

KS Legislative salary raise recommended

(KAIR)--A Kansas commission is recommending a nearly 50% increase to state lawmaker pay to provide them a fairer wage.

The bipartisan Legislative Compensation Committee, earlier this month, unanimously voted to recommend a proposal that calls for raising lawmaker pay from an average compensation of \$29,000 to an annual salary of \$43,000. Legislative leaders like the Senate president and the speaker of the House would earn more, up to \$68,000.

The plan now heads to the full Legislature, where lawmakers will need to consider authorizing their own pay raise to go into effect in 2025.

KCUR reports the proposed salary is based on the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data for average annual wages of Kansans. The plan also calls for annual adjustments to pay based on a three-year rolling average of the statewide wage increases reported by the bureau.'

Currently, Kansas lawmakers are paid a \$88.66 daily salary for the 90 days they serve during the legislative session. Lawmakers saw an annual increase to the daily rate between 1997 and 2009, but the daily rate has not changed since.

They also get \$157 a day for food and housing in Topeka and a \$7,000 stipend for the rest of the year when the Legislature is not in session. The commission chose to keep the \$157 per diem in effect, but discontinue the \$7,000 stipend.

The Legislature could reject the commission- rate change during the first 30 days of the 2024 session and force the commission to try again. If the Legislature rejects a proposal a second time, the current compensation rate would remain in effect.

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