



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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GOVERNOR

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VETO MESSAGE FROM THE
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
REGARDING SENATE BILL 197 OF THE 2026 REGULAR SESSION

Limits on Responding to Natural Disasters

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 1, line 9, after “expense,” delete the rest of the line.

Page 1, line 10, delete “the”.

I am vetoing this part because it limits the amount of financial resources necessary to provide required matching funds for federal FEMA reimbursements in response to natural disasters. Kentuckians have relied on the ability of the Commonwealth to pay its share of FEMA reimbursements that are awarded to local governments, non-profit entities, and to the Commonwealth, rather than delay these reimbursements awaiting an action by the Kentucky General Assembly in regular or special session.

FEMA Reimbursement

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 1, line 20, delete “All”.

Page 1, line 21, after “deposited”, delete the rest of the line.

Page 1, line 22, delete “Budget Reserve Trust Fund Account (KRS 48.705)”.

Page 1, line 23, after “the”, delete “School Facilities Construction”.

Page 1, line 24, delete “Commission to be distributed to the”.

I am vetoing this part because FEMA reimbursements have always been deposited directly into the General Fund and there is no reason to change that process by adding an unnecessary step. Further, there is no reason to run this money through another agency in addition to the Kentucky Division of Emergency Management, which has the expertise to ensure the Perry County School Board receives the money as soon as possible and in a manner that preserves the project eligibility for FEMA reimbursement.

Reporting

*I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:
Page 2, lines 10 through 12, in their entirety.*

I am vetoing this part because in House Bill 500 as amended by Senate Bill 197 the General Assembly included requirements for approximately 200 reports to be submitted to the Legislative Branch from the Executive Branch over the biennial period. This is in addition to approximately 520 reports that are required of Executive Branch agencies through statutes. To contend with budget cuts of up to 7 percent in the next two years, the amount of time and effort compiling, preparing and finalizing reports to the Legislative Branch is excessive and counter to the cost controls that will be necessary to operate in the next two years.

Unfunded Mandate

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 4, lines 14 through 16, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it would require implementation of statute without providing any appropriation. An agency is under no obligation to carry out an unfunded mandate. In the absence of an appropriation, these unfunded statutes may not be implemented. See Fletcher v. Commonwealth, 163 S.W.3d 852, 865 (Ky. 2005); Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana, and Kentucky, Inc. v. Cameron, 603 F.Supp.3d 501 (W.D. Ky. 2022); Fraternal Order of Police Barkley Lodge #60, Inc. v. Fletcher, 618 F.Supp.2d 712 (E.D. Ky. 2008).

Unfunded Mandate

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 4, lines 17 through 19, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it would require implementation of statute without providing any appropriation. An agency is under no obligation to carry out an unfunded mandate. In the absence of an appropriation, these unfunded statutes may not be implemented. See Fletcher v. Commonwealth, 163 S.W.3d 852, 865 (Ky. 2005); Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana, and Kentucky, Inc. v. Cameron, 603 F.Supp.3d 501 (W.D. Ky. 2022); Fraternal Order of Police Barkley Lodge #60, Inc. v. Fletcher, 618 F.Supp.2d 712 (E.D. Ky. 2008).

Unfunded Mandate

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 6, delete lines 18 through 19, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it would require implementation of statute without providing any appropriation. An agency is under no obligation to carry out an unfunded mandate. In the absence of an appropriation, these unfunded statutes may not be implemented. See Fletcher v. Commonwealth, 163 S.W.3d 852, 865 (Ky. 2005); Planned Parenthood Great Northwest, Hawaii, Alaska, Indiana, and Kentucky, Inc. v. Cameron, 603 F.Supp.3d 501 (W.D. Ky. 2022); Fraternal Order of Police Barkley Lodge #60, Inc. v. Fletcher, 618 F.Supp.2d 712 (E.D. Ky. 2008).

Education Funding

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 9, lines 16 through 17, in their entirety.

Page 9, line 18, delete “161.165, and 161.167, no”.

I am vetoing this part because it limits the programs that the Department of Education can fund within its appropriations.

Education Funding

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 11, line 3, after “year”, delete the rest of the line.

I am vetoing this part because it directs funding to an individual vendor rather than procuring education services competitively through the model procurement code.

College Entrance Exams

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 12, lines 4 through 7, in their entirety.

Page 12, line 8, delete “federal statutes”.

I am vetoing this part because the Kentucky Department of Education has informed me that this provision cannot be implemented by any vendor with their current product.

Capitol Annex Renovation

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 15, lines 24 through 27, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because the legislature does not manage the Commonwealth's state capital construction program, including when it is not in session and does not exist. That is an Executive Branch function specifically assigned by statute to the Finance and Administration Cabinet's Department for Facilities and Support Services. The Cabinet works with all state agencies in addressing their needs through capital construction projects. This partial veto does not change that process, which will continue to operate as it has for decades.

Use of Lottery Revenues

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 30, lines 12-14, in their entirety.

Page 30, line 15, delete "the 2026-2028 fiscal biennium".

Page 30, after "agency account", delete the rest of the line.

Page 30, line 17, delete "of the General Assmby".

I am vetoing this part because the 2026-2028 biennial budget enacted in House Bill 500 is estimated to result in more than 3,000 fewer need-based aid recipients. The ability to use excess lottery revenues may mitigate this negative impact on Kentucky students in need.

Prison Education Program

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 41, line 24, delete "Agency Bonds".

Page 41, line 24, after "Agency Bonds", delete the strike-through.

I am vetoing this part because this capital project was intended to be supported financially from general revenues rather than mandating the Kentucky Community and Technical College System use its own limited resources to finance the construction of this important project. This line-item veto will revert the appropriation back to Bond Funds.

On-Site Work

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 43, line 22, after "Cabinet." delete the rest of the line.

Page 43, lines 23 through 24, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it repeats the telecommuting policy that is already in place through the Personnel Cabinet for all Cabinets and would require another unnecessary report. The Executive Branch's telecommuting policy has successfully been in place for over four years.

Line-Item Veto

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 44, lines 25 through 27, in their entirety.

Page 45, line 1, in its entirety.

I am vetoing this part because allocating \$5 million for a feasibility study is not an appropriate use of scarce resources.

Line-Item Veto

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 45, line 11, after "biennium", delete "the Residential", then after "Housing", delete "Infrastructure Fund".

I am vetoing this part because there is a critical need for funding to support affordable housing and the General Assembly's budget provided only \$2,500,000 each year to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund. This veto will provide the needed flexibility to devote this \$10,000,000 to potentially leverage other funding to create affordable housing.

Line-Item Veto

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 48, line 13, delete "\$3,000,000".

Page 48, line 13, after "\$3,000,000", delete the strikethrough.

I am vetoing this part because the City of Ashland informed the General Assembly it needed an appropriation of \$4,000,000 for renovation and repairs at the Paramount Theater. After providing the amount of funding the city needed, the legislature, without explanation, took away the \$1,000,000 it knew was necessary. This will revert the appropriation back to \$4,000,000.


Line-Item Veto

I, Andy Beshear, Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, pursuant to the authority granted under Section 88 of the Kentucky State Constitution, do hereby veto the following part:

Page 55, lines 3 through 6, in their entirety.

I am vetoing this part because it provides \$300,000 from the Budget Reserve Trust Fund to the Legislative Branch for security during the 2026 Southern Legislative Conference. The General Assembly has more than \$55 million in unspent appropriations from prior years and the ability to use it for this purpose.

This, the 27th day of April, 2026.



Andy Beshear
Governor