

## New Year's Update

Linda and I wish you and your loved ones a happy New Year! Thank you for your friendship, support, and prayers for our family over the years and during the last campaign. May the Lord bless you abundantly in the coming year!

My new committee assignments were announced last week. I will be Chairman of the Agriculture Committee, member of Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development Committee, and member of the new committee, Rural Revitalization. This makes fifteen different committees on which I have served.

I will most likely still be a member of the Joint Committee of Administrative Rules and Regulations (JCARR). JCARR is made up of both Senators and Representatives who meet throughout the year evaluating new regulations proposed by state agencies. The Chair position rotates each year between the House and the Senate which will possibly make me the Chair in 2019. Additionally, as chair or vice chair of JCARR I have been a member of the State Rules and Regulations Board made up of three legislators, along with representatives from the Department of Administration, Secretary of State, and Attorney General's offices. The Board meets periodically to consider proposed regulations for temporary/emergency approval.

I am looking forward to the new assignments and expect to be very busy. I was also reassigned to a new office, 458W-A, but my seat on the House Floor remains the same, right in front beside the "well." I have not received my new phone number, but my email will remain the same: [ron.highland@house.ks.gov](mailto:ron.highland@house.ks.gov).

Many are asking what to expect this year. From a legislator's perspective, I do not expect any major differences. The committees will function as they normally do, evaluating proposed legislation, etc. The two-year budget will be the hot topic for the year and receive the most attention. The Governor is required by law to submit a budget to the legislature very shortly after session begins on January 14. The various budget committees will consider the budget proposal and make any changes they deem necessary before forwarding them on to their respective chamber for consideration.

Where I do expect some drama will be during the veto session. Any bill or line item in the budget that is vetoed will be considered by both chambers where it will take two thirds majority vote to override the Governor's veto. I cannot make any predictions on what the final budget will look like. Much will depend on expected revenues for the future and budget increase requests from the various agencies. It will be interesting, and I will do my best to keep you informed of the progress throughout the session.

It is my honor to serve you as your Representative for the big 51<sup>st</sup> District at the Statehouse. You will soon be able to reach me there in mid-January. For now, I can be contacted at [ron.highland@house.ks.gov](mailto:ron.highland@house.ks.gov).