

Ks Senate Vote to Determine Tax Plan's Fate

(AP)--The Kansas Senate will determine whether a plan for raising sales and cigarette taxes to erase a budget deficit will clear the Republican-dominated Legislature and go to GOP Gov. Sam Brownback.

Two bills contained parts of the tax plan. The measures together would raise \$384 million during the fiscal year that begins July 1.

The Senate was expected to vote Friday on a bill increasing the state's sales tax to 6.5 percent from 6.15 percent. The House approved it early Friday morning, 63-44.

The Senate approved the other part of the package Sunday. It is a bill raising the cigarette tax by 50 cents a pack to \$1.29. The measure also includes a modest tax increase for business owners.

The House approved the bill early Friday, 63-45. But House GOP leaders used a procedural maneuver to block the bill from going to Brownback until they saw how the Senate voted on the other measure.

The state's budget gap arose after the Republican-dominated Legislature slashed income taxes in 2012 and 2013 at Brownback's urging to stimulate the economy.

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