

SESSION OF 2025

**SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION NO. 1612**

As Recommended by Senate Committee on
Ways and Means

Brief*

SCR 1612, if adopted by a two-thirds majority of each chamber of the Kansas Legislature and approved by voters, would amend the *Kansas Constitution* in Article 11 to allow the Legislature to contract for public debt and pledge the full faith, credit, and taxing power of the State by issuing General Obligation bonds.

Under current constitutional provisions, the State may issue general obligation debt only in limited circumstances. Article 11, Section 6 provides that for the purpose of defraying extraordinary expenses and making public improvements, the State may contract public debts, but never to exceed, in the aggregate, \$1 million. Furthermore, Section 7 provides that no debt shall be contracted by the State unless the proposed law for creating such debt shall first have been submitted to a direct vote of the electorate at a general election and approved by a majority of all votes cast.

The resolution would require the following explanatory statement be printed on the ballot with the text of the amendment if it is submitted to the voters for their approval:

This amendment would modernize the 1861 public debt law for the purpose of reducing the interest rate paid by the state on new and refunded debt obligations, to allow the legislature to contract for public debt, including

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

issuing general obligation bonds, revenue bonds or other evidence of public debt backed by the full faith, credit and taxing power of the state after considering the cost effectiveness and debt service efficiency for the state, and would provide the legislature authority over all matters relating to such public debt.

A vote for this proposition would allow the legislature to contract for public debt and pledge the full faith, credit and taxing power of the state for the payment of such debt and give the legislature authority over all matters concerning the contracting of public debt of the state.

A vote against this proposition would provide no change to the Kansas constitution.

If approved by two-thirds of the Legislature, the text of the resolution and the yea and nay votes of both the Kansas House of Representatives and the Kansas Senate would be published in the journals of both chambers.

The resolution would require the Secretary of State to publish the resolution and to submit the proposed constitutional amendment to voters at the primary election in August 2025, unless a special election is called at an earlier date by concurrent resolution of the Legislature.

Background

The resolution was introduced by the Senate Committee on Ways and Means at the request of Senator Fagg.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

In the Senate Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Senator Fagg, who indicated that giving the

Legislature the authority to issue General Obligation bonds and pledge the full faith and credit of the Kansas taxpayers would reduce the interest rate on new bond issuance.

No other testimony was provided.

Public debt; constitutional amendment; full faith and credit; general obligation bonds