

INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Minutes of the 4th Meeting of the 2025 Interim

September 23, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fourth meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on State Government was held on September 23, 2025, at 11:00 AM in Room 154 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Michael J. Nemes, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Representatives David Hale, Co-Chair; DJ Johnson, Co-Chair; Senator Michael J. Nemes Co-Chair; Senators Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Greg Elkins, Keturah J. Herron, Scott Madon, Amanda Mays Bledsoe, and Lindsey Tichenor; and Representatives Shane Baker, Ryan Bivens, Josh Calloway, Jennifer Decker, Anne Gay Donworth, Jim Gooch Jr., Erika Hancock, John Hodgson, Thomas Huff, Mary Beth Imes, Matthew Koch, Matthew Lehman, Chris Lewis, Scott Lewis, Matt Lockett, Savannah Maddox, Mary Lou Marzian, Marianne Proctor, Rebecca Raymer, T.J. Roberts, Nancy Tate, James Tipton, and Susan Witten.

Guests: Kristina Slattery, Commissioner, Department for Business and Community Development, Cabinet for Economic Development (CED); Matthew Wingate, General Counsel, CED; Lee Carter, President, Kentucky Horse Park (KHP), Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet; and Representative Vanessa Grossl.

LRC Staff: Daniel Carter, Jesse Farler, Christina Gordley, Shannon Tubbs, and Peggy Sciantarelli.

Approval of Minutes - August 21 Meeting

A motion was made by Representative Bivens and seconded by Co-Chair Johnson to approve the minutes of the August 21, 2025, meeting. Minutes were approved by voice vote without objection.

Cabinet for Economic Development - Bluegrass State Skills Corporation - Overview

Kristina Slattery, Commissioner, Department for Business and Community Development, CED, and Matthew Wingate, General Counsel, CED, provided an overview of the Bluegrass State Skills Corporation (BSSC). BSSC is an independent corporation established in 1984 and administratively attached to CED. BSSC works with qualified

companies and educational institutions to support skills and occupational upgrade training. The overview focused on mission, purpose, primary responsibilities, funding, governance structure, grants and incentives award process, and activity for FY 2024 through YTD FY 2026.

In response to Co-Chair Johnson, Ms. Slattery said BCCS could provide the committee with data about the number of trainees, the types of training, and the types of industry accessing the programs.

In response to Representative Tipton, Ms. Slattery discussed BSSC's collaboration with entities that provide similar types of training. Project managers ensure there is no overlap of applicants, and they work to promote workforce development through partnership with community colleges and local workforce investment boards. The Council for Postsecondary Education and the Kentucky Community and Technical College System are represented on the BSSC board.

In response to Representative Witten, Ms. Slattery stated new businesses are not negatively impacted by the scoring process when applying for funding. BSSC takes the addition of new jobs into account and has the ability to set aside funds for new committed location projections.

In response to Senator Tichenor, Ms. Slattery discussed the difference in FY 2024 and FY 2025 Grant in Aid funding. Relevant factors impacting the funding difference could include reimbursement paperwork, construction of company facilities, or delay in disbursement of committed funds. Program trainees are not categorized according to age.

In response to Representative Marzian, Ms. Slattery explained that BSSC connects with the Kentucky Science and Technology Center and other commonwealth programs to provide employment opportunities to transitioning veterans but does not track post-employment data for veterans.

In response to Representative Roberts, Ms. Slattery stated the difference in Grant in Aid funding between FY 2024 and FY 2025 may relate to a special allocation secured by some Kentucky companies. The FY 2024 data may be tied to commitments with the Ford company. Mr. Wingate stated additional line items in the budget that year may also have been a factor.

Representative Lehman questioned why the skills training investment credit is not being maximized. Ms. Slattery stated BSSC typically receives more applications than can be

funded through Grant in Aid. The skills training investment credit is an income tax credit and is not a refundable tax credit.

Discussion of BR 868, 2026 Regular Session - AN ACT relating to the Kentucky Horse Park

Representative Grossl and Lee Carter, President, KHP, presented 26 RS BR 868. Representative Grossl stated she plans to sponsor the legislation in the 2026 Regular Session to ensure KHP maintains its high integrity standards and is able to protect athletes and guests.

In 2017, the U.S. Congress passed legislation that established the U.S. Center for SafeSport (SafeSport), which has jurisdiction over Olympic and paralympic sports organizations with respect to safeguarding amateur athletes from abuse. KRS 148.290, relating to the policing of KHP, does not address situations related to SafeSport, and incidents related to SafeSport are not addressed in 200 KAR 3:020. To help preserve the safety and integrity of events and guests, 26 RS BR 868 would establish powers for KHP similar to those granted to the Racing and Gaming Corporation in KRS 230.215. Mr. Carter stated KHP does not restrict activity unless there is legal authority to do so. The proposed legislation would not increase cost and would provide the ability to police situations when needed in order to preserve the integrity of KHP and its guests.

In response to Senator Mays Bledsoe's question about the appeal process, Mr. Carter said KHP would follow SafeSport's multiple disciplinary method protocol.

In response to Representative Calloway, Mr. Carter stated sanctioned activity would be handled by SafeSport and not at the state park level. If a crime is involved, it would be reported to local authorities.

In response to Representative Donworth, Mr. Carter said KHP liability is always a concern. The U.S. Equestrian Federation, the event community, and show organizers are generally aware of individuals who have been sanctioned. Permitting those individuals to be present at a sanctioned event would put show organizers at risk of losing their license, and KHP would need statutory authority for its mounted police to remove someone. BR 868 would provide an avenue to authorize expulsion.

In response to Representative Tipton, Mr. Carter said he is not aware of other states having or considering similar legislation. Most equestrian venues are privately owned. Representative Grossl said BR 868 is narrowly focused on KHP but could potentially take a broader approach. She welcomed feedback and ideas from members.

In response to Senator Chambers Armstrong, Mr. Carter agreed that, since KHP already has statutory authority to eject park attendees, "2." of subsection (4)(d) in BR 868 could potentially be omitted.

In response to Representative Roberts, Mr. Carter said that inclusion of the language "reputation of the park" in subsection (4)(d) could be reconsidered. Representative Grossl suggested possibly revising it to focus on financial impact to KHP.

In response to Co-Chair Johnson, Mr. Carter discussed KHP's law enforcement powers. KHP's mounted police have full arresting authority and work closely with State Police and Lexington police.

Chair Nemes cautioned that any revisions to the bill draft to extend authority should be careful to not impose a statutory obligation that cannot be met.

In response to Senator Mays Bledsoe, Mr. Carter discussed the authority granted in subsection (4)(d) and stated KHP would direct appeals or requests to the Kentucky Horse Park Commission, which is established in KRS Chapter 148.

Adjournment

Chair Nemes announced the next meeting of the committee would be held on Tuesday, October 21. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.