



The Record

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Number 14

Fixing Our Gun Problem

By Dr. Jim Haas

Bang, bang, bang. Again and again and again.

To understand why America has so many gun deaths, look no further than the Christmas card sent in December 2021 by Andrew Ogles, the Republican U.S. House Representative for the Nashville district that includes the school where three children and three adults were murdered two weeks ago. Ogles' card pictured his smiling family—him, his wife, and three young children—with the parents and two children each holding guns including an assault rifle. The message said, “The very atmosphere of firearms anywhere and everywhere restrains evil interference—they deserve a place of honor with all that’s good.” That’s the Christmas spirit: honor firearms.

The Nashville tragedy was the 130th mass shooting to that date this year, an average of well more than one a day. On the day it happened, another Tennessee Republican congressman, Tim Burchett, told reporters, “We’re not gonna fix it—criminals are gonna be criminals.” That’s the legislative spirit: bury your head in the sand and admit you’re incompetent.

Despite Burchett’s nihilism and Ogles’ bizarre reverence for a gun god, there is much

we can do. Nicholas Kristof, in the January 24 *New York Times*, described numerous policies likely to reduce gun deaths. Rather than rely on one or two fixes, Kristof proposes a harm-reduction approach used in public health for dangerous products like cars, numerous targeted fixes like those that have significantly reduced highway deaths: mandatory seat belts, airbags, safer vehicles with technologies like lane alarms and tire pressure warnings, rumble strips on highway shoulders, daytime running lights, and many more.

An obvious step is to control access to guns as we do with cars and cigarettes by licensing and by minimum age limits. Most gun murders are by young people and those with mental health issues, so not allowing guns to those under 21 or who have a record of alcohol abuse, domestic or other violence, or other red flags will certainly fix some of our gun problem. Licensing gun ownership, including a background check, safety training, and a requirement for safe storage of weapons and ammunition, will fix some, as well. And as we do with cigarettes, restricting advertising, heavy taxes, and strict dealer regulations will be other fixes.

Massachusetts, with the second-lowest gun mortality rate in the country (after Hawaii), re-

quires a \$100 fee for a gun license, fingerprinting, a background check, a reason for buying a gun, a guarantee of safe storage, and a requirement to report a stolen gun. Mississippi has the highest gun mortality rate and buying a gun from a store requires only a 13-question background check; a private sale doesn’t require even that. Adopting a dog in Mississippi requires a \$125 fee, a fencing and security assessment, a family visitation, and three other steps; voting there is also much more complicated than buying a gun. What should be hard is easy and what should be easy is hard. That would be easy to fix.

A gun is harmless without ammunition, so outlawing hollow-point bullets, which are easily available but so destructive that our military isn’t allowed to use them, would save lives as would regulation of, and a heavy tax on, ammo sales. According to one study, the cost to society of a single murder—investigation, courts, prison, lost



productivity—is more than \$17 million. If handguns, assault rifles, and ammo were taxed an extra 20 percent, demand would significantly decline and some of the costs of crime paid for. Years ago, the comedian Chris Rock suggested that we could reduce gun deaths by making each bullet cost \$5000.

With more guns than people, we won’t eliminate gun deaths, but we can certainly reduce them with a variety of harm-reduction legislation. To do so, we need to elect people willing to fix at least some of our gun problem. The flag at half-staff mourns not only the victims; it mourns our country.

David W. Johnston, New County Administrator

Focused on Igniting Collaboration and Development in the Community



(KANSAS CITY, KS) – CEO/Mayor Tyrone A. Garner of the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas, officially introduced and welcomed David W. Johnston as permanent County Administrator this morning. Johnston was confirmed unanimously by the Board of Commissioners at the March 2, 2023, Full Commission Meeting.

At a press conference held in the Commission Chambers of the Municipal Building, Mayor Garner expressed confidence and excitement

for Johnston's leadership and qualifications to lead the Unified Government and Wyandotte County Kansas City, Kansas.

"I am truly confident in the leadership and vision Mr. Johnston will bring to the Unified Government and our community," expressed Mayor Tyrone A. Garner. "Our community has faced many difficult challenges and obstacles over the past few years. It is exciting to have a permanent County Administrator that is up for the commitment to help guide us in a positive and truly unified direction."

David W. Johnston brings over 35 years of professional experience in public service and management with success in intergovernmental

relations, economic development, strategic planning, financial management, budgeting and staff development. Mr. Johnston has served as a trusted advisor to many organizations and has committed to providing measurable deliverables on various projects and developments.

