

KANSAS INTER FAITH ACTION

Annual Report 2020



Advocacy—Our coalitions include Alliance for a Healthy Kansas (Medicaid), Kansas Coalition for Citizen Participation (voting rights), Smart Justice (criminal justice reform), the WEALTH coalition (climate and energy), and Kansans for Payday Loan Reform.— each of these had Lobby Days or informational hearings.

KIFA submitted testimony on 7 bills this year, and testified in person before committees on 3: Medicaid Expansion, decriminalization of marijuana possession, and against the municipal banning of plastic bags.

One highlight of the session was the first-ever comprehensive hearing on climate change in Kansas, in front of a committee of legislators and community leaders.

Medicaid Expansion—Again this year our main focus was on Medicaid Expansion. The compromise bill between the Governor and Senator Denning was stymied throughout the year by Senate leadership and an unrelated constitutional amendment. The pandemic only makes it more plain that healthcare is a human right!

Our activities included testifying in front of the committee, a Medicaid Expansion Sabbath in early February, press and public outreach, helping organize a faith event with the Governor and Senator Denning in Wichita in March, and two rallies direct action outside the Senate chamber.



Faith and Public Policy Forums — Our main program; a panel of experts and advocates from allied organizations sharing solid information with voters across the state. We held 3 in the fall of 2019: Johnson County, Topeka and Wichita. This year we plan to hold 1 or 2 statewide events via Zoom and share portions of the recordings for local gatherings.

Clergy Council—We established monthly clergy calls to share information, and hear from guest experts, and build a supportive community. Speakers have included Sr. Simone Campbell, Ruth Ivory-Moore of national ELCA Advocacy, Lt. Gov. Lynn Rogers, and author Jack Jenkins. We will continue this series later this summer.



Partnerships —As part of our partnership with the Central States Synod of the ELCA, Reb Moti takes part in a monthly call with other State Public Policy offices and we work closely with Bishop Candeia and Synod staff. Our partnership with the Kansas-Oklahoma conference of the UCC continues. We are developing a strategic partnership with the state chapter of the NAACP, which will help us build our relationships around the state as well as deepening our anti-racist work.

Putting faith into action ...

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