

Givens: Veto override of House Bill 1 opens new opportunities

The following is a statement from Senate President Pro Tempore David Givens, R-Greensburg, regarding the General Assembly's override of the governor's veto of House Bill 1.

"Now that House Bill 1 will become law, Kentucky students will have access to potentially hundreds of millions of dollars in federal support to help meet their individual educational needs. This is a significant opportunity, and one we should all be working

together to maximize. "I believe I speak for the majority of the General Assembly, as well as families and educators across the commonwealth, in calling on the Governor to join us in supporting this effort. If we are serious about putting students first, then we should be just as serious about ensuring every available dollar is brought back home to Kentucky. "This law is designed with students at the center. No public dollars are directed to

any particular school. Instead, contributions go to scholarship-granting organizations, which then provide scholarships directly to eligible students and families, including those served by our public schools. The focus is not institutions, but rather opportunity. "So I would again encourage the Governor, and anyone who cares about Kentucky's future, to take part. Write a \$1,700 check to a scholarship-granting organization of your choice utilizing

the \$1,700 federal tax credit and help demonstrate that we value investing as many federal dollars in Kentucky students as we can. "This is about expanding opportunity, empowering families and making sure Kentucky is positioned to benefit from every resource available to us. Now is the time to come together and make that happen as successfully as possible. "If you were an opponent before, there is time to be a proponent now."



LRC Photo
Senate President Pro Tempore David P. Givens, R-Greensburg, speaks on overriding the governor's veto of House Bill 1, an act implementing the federal education opportunity program in Kentucky.

Senate committee advances school bus safety bill

A Senate committee unanimously advanced a bill Thursday that would allow school districts to install camera systems on school buses to help curtail stop arm traffic violations.

Rep. David Hale, R-Wellington, is sponsoring House Bill 7, and he told the Senate Veterans, Military Affairs and Public Protection Committee that the school bus safety bill could lead to saving lives.

"What this bill does is it sets up an option for these districts to have these manufacturers or vendors install these cameras, which in turn then they would maintain. They would monitor. They would collect the data and the only time there would be a recording would be when the bus would be stopped," he said.

Hale said when a bus's stop arm is ex-

tended, the camera would record the loading and unloading processes, and once the arm retracts, the recording would stop.

Hale said HB 7 is extremely important to him because it relates to the safety of children and young people, and when he researched school bus-related violations, he became concerned.

"I've researched it a lot. I've collected a lot of data and I was alarmed. I mean I was actually astounded at the amount of violations that occur every day by people passing a school bus that is stopped, either loading or unloading children," he said.

Hale said the state Department of Education worked a few years ago with bus drivers who completed a log one day to record how many violations occurred. The

participating drivers recorded 1,600 violations that day, he said.

Hale said some districts already have stop arm cameras on their buses, but the cost is "astronomical."

Hale said under HB 7, if there is a violation and a recorded violation is seen, that data is collected by the camera vendor and sent to local law enforcement officials.

To ensure the safety efforts are successful, Hale said law enforcement groups would have to be involved in the efforts. He said officers, deputies and others would conduct further action using license plate numbers. A letter would be sent to the person associated with the license plate number with the date, location and time of the alleged offense. He said there's also an appeals process.

"But if not, and they

wanted to pay that fine, the fine would be a \$300 fine on the first offense and a \$500 fine of any offense thereafter in the next three-year period," Hale said. "That would be collected by the school. That would go to the schools, which in turn would help them pay off what the expense of these cameras would be to install, which is thousands of dollars for each bus."

The bill stipulates that recorded images related to a violation are considered private and would be accessible only by authorized personnel.

Committee Chair Sen. Matthew Deneen, R-Elizabethtown, said changes adopted by the committee Thursday narrow down the bill to its intent, which is only related to the traffic violation of going around a school bus when the

stop sign is extended.

Sen. Gary Boswell, R-Owensboro, thanked Hale for his work on the bill and said it's long overdue.

"I've been watching the testimony over a long period of time. Years ago, when I was in the insurance business, one of the first, most difficult cases I had was a young man walked in front of a school bus to get on the school bus in Daviess County," he said, noting that the individual was struck and killed.

Sen. Lindsey Tichenor, R-Smithfield, also thanked Hale for the legislation. She said it would be interesting to see the data from participating districts to de-

termine if a fiscal note is needed and ensure more students in Kentucky would be safe.

