

Welcome to the House

We are happy to have you visit the **Kansas House of Representatives**. We hope this information will make your visit more informative and enjoyable.

The East Visitor's Gallery is open to the public at all times. The Gallery you see opposite you is for invited guests and staff. The House Chamber was restored during the summer of 1998. The colors and decorations are as similar to the original as possible. The paintings on the ceiling were restored to the original beauty. The columns were stripped of many layers of paint then hand rubbed to restore the luster. The names in the frames on either side of the chamber are of Free Staters. No one knows why these names were selected to be immortalized.

There are 125 elected members in the House. Traditionally, the Majority Party is seated on the south side with overflow on the north side of the aisle as necessary. Speaker of the House is Melvin Neufeld of Ingalls, who presides over the House sessions. Dennis McKinney of Greensburg is the Minority Leader of the House and sits below the rostrum on the north side of the center aisle.

On both sides of the Chamber you will see large displays of the members' names. The lights beside each name allow viewing of the voting during the legislative session. Green lights are Yea; red lights are Nay; white lights are Pass or to record one's presence. These lights are activated from boxes on each Representative's desk. The white light is also used during periods when votes are not being taken to request to speak. After they are recognized, members come to the well of the chamber to use the microphones in the center aisle. (They also have an amber light which is used to call a Page. These lights are displayed on the North and South walls of the Chamber. Pages are junior high and older students who are appointed by their Representative to serve for one day during the session.)

Above the members' names are spaces which give information about the bill that is being voted upon or discussed. The number area at the top is the bill or resolution identification number. Also, there is an information line that tells the order of business. The middle section is unlighted until a vote is taken. The final vote tallies appear in the three display areas when the roll is closed. During the ninety-day session you may obtain a House Calendar from the Document Room on the first floor to follow the action.

The ceiling lights in the chamber were installed in the 1970's. They are lowered on chains from the attic to change the light bulbs. The eternal lights on the Speaker's podium are always kept burning.

The desk area on the south side of the chamber is the press desk. The enclosed desk on the north side is where the Chief Clerk and staff are seated. The Journal Clerks sit at the curved desk in front of the podium.

We invite you to come back and visit anytime. The session starts the second Monday in January and ends in early April. Normally the House convenes at 11:00 a.m. At deadline times and at the end of the session convening time is earlier and the hours are longer.