"I appreciate the trust that Mayor Garner and the County Commissioners have in me by naming me the next county administrator for the Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas," said County Administrator David W. Johnston. "I look forward to bringing my years of experience to help the county meet its challenges and opportunities head on. I

experienced the strong community spirit during my first visit to the community as I met with dedicated elected officials, staff that care about providing quality services, and a multitude of stakeholders who truly care about our county. Because of this my wife and I are excited to call Wyandotte County our home."


About Our County Administrator David W. Johnston, ICMA-CM, joins the Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas as its third County Administrator.

David comes from Covington, KY where he served as City Manager from 2017 to 2021. During that time, he raised the city's Moody Bond rating to A2 status, effectively addressed blighted properties and poverty, successfully guided a major redevelopment effort and renewed focus on customer service within city government that improved staff morale.

As a result, Covington was awarded "City of the Year 2020-2021" by the Kentucky League of Cities and "One of the 50 Transformative Smart Initiatives in the World – 2021" by Smart Cities Connect as well as the IEDC 2021 Bronze Award for Neighborhood & Retail Development for Covington's Small Business Assistance Program that he started in 2017.

David holds a Master of Public Affairs degree from Indiana University, with a concentration in Urban and Regional Planning, as well as a Certificate in Economic Development from the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.

He is a credentialed manager with the International City/County Manager Association (ICMA), the International Economic Development Council (IEDC), the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), the National Association of Industrial and Office Parks (NAIOP) and the National League of Cities (NLC).



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YOU are invited

Anyone who believes in the mission of The League of United Latin American Citizens LULAC is eligible to join us. Being part of the conversation will bring us together with all of society.

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the largest and oldest Hispanic and Latino civil rights organization in the United States.[2] It was established on February 17, 1929, in Corpus Christi, Texas, largely by Hispanics returning from World War I who sought to end ethnic discrimination against Latinos in the United States. The goal of LULAC is to advance the economic condition, educational attainment, political influence, housing, health, and civil rights of Hispanic people in the United States. LULAC uses nationwide councils and group community organizations to achieve all these goals. LULAC has about 132,000 members in the United States.

Council 11085 has LULAC members in the counties of Douglas, Johnson and Wyandotte (Kansas) – Clay and Jackson (Missouri).

Join us at the monthly Zoom meetings – the second Saturday of each month at 2 p.m.

Rudy Padilla Email opkansas@swbell.net
Maria Cristina Herrera MariCriszap@gmail.com



By Sharon Hoover

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Central Avenue is celebrating Earth Day on Saturday, April 22, 2023, at Bethany Park starting at 9:00am. Volunteers need to help with Spring Cleaning.

WYCO Dumpster Days will be April 21 & April 22, 2023, at Highland Park, 4900 Shawnee Dr. from 8am to 12pm. This is an opportunity to recycle electronic waste for a fee and dispose of unwanted bulky items like mattresses and furniture for free. Proof of residency in Wyandotte County needed - like a driver's license or utility bill. Fee for electronics CRT Computer screen-\$10; LCD/ Flat Screen TV -\$20; CRT TV- \$40. Cash only. Exact change required.

Time for the kiddies: Ag Hall's Farm Tales' topic on Thursday, April 20, 2023, will be about growing peas.

Upon arrival there will be crafts and activities, then story time in the theater "The First Peas to the Table." Next the kids will meet the farmer who will discuss growing peas followed by a craft or activity. This is for children ages 3-6 years old. Programs start at 10:30 am.

On Saturday, April 22, 2023, Ag Hall will be the site for the annual Barnyard Babies presented by Great American Kites & Events. Festivities will be from 10am-4pm. Celebrate the day visiting farm animals, enjoy miniature train rides, play games, and shop at the farmer's market. Plans are for flying giant kites, crafts for the kids, hayrides & more. Admission is \$5 for ages 3 & up. Children under three are free.

Turner Community Connection is hosting its quarterly community meeting on Monday April 17, 2023,

at 6:00 pm at 4826 County Line Road (Bristol Hill Methodist Church). The topic is "Gang Activity Update" presented by Detective Jamie Miller of the KCKPD gang unit. He will take questions after the program. Others in attendance will be Mayor Tyrone Garner, Commissioner Andrew Davis, Commissioner Melissa Bynum, and Commissioner Angela Markley. Light refreshments will be served.

Last novel read was "Dear Edward" by Ann Napolitano about a 12 year old boy who is the sole survivor of a plane crash. It tells of his struggles to find a place for himself in a world without his family. I really like this author and intend to read her latest "Hello Beautiful".

Until next time, stay safe and be kind to those around you. Continue to pray for the brave Ukrainians fighting for the right to remain free.

Have you started your Spring cleaning yet? Several community events are scheduled for April that you can volunteer for and one that you can rid yourself of items you no longer want.

