

TOBACCO SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT FUND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes

October 9, 2025

Call to Order and Roll Call

The fifth meeting of the Tobacco Settlement Agreement Fund Oversight Committee was held on October 9, 2025, at 10:30 AM in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Senator Jason Howell, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Jason Howell, Co-Chair; Senators Keturah J. Herron, and Aaron Reed; and Representatives Myron Dossett, Daniel Fister, Erika Hancock, Kim King, Shawn McPherson, and Rachel Roarx.

Guests: Brandon Reed, Executive Director, Kentucky Office of Agricultural Policy (KOAP); Bill McCloskey, Deputy Executive Director, KOAP; Julie Brooks, Policy Specialist, Department for Public Health (DPH), Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS); Andrea Day, Division Director of Child Care, Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), CHFS; Sarah Johnson, Division Director of Substance Use Disorder, Department of Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities (DBHDID), CHFS; and Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland, Chronic Disease Prevention Branch Manager, DPH, CHFS.

LRC Staff: Stefan Kasacavage, Hillary Abbott, Kelly Ludwig, and Rachel Hartley.

Approval of minutes for the meeting of September 18, 2025

A motion to approve the September 18, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Representative Fister and seconded by Representative McPherson. The minutes were approved by voice vote.

Report on the projects considered for funding by the Agricultural Development Board

Brandon Reed, Executive Director, KOAP, highlighted various events including Department of Agriculture Commissioner Shell's visit to 14 schools across Kentucky to bring attention to the Agriculture in the Classroom program, which is a nationwide

program offered to students in grades K-12 to broaden their access to agriculture education.

Mr. Reed congratulated Bill McCloskey, Deputy Executive Director, KOAP, on his reelection as president of the National Council of State Agricultural Finance Programs.

In September 2025, the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board approved \$950,000 in funds, and the Kentucky Agricultural Finance Corporation approved \$3.3 million in funds.

Mr. McCloskey highlighted the following projects:

- The Organic Association of Kentucky was approved for \$209,000 in state funds to support the following programs: the Farmer Education Program, the Production Technical Assistance Program, and the Marketing and Outreach Program.
- Joseph Dale Bentley was approved for \$51,300 in state funds for the construction and expansion of a small ruminant facility.

In response to Chair Howell, Mr. McCloskey stated Mr. Bentley's customers for his goats housed in his small ruminant facility are mostly overseas because of the quarantine requirements in the United States.

In response to Representative King, Mr. McCloskey stated Mr. Bentley will use the funds for infrastructure improvements to accommodate more goats and to enhance his ability to market them effectively. Mr. Bentley has already established a successful international shipping process for goats.

Update from the Cabinet for Health and Family Services

Julie Brooks, Policy Specialist, DPH, CHFS, stated the Health Access Nurturing Development Services (HANDS) program is an early childhood home visitation service that aims to support healthy pregnancies, promote child development, and empower families towards self-sufficiency. HANDS has recently increased families served and the services provided.

Ms. Brooks also highlighted the following programs funded in part with tobacco master settlement agreement funds: the tobacco prevention and cessation program, the lung cancer screening program, the early childhood oral health program, and the early childhood mental health initiative.

Sarah Johnson, Division Director of Substance Use Disorder, DBHDID, CHFS, stated the tobacco master settlement agreement funds support early childhood mental health specialists and early childhood consultants. Mrs. Johnson highlighted the substance use prevention programs and treatment programs for pregnant women.

Andrea Day, Division Director of Child Care, DCBS, CHFS, stated the Child Care and Development Funds is a federal grant designed to support low-income families with child care costs through subsidies. Ms. Day also highlighted the Kentucky All Stars program and professional development activities.

In response to Representative Dossett, Elizabeth Anderson-Hoagland, Chronic Disease Prevention Branch Manager, DPH, CHFS, stated there are ongoing outreach efforts to address youth vaping and emphasized the need for teaching refusal skills to teenagers, which would enable them to navigate peer pressure related to various illicit substances.

In response to Chair Howell, Ms. Brooks stated some programs rely solely on tobacco master settlement agreement funds, while others receive additional support from federal or state sources. The HANDS program was highlighted for its outreach efforts to combat misconceptions about its target demographic. Ms. Brooks stated the lung cancer screening program began in 2022. Ms. Anderson-Hoagland expressed optimism about the program's growth since 2022 as awareness increases. The program aims to facilitate access to screenings for underinsured or uninsured individuals. Ms. Brooks stated the early childhood mental health consultants play a crucial role in linking families to necessary services, although the number of consultants may not fully meet the demand across all regions of Kentucky. Ms. Day stated 34 percent of child care center providers are high-quality, based on the rating system in Kentucky All Stars. This is a decline from previous years, which prompted CHFS to conduct surveys to understand barriers preventing providers from achieving higher quality ratings. Many providers prioritize operational stability over quality enhancements.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.