



# K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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## **Progress on road to brighter future**

This past January when I went before the Legislature to outline my priorities for the state during the coming year, I discussed how we had real opportunities to move our state forward. I believed then – as I do now – that by focusing on quality education, job creation, access to health care and renewable energy, we can create a brighter future for all of us.

Last year, our state made a commitment to the students of Kansas and I was glad to see legislators embracing that commitment this year by fully funding the three year school plan.

I was also pleased we were able to expand the ability of Kansas children to get the early learning opportunities they need to enter kindergarten ready to learn, and to expand the ability of students to continue their education beyond high school through additional financial aid.

Thanks to the actions we took this year, those students will have more opportunities in the workforce. By reducing the unemployment insurance tax, reducing the franchise tax for small businesses and encouraging development in rural areas, we are ensuring Kansas' business climate remains robust and promotes job creation.

One area in which additional progress was made – though not as much as I had hoped – is health care. We must start dealing with the health care crisis, and thanks to cooperation with legislators our state's health experts will come back to us next year with a plan to cover all Kansans.

I remain disappointed, however, that some legislators continue to put politics ahead of the best interests of our children by once again failing to pass my proposal to insure all Kansas children from birth to age five.

Finally, Kansas has the potential to be a real leader when it comes to wind power, biofuels and energy efficiency. The steps we've taken this year will help us move away from fossil fuels and seize the opportunities before us.

Working together, I believe we made good progress this year and I look forward to working with legislators and all Kansans to continue that progress in the months and years ahead.

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