Rosedale Development Association is sponsoring an All Day Cleanup from 9am until noon on Saturday, April 15, 2023. Join them



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SENATE NEWS



By Sen. Pat Pettey

THIS WEEK AT THE CAPITOL
 This was the last week for committees to meet as we approach the end of March. The Senate will be going into session at 10:00 AM on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. We have over 70 bills below the line, and we have 30 above the line for action on Monday.

It is truly an honor to serve you in Topeka. If you have any questions, please contact me at 785-296-7375 or pat.pettey@senate.ks.gov. I am

also happy to set up a Zoom to discuss any questions or concerns.

COMMITTEE UPDATE

This year, I serve on the following committees:

- Education
- Public Health and Welfare
- Ways and Means

You can click on the hyperlinked committee names to access the upcoming agendas.

GENERAL ORDERS

The Senate worked bills on Tuesday through Thursday of this past week. We passed 16 bills and approved three appointments. We also debated one resolution that did not receive the required 2/3rds

majority vote, and thus failed.

The resolution was our now-annual application to the Convention of States. At its core, the convention of states transfers authority from the people of our nation through our elected representatives to a small group of delegates charged with potentially designing a form of new government with no input or accountability from citizens. The interests of everyday Americans would be shut out of the ultimate closed-door meeting. There would be no way to limit the scope of a constitutional convention and no way to guarantee that our civil liberties and constitutional process would be protected. Groups with the most funding, the best connections, or the most resources could impact the outcome of the convention for their own interests, rather than the best interest of the people. I am glad that once again, this resolution failed to receive the supermajority required to pass. I voted NO.

The other major piece of legislation that we debated this week was S Sub HB 2344, introduced by Senators Chase Blasi and Kristen O'Shea. At its core, this bill significantly deregulates child care, creating more slots at the expense of our children's safety. These changes were not requested by the child care community or child care advocates, and in fact tie the hands of KDHE in providing exemptions to child care facilities to address their individual needs. This bill does not consider national health and safety standards critical to children's health and development – it decreases staff qualifications, annual training hours, and square footage per child while increasing group sizes and staff-to-child ratios. I voted NO. The vote was extremely close, and it only passed after Senator Virgil Peck flipped from a NO to a YES.

Kansans need more child care, but we currently have 11,000 approved child care slots open. The pressing barriers for families are cost, flexibility in hours, and more infant care and the bill does nothing to address these needs.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

As a refresher, conference committees are formed when there are

differences between the Senate and the House's versions of a bill. The committees are generally made up of the chair, vice-chair, and ranking minority member of the committee in which the bill was originally worked. In theory, these 6 legislators work out those differences and bring a compromise bill to their respective chambers for consideration. In the case of shell bills, though, these conference committees are opportunities for legislative leadership to bundle bills or replace them outright with their legislative priorities. Once these CCRs come to the Senate floor, they are not subject to amendment.

The only conference committee that has been scheduled so far is for SB 83. The Senate version of this bill would have expanded the Tax Credit for Low Income Students Scholarship Program. The House K-12 Education Budget committee gutted that bill and replaced it with full-blown vouchers in the form of educational savings accounts (ESAs). These are two very different programs, and 3 members of the House K-12 Education Budget committee (Chairwoman Kristey Williams, Vice-Chair Brenda Landwehr, and Ranking Minority Member Valdenia Winn) and 3 members of the Senate Education committee (Chairwoman Molly Baumgardner, Vice-Chair Renee Erickson, and Ranking Minority Member Dinah Sykes) will meet on Monday to begin negotiations.

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE IN CRISIS

The Senate Public Health and Welfare committee had a packed week, holding hearings on over 10 bills. I serve as ranking minority on Public Health & Welfare. One of the most contentious debates was over SB 315, which was introduced by Senator Mike Thompson. This bill would require child care facilities, elementary, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions and employers to grant exemptions from vaccine requirements without inquiring into the sincerity of the request. It would also repeal the

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Carla Schubert, Section 504 Coordinator
Young Management Corporation 22602 State Line Road
Bucyrus, KS. 66013
913-947-3131 - TTY: 711

Petty...

...from page 4

meningitis vaccine requirement to live in student housing.

During the committee hearing on Tuesday, Republican Senator Kristen O’Shea – who in the past has vehemently opposed loosening vaccine requirements that will threaten children’s and public health – requested security for the committee room after a conferee provided testimony directed at Senator O’Shea in a manner that the senator found threatening. I encouraged Senator O’Shea to ask for security. The committee chairwoman, Senator Beverly Gossage, initially declined Senator O’Shea’s request.

The bill failed to pass out of committee on Thursday. On Friday, however, Senator Molly Baumgardner moved for the committee to reconsider the bill. She had not voted on the prevailing side, but the chair maintains that she could do whatever she wanted so the bill was reconsidered. It is always mind-boggling how the majority party gets to set the rules used throughout the legislative process, yet throw them aside when they are unable to follow them to get their way.

BENEFITS OF A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP

Did you know getting a good night’s sleep reduces your risk for many chronic diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression?

Check out these tips for becoming your best slept self:

- Get some sun – especially in the early morning
- Get up and get moving – try to aim for 30-minutes of physical activity
- Sleep in a cool, dark & quiet place
- Cut back on caffeine
- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night

Learn more from National Sleep Foundation: <https://bit.ly/3Lnzr65>.

WYCO Clean Air Now and the Justice 4orward Initiative in the Capitol 3/23. Pictured are Anna Ramos, Esther Almanza, and Rayan Makarem.

FOLLOW OUR WORK

In addition to watching legislative proceedings live, you can always stay up to date with legislative matters by following our caucus’s social media accounts. Our staff live-tweets Senate session daily, provides updates on legislation regularly on Facebook, and shares resources to help you advocate for your issues on Instagram.

IMPORTANT STATE PHONE NUMBERS

Here is a list of numbers I often receive requests for during the Legislative Session. I hope you will find this information helpful.

Attorney General
(888) 428-8436

Child Abuse Hotline
(800) 922-5330

Consumer Protection
(800) 432-2310

Crime Tip Hotline
(800) 572-7463

Crime Victim Referral
(800) 828-9745

Department on Aging
(800) 432-3535

Driver’s License Bureau
(785) 296-3963

Fraud Hotline
(800) 432-3919

KPERS
(888) 275-5737

Governor’s Office
(877) 579-6757

Highway Conditions
(800) 585-7623

Housing Hotline
(800) 752-4422

KanCare Consumer Assistance
(866) 305-5147

Kansas Jobs
(785) 235-5627

Kansas Lottery
(785) 296-5700

Kansas State Library
(800) 432-3924

Legislative Hotline
(800) 432-3924

School Safety Hotline
(877) 626-8203

Social Security
(800) 772-1213

DCF
(785) 296-1491

Suicide Prevention Hotline
(800) 273-8255

Tax Refund Status Info
(800) 894-0318

Taxpayer Assistance
(785) 368-8222

Unclaimed Property
(800) 432-0386

Vital Statistics
(Birth Certificates)
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Kansas Joins \$22.5 Million Multistate Securities Settlement Against Cryptocurrency Platform

Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt, today, announced the Office of the Kansas Securities Commissioner, a division of the Kansas Insurance Department, joined a multistate settlement against Nexo Capital, Inc, a cryptocurrency-related financial service company. A consent order against Nexo was entered for offering and selling unregistered securities.

“The securities laws of Kansas exist first and foremost to protect Kansas investors,” said Commissioner Schmidt. “While the Department does not directly regulate cryptocurrency, we do have regulatory jurisdiction over securities products that are related to cryptocurrencies and will continue to enforce state law.”

Kansas joins 27 other states in filing the order as part of a

multistate taskforce with the North American Securities Administrators Association (NASAA). The order awarded \$424,528.30 to Kansas for its part of the overall settlement of \$22.5 million.

Nexo’s Earned Income Product (EIP) investors could passively earn interest on digital assets by loaning those assets to Nexo. Nexo maintained total discretion over the revenue-generating activities used to earn returns for investors. The company offered and promoted the EIP and other products to U.S. investors via its website and social media channels, suggesting that investors could obtain returns as high as 36% in some instances. Nexo was alleged to have failed to comply with state securities registration requirements, depriving investors of important information necessary to understand

and evaluate the risks of investing in the EIP.

As more companies offer crypto-related securities products, the Department has increased enforcement efforts by actively participating in the NASAA multistate taskforce groups focused on crypto-interest accounts. In 2022, a consent order was entered into with BlockFi as a result of these cooperative, multistate investigations.

A copy of the Nexo consent order is available at <https://bit.ly/3TEHlOr>. If you suspect you have been a victim of securities fraud, please contact the Office of the Securities Commissioner at 785-296-3071 or file a complaint online at <https://insurance.ks.gov/department/ksc/complaint/ksc-complaint.php>.

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April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month

Distracted driving comes in many forms, but texting and cell phone use while driving has become the most prevalent type of distracted driving. We want to help spread the word that Kansas law enforcement agencies are teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) for the 2023 U Drive. U Text. U Pay. campaign.

