

CAPITOL REPORT – WEEK 12

APRIL 4, 2025

Weekly Overview: This week the House proved once again that they can move as quickly or as slowly as they choose. On Monday the House gave first round approval to nine different pieces of legislation. Tuesday, they worked through the lunch hour amending all thirteen appropriation bills, putting their mark on Governor Kehoe’s proposed \$48 billion budget. You will find details of the House budget changes later in this report. On Wednesday, the House kept up the manic pace, Perfecting an additional five pieces of legislation and Third Reading and sending twenty more to the Senate. Of note, one bill requiring cities, counties, and MoDOT to pay for the cost of relocating infrastructure using the public right-of-way due to road maintenance or expansion failed on Third Read. The defeat of a bill on Third Reading in the House, even controversial ones, is a rare occurrence and was the only hiccup in the methodically planned week. The House then gave final approval to the budget bills on Thursday sending them to the Senate. The Senate will spend the next few weeks making their changes before sending the bills back to the House. The budget is due to Governor Kehoe by the first Friday after the first Monday in May, per the constitution.

In direct contrast, the Senate was only able to work through one piece of legislation this week. On Monday and Tuesday the Senate found itself bogged down in debate and unable to Perfect any bills. Wednesday, the Senate brought up for debate [HB 594](#) – a bill that originally allowed Missourians to deduct 100% of all capital gains income reported to the IRS from their state taxes. During negotiations, language was added removing the sales tax on diapers and feminine products, as well as increasing the tax credit for low income seniors to \$1,550. The tax credit often referred to as the circuit breaker, had not seen an adjustment in 2008. The legislation needs one more vote before it will be sent back to the House for its final approval.

There are only 6 weeks left to conduct legislative business before the constitutional deadline at 6pm on Friday May 16th.

In the News...

- A Republican state senator spent hours Wednesday trying to block the appointment of his former colleague to a county office over a grudge that goes back more than seven years. Shortly after 1 a.m., the filibuster sputtered and the appointment was confirmed by the Missouri Senate. State Sen. Mike Moon, (R-Lawrence), sought to prevent former Senate President Pro Tem Dave Schatz from being confirmed to a spot on the Franklin County Commission. He began his filibuster Wednesday afternoon, laying out grievances against Schatz and reading emails from people he said were residents of Franklin County who wanted the Senate to support another candidate. After numerous failed attempts to set the appointment aside, the Senate confirmed Schatz around 1 a.m., briefly adjourned and returned to approve its journal and head home for the week.
- A Missouri House member violated a state disclosure law by voting on an appropriation that helped his employer, according to a report approved unanimously on Wednesday by the House

Ethics Committee. The committee, made up of five Republicans and five Democrats, was investigating a complaint against state Rep. Justin Sparks, a Republican from Wildwood, related to his employment with the National Law Enforcement Foundation. The committee found “no support for the claims made in the complaint,” the report states, but found Sparks took “one to three votes with an apparent conflict of interest.” The committee’s inquiry concluded with a “letter of reproof,” the lowest punishment for violations of House ethics rules.

- On Wednesday, Governor Mike Kehoe requested federal assistance for storm recovery efforts in 28 Missouri counties. If approved, public assistance would allow local governments and qualifying nonprofits to seek federal reimbursement for emergency response and infrastructure recovery costs. In addition, a request for individual assistance for 25 counties was also made which, if approved, would allow eligible residents to seek federal assistance for temporary housing, housing repairs and replacement of damaged belongings or vehicles.
- Also on Wednesday, in response to the storms sweeping across Missouri, Governor Mike Kehoe signed Executive Order [25-21](#). This EO activates the Missouri National Guard to assist with response efforts for ongoing and severe forecasted storm systems that have caused, or have potential to cause, damage resulting from tornadoes, straight line winds, large hail, heavy rains, flooding and flash flooding, impacting communities throughout Missouri. Governor Kehoe first declared a State of Emergency on March 14, 2025, through Executive Order 25-19 in preparation for severe weather.
- On Tuesday, former Missouri Republican Party Chairman Ed Martin’s nomination as U.S. attorney for Washington D.C. was placed on hold by California Democratic Senator Adam Schiff. Senator Schiff is a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which vets nominees for U.S. attorney posts. Judiciary Committee rules say a hold would prevent a nominee from getting unanimous consent on the floor or delay a committee hearing for a week. Mr. Martin is serving in an interim role while his nomination is pending.

Budget Update

The House finished crafting their version of the Fiscal Year 2026 operating budget this week. On Tuesday, Budget Chairman Dirk Deaton (R-Seneca) brought the thirteen operating bills before the full House. Over the course of the five-hour debate, few substantive changes were made through the amendment process. Democrats offered a series of amendments including an amendment that would have restored the State Adequacy Target rate to \$7,076, which fully funds the school foundation formula, an amendment to remove the \$50 million in General Revenue for private school vouchers (called the MO Scholars Program) and attempted to fund a series of community non-profit organizations but was ultimately unsuccessful.

On Monday, the state had \$3.8 billion in general revenue surplus, down from an historic high of \$5.7 billion in 2023. The FY2026 budget anticipates leaving about \$1.9 billion in General Revenue unspent. The House operating budget plan has cut almost \$800 million in general revenue and is \$2.1 billion less than Governor Mike Kehoe’s \$54 billion spending plan. This was achieved by removing almost all funds that have remaining unspent (called lapsed) funding, reducing Medicaid expenditures to match enrollment rather than projected enrollment and reducing the recommended state employee pay raise. Additionally, the budget now contains 105 earmarked projects, 9 of which were added Monday, totaling over \$170 million.

There are three capital improvement