$800,000, and that alone is just the tip of the iceberg," he said.

Osman said the Legislature is "putting our thumb on the scale" in a way that will encourage more people to seek a jury trial rather than plead because the bill changes sentencing.

"HB 2444 would replace discretion with blanket policy, upend other policy choices made by the Legislature, and result in more trials," said public defender Jennifer Roth in testimony for a hearing earlier this year. "HB 2444 would take away discretion from district court judges in a sweeping fashion."

Roth said the Legislature has "crafted a list of mitigating factors" that allowed judges to depart from sentencing guidelines, including factors for survivors of

abuse, people with physical or mental impairments, and veterans.

"HB 2444 would prohibit a departure, regardless of the situation," she said.

Osman on Monday called the bill "problematic" and said it would require more prison beds be available, noting that Senate changes shifted the bill to add 220 beds by 2036 — 124 of those next year.

"This is the highest we've seen for any bill this session — the highest we've seen for any bill for multiple sessions," he said.

"You can't shove that off to the next Legislature and say it's their problem to sort out. It's our problem too. When you have bills that impact the prison bed space this dramatically ... it is a certainty we are going to need to build new prisons because of this bill, and we're not going to do it."

Osman said there were no funds allocated to build new prisons to meet the needs of HB 2444.

Be wary of fake traffic violation scam, Kobach says

TOPEKA — Kansas Attorney General Kris Kobach issued a consumer alert warning Kansans about a growing scam involving fraudulent "Notice of Hearing" notices for alleged traffic violations.

Scammers are sending fake notices via text message and email that mimic official court documents.

These notices often include realistic details such as court headings, case numbers, statute citations, and a QR code or link directing recipients to pay a fictitious fine and associated costs.

"Courts do not serve legal documents on individuals via

text or email," Kobach said.

"Kansans should not respond to unsolicited messages or emails containing purported legal documents from courts requesting payments. Kansans should also avoid interacting with texts or emails that include alleged notices or direct the consumer to scan any QR code within them. If you receive any of these notices, please report it to my office so we can investigate."

How to spot and avoid the scam

• Unsolicited delivery: Real court notices for traffic viola-

tions or hearings are never sent by text or email.

• Pressure to pay: The notices urge quick payment via QR code or link to "resolve" the matter and avoid further penalties.

• Professional appearance: They often feature official-looking formatting to appear legitimate.

What to do if you receive one

• Do not reply, call any provided number, scan the QR code, or click any links. Interacting with the message could introduce malware to your device.

• Verify any claim independently: Contact the clerk of the relevant court directly using a phone number from the court's official website (never one listed in the suspicious message).

• Think before you act: Pause and double-check before responding to any unexpected legal communication.

Kansans who receive these fraudulent notices are encouraged to report them to the Kansas Attorney General's Public Protection Division at www.ag.ks.gov or by calling (785) 296-3751 or 1-800-432-2310.

Doom

Continued from Page 1

campaigns promoting "same-sex marriage and gay equality." It never worked to say, "You're a hater, you're a bigot if you don't agree with me." What worked was a moral message affirming "two people bonded in love to each other for the rest of their lives, serving each other and serving their community and, for many of them, serving their God."

Rauch stressed that mainline Protestant churches were once the "cultural lynchpins of our communities. ... They were sociologically bedrock institutions, but they were also helping give us the ideas that stabilized our democracy."

Today, added Rauch, "the critical problem in American political, cultural and spiritual life ... lies among white evangelicals and their politicalization and their fear-

based theology."

In response, Rowe concluded: "What we're trying to do though is talk about a God that is very different, a God that includes, a God that loves and leads with that, a God who creates space for all people, a God who ... understands that we've all been created in God's image, and we're all worthy of love and that we're all beloved of God, even Jewish atheists -- everyone. That is a countercultural message now."

Terry Mattingly is Senior Fellow on Communications and Culture at Saint Constantine College in Houston. He lives in Elizabethton, Tennessee, and writes *Rational Sheep*, a Substack newsletter on faith and mass media.

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Dinner Fundraiser for Stroke Awareness

Friday April 3, 2026 • 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
\$15.00 per person

Dinner Menu

Spaghetti - Marinara and Alfredo
Green Beans & Garlic Bread • Dessert & Drinks

All proceeds will benefit Clorina Fenton, stroke survivor.

Items to be raffled off!
Karaoke after dinner 8 pm - 11 pm!
417 NW 4th St. Abilene, KS 67410

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

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Lottery

Powerball
Drawing March 25
7 21 55 56 64 26
Power Play = 4

Super Kansas Cash
Drawing March 25
5 17 19 23 29 5

2by2 Kansas
Drawing March 25
Red — 3 26
White — 8 14

Mega Millions
Drawing March 24
4 13 52 53 69 10

Pick 3
Drawing March 26
Midday — 4 6 8
Drawing March 25
Evening — 1 8 0

Millionaire for Life
Drawing March 25
1 26 40 46 50 3

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Market Watch

	Thursday	Change
ADM	72.41	+0.085
Apple	254.49	+1.60
AT&T	28.925	-0.01
Bank of Am.	48.35	+0.10
Bayer	10.98	+0.08
Boeing	200.09	+5.67
BP	46.15	-0.04
Caterpillar	705.89	+2.76
Coca-Cola	74.70	+0.015
ConocoPhillips	132.75	-0.46
Deere	590.00	+8.47
Everygy	80.40	UNCH
Exxon Mobil	165.40	+0.025
Ford Motor	11.6101	+0.0151
Harley-David	19.49	UNCH
Home Depot	328.30	-0.13
IBM	242.49	+0.77
Johnson & Jo.	239.39	+0.13
McDonald's	309.63	+0.67

Microsoft 365.97 -5.07
Pepsico 150.83 -0.90
Pfizer 27.57 +0.29
Union Pacific 239.19 -2.14
UPS 97.50 -0.87
Wal-Mart 122.6985 +0.5185

Grains:

Prices at 3:40 p.m. March 26

Wheat	\$6.06
Change	+0.08
Corn	\$4.12
Change	UNCH
Soybeans	\$10.84
Change	+0.14
Milo	\$3.77
Change	UNCH

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Community Calendar Sponsored by Black and Company Realtors

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All classes are located at the Dickinson County Art Council 401 N. Cedar Jewelry making March 5th 6:30 pm March 18th pen and pencil multimedia 6:30 pm March 4th, Line Dancing 6:30 pm March 25th Stained glass 6:30 pm

Talmage Community Annual soup and Bake Sale. Saturday, March 14, 2026 from 4-7 p.m. at th ealmage Community and Senior Center, 2971 Main Street, Talmage, Ks. Soup Supper Donation.

End of the Trail Quilters Guild, 2026 Meeting Schedule
Location: First United Methodist Church in Abilene, Fourth Tuesday of the Month at 7pm
No meeting in November, December TBD - either December 1 or December 8

Kids Bingo Night Saturdays 7:00 pm offered by Enterprise Rec Commission, Enterprise Community Building

7 PM every Monday, Boy Scout Troop 40 meets at VFW 3279 on Spruce

COMMUNITY MEALS will be served on the 2nd and 4th MONDAY of the Month at the Sterl Hall Fairgrounds 619 N. Rogers St.

Kiwanis Club meetings the 4th Monday of each month: 6:30pm
@Walts Campground and Country Store, Exit 281/1-70 (Mink Rd) Kiwanis Board meetings the 3rd Monday of each month: NOON @ Pizza Hut

Sons American Revolution, every 4th Tuesday at 7pm, at VFW Bldg, 317 N Spruce St, Abilene, KS.

Every 2nd Tuesday at 2 PM. The American Legion Auxiliary- Unit 39 meets in the National Guard Armory-1009 NW 8th St Abilene

3rd Tuesday of each month at 7 PM The American Legion Post #1969 meets at VFW Building - 317 N Spruce St

7 PM every Tuesday, Pack 240 in the Brethren in Christ Church 11th & Buckeye, Abilene, KS 67410

The End of the Trail Quilters Guild meets every 4th Tuesday of the month except December. They meet at 7 PM at the First United Methodist Church in Wright Hall

1st Tuesday at 7 PM VFW Post 3279 meets at 317 N Spruce St, Abilene, KS

3rd Wednesday of each month, 12:15pm, Herington Hilltop Community Center

Narcotics Anonymous Meeting 1005 N. Buckeye Ave, Abilene, Sun 7 PM Wed 7 PM Open meeting wheelchair accessed Eddie A 785-252-7074

7 PM every Tuesday, open AA Step meeting at St. John's Episcopal Church 6th & Buckeye, Abilene Ks 67410

1st Thursday at 8 PM The American Legion Son's, Squadron #39 meets at The National Guard Armory -1009 NW 8th St. Abilene, KS 67410

1st Thursday at 7 PM The American Legion Riders, Chapter #39, meets at The National Guard Armory-1009 NW 8th St. Abilene, KS 67410

3rd Thursday at 7 PM The American Legion Post #39 meets at The National Guard Armory-1009 NW 8th St. Abilene, KS 67410

7 PM every Thursday, open A.A. meets at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6th & Buckeye, Abilene, KS 67410

7 PM every Saturday, open A.A. meets at St. John's Episcopal Church, 6th & Buckeye, Abilene, KS 67410

8 PM every Sunday, open A.A. meets at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church Parish Hall, 3599 North Field, Solomon, KS 67480

Biblical Citizenship in Modern America Class Starts on Sunday, November 5, 2023, 5:00 p.m. Countryside Bible Fellowship (2189 Broughton Rd, Clay Center, KS) www.CountrysideBibleFellowship.com for more information