

Kansas Turnpike; HB 2234

HB 2234 names the Secretary of Transportation (Secretary) as the director of operations of the Kansas Turnpike Authority (KTA). The director of operations will be responsible for the daily administration of the toll roads, bridges, structures and facilities constructed, maintained, or operated by the Authority, and the director or the director's designee would have such powers as are necessary to carry out those responsibilities. This provision will expire July 1, 2016.

The bill provides the KTA cannot use KTA toll or other revenue in ways other than those established in existing law: maintaining, repairing and operating turnpike projects; paying principal and interest on bonds and creating reserves for the same; fixing and collecting tolls; and entering into certain types of contracts.

The bill changes authority for contracting between KTA and the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) for three years. The bill adds an effective date of July 1, 2016, to provisions in existing law regarding contracting between the KTA and KDOT (generally, allowing KTA to contract with KDOT for use of KDOT resources for certain types of work related to KTA projects).

In a new section, the bill states the KTA retains its separate identity, powers, and duties as an instrumentality of the state; however, the bill in this new section requires duplication of effort, facilities, and equipment between KDOT and the KTA be minimized in operation and maintenance of turnpikes and highways in the state. The KTA and the Secretary are authorized to take actions including the temporary transfer of personnel, property and equipment from the KTA to the Secretary and from the Secretary to the KTA. Further, the bill requires the integrity of the bonded indebtedness be maintained through the actions of the KTA. The provisions of this new section will expire July 1, 2016.

The bill also repeals a number of statutes specific to certain turnpike projects and a 1978 statute authorizing KDOT to sell certain land in Pottawatomie County.