

Governor Kelly signs bipartisan COVID-19 response bill

Jun 9, 2020

Governor Laura Kelly today signed the bipartisan COVID-19 response bill, House Bill 2016 into law.

“From day one, my administration has worked keeping Kansans healthy, and protecting the economic future of Kansas’ businesses and communities,” Governor Kelly said. “That means reaching across the aisle to get things done. This bill contains essential provisions that will allow us to continue to deliver critical health and economic services to communities and businesses throughout the state during this pandemic.”

The bill addresses the ongoing COVID-19 emergency and its effects, both economic and health-related. It provides the Legislature with the ability to more effectively engage in oversight while the Legislature is not in session while Governor Kelly retains the emergency authority to act as needed during the pandemic.

Though there are a number of COVID-19 response measures contained in the bill, the key provision extends the current emergency declaration through September 15, 2020, providing stability and certainty for the state’s ongoing emergency response efforts. Beyond September 15, the State Finance Council may extend the declaration by a vote of 6 legislative members.

The bill also contains the provisions of a number of executive orders that the Governor has issued during the pandemic, including allowing for expanded telemedicine, temporary licensure of out-of-state medical providers, electronic notarization of documents and certain liquor sales.

While the bill does provide some liability protection for medical providers and businesses, these elements are written very narrowly to apply to certain aspects of the COVID-19 response, and for most businesses the liability protection only applies when the business acts within the scope of public health requirements.

House Bill 2016 becomes effective upon publication in an emergency edition the *Kansas Register* to be published tomorrow.