From April 3-10, 2023, law enforcement officers will work together to enforce texting and distracted-driving laws.

Staggering Statistic

- According to NHTSA, nearly 32,483 people died in distraction-affected crashes over the ten-year period from 2011 to 2020.

Safety Tips for Driving

- If you are expecting a text message or need to send one, pull over and park your car in a safe location. Once you are safely off the road and parked, it is safe to text.
- Designate your passenger as your "designated texter." Allow them access to your phone to respond to calls or messages.
- Do not engage in social media scrolling or messaging while

driving.

- Struggling to not text and drive? Activate your phone's "Do Not Disturb" feature, or put your cell phone in the trunk, glove box, or back seat of your vehicle until you arrive at your destination.

Put Your Phone Away or Pay

- When you get behind the wheel, be an example to your family and friends by putting your phone away. Just because other people do it doesn't mean texting and driving is "normal" behavior.

- Handheld Device Use: 29 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands prohibit all drivers from using handheld devices in normal or special circumstances. All are primary enforcement laws—an officer may cite a driver for using a handheld cellphone without any other traffic offense taking place.

- Text Messaging: In 48 states, D.C., Puerto Rico, Guam, the

Northern Mariana Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands, texting while driving is an illegal, ticketable offense. You could end up paying a hefty fine and get points on your license.

- If you see someone texting while driving, speak up. If friends text while driving, tell them to stop. Listen to your passengers: If they catch you texting while driving and tell you to put your phone away, put it down.

- Remember, when you get behind the wheel, U Drive. U Text. U Pay.

Consumer Alert: Letter Offering Millions in Unclaimed Life Insurance Policy is a Scam

Topeka, Kan. - The Kansas Insurance Department and the Office of the Kansas State Treasurer have received reports of a mail scam circulating in multiple Kansas counties. These letters claim to be from an attorney with law firms located in Canada, and state there are millions of dollars in an unclaimed life insurance policy available. The sender asks the recipient of the letter to partner with them to claim these monies.

Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt and Treasurer Steven Johnson advise Kansans that these letters are a scam, and to not contact the sender.

"Unfortunately, scams like this are nothing new," Schmidt said. "If it sounds too good to be true it probably is. You should always be cautious of any unsolicited offer that promises no risk but requires your personal information before you can claim an alleged benefit."

"There are no fees associated when locating unclaimed property – including old life insurance policies that have been remitted to our office," Johnson said. "While we may follow up to request additional information to verify your claim, these letters will come directly from our office, not from a third party. You can always contact our office to verify that a letter is authentic."

There are legitimate ways to check for both a life insurance policy benefit and unclaimed property through valid sources. Kansans can locate a life insurance policy using the National Association of Insurance Commissioners' Life Insurance Policy Locator at eapps.naic.org/life-policy-locator. To check for unclaimed property in your or a loved one's name, visit the Treasurer's Unclaimed Property division at kansascash.ks.gov/up_main.html or call 785-296-4165.

To report suspected insurance fraud, contact the Kansas Insurance Department's Anti-Fraud Division at 785-296-5203 or by email at kid.antifraud@ks.gov.

The Kansas Legislature established the Kansas Insurance Department in 1871, currently led by Commissioner Vicki Schmidt. The mission of the Department is to regulate companies that sell policies in Kansas to ensure solvency and compliance with state law, educate consumers about all things insurance and securities, and advocate for a strong and competitive market to give Kansans choices when shopping for products that meet their needs.

Important State Phone Numbers

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(888) 428-8436

Child Abuse Hotline
(800) 922-5330

Consumer Protection
(800) 432-2310



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OLATHE, KS 66061

MENU: Buffet - Beef Tri Tip & Smoked Chicken Breast, two sides, roll, dessert & beverages (water & iced tea)
(Absolutely No Food or Beverages are to be brought into the Reunion Event)
Cash Bar Available

COST: TICKET PRICE: \$50 PER PERSON

DRESS: CASUAL (JEANS AND SHORTS ACCEPTABLE)

REGISTRATION: MAY BE COMPLETED ONLINE OR BY RETURNING
THE REGISTRATION FORM BY APRIL 1, 2023

Due to the large attendance expected early registrations are encouraged by April 1, 2023. Reservations will be accepted no later than June 1, 2023. **NO DAY OF RESERVATIONS ARE POSSIBLE FOR THIS EVENT.**

WOULD YOU LIKE TO ATTEND?

ONLY AHS GRADUATES THROUGH 1973 ARE ELIGIBLE

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR A RESERVATION FORM

AHS 2023 REUNION COMMITTEE

PO BOX 860124

AND WEBSITE INFORMATION

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