Sen. Matt Nunn, R-Sadieville, said he had privacy concerns when the bill was first filed, but decided he would support it after looking at Thursday's changes and hearing testimony.

"We know the severity, the potential severity if something were to occur," he said. "But the volume in which we're seeing it, and that's how you measure risk. You measure severity times volume. That's how you measure risk. And so, you helped me understand the risk here today."

The bill now heads to the full Senate.

Bill on financial exploitation of seniors passes the House

Legislation that would strengthen Kentucky laws against financially exploiting senior citizens passed the House last Wednesday.

House Bill 794 aims to protect senior citizens by increasing the felony class and punishment for people convicted of offenses related to financial exploitation of those 65 and older. It would also allow the Kentucky attorney general to file for extradition of individuals in another state who have committed financial exploitation of older Kentuckians.

The measure also seeks to implement training procedures for licensed investment advisors, requiring two hours of training that can count toward their mandated 12 hours.

Bill sponsor Rep. Matt Lockett, R-Nicholasville, highlighted the scope of financial exploitation schemes commonly conducted on seniors.

"Common scams reported by older Kentuckians involve tech

support fraud, romance schemes, and grandparent government impersonation schemes," he said. "These schemes can sometimes be very elaborate, convincing seniors to withdraw thousands of dollars from investment accounts, bank accounts and retirement accounts."

During discussion, Rep. Sarah Stalker, D-Louisville, asked whether the bill would affect training requirements for bank tellers or apply only to licensed investment advisors.

Rep. Michael Meredith, R-Oakland, responded with insight into current training protocols for bankers and tellers.

"I think this would specifically just apply

to licensed investment advisors," he said. "However, banks and their employees are trained on these things annually as well to try and prevent these frauds."

Stalker shared an experience involving a friend's parents who were victims of financial exploitation.

"It stated with a simple phone call," she said. "It was so bad that she went to the bank not once but twice to make withdraws."

She said a bank teller recognized suspicious activity and contacted the family.

Rep. Adrielle Camuel, D-Lexington, shared a similar experience with her mother.

"She was almost a victim of a very large scheme. The scams, the

stories that Kentuckians are being told are so realistic," she said. "We don't know how they had specific information, including bank information, her address, other personal information, and I cannot thank you enough for bringing this."

Lockett urged members to vote yes on the measure, emphasizing the importance of protecting vulnerable groups.

The legislation "is a great step in protecting those 65 and older and from financial exploitation," he said. "It's time we send a very strong message to those that would pray on our senior adults."

The bill passed 94-0 and now moves to the Senate.

South Central Kentucky Rotary Club Fish Fry

March 26-27

Come join us at the Old Courthouse on the square in Greensburg for our first Fish Fry of 2026. This will be conducted in memory of two of our own that have recently passed, Tom Noe and Bill Patterson.

The proceeds will be distributed to organizations near and dear to their heart.

Starting at 10:00 a.m. CT both days until sell out.

FOR ORDER AHEAD CONTACT:
Walt Parrott: 270-405-1042
Steve Curry: 270-405-4304

NOTICE OF VACANT GREEN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION SEAT

The Green County Board of Education ("Board") is seeking applications for appointment to fill a vacancy on the Board representing seat Division # 4. This appointment will be effective until the November 3, 2026 regular election.

Responsibilities include: setting policy to govern the District; hiring/evaluating the Superintendent; and levying taxes and adopting the District budget. Board members must:

- Be at least 24 years old and a Kentucky citizen for the last three years;
- Be a registered voter in the particular District of the vacancy;
- Have completed the 12th grade or have a GED certificate;
- Meet all other legal qualifications (KRS 160.180); and
- Complete required annual in-service training.

Applications are available at 402 E. Hodgenville Ave., Greensburg, KY 42743 or online at <https://sites.google.com/green.kyschools.us/greencountyschools/departments/board-of-education?authuser=0>.

Mail applications to:
 Superintendent, ATTN: Board Vacancy,
 402 E. Hodgenville Ave., Greensburg, KY 42743.
 Applications will be accepted through April 2, 2026.

Deadline for news and advertising is 2 p.m. central time Friday. However, earlier is always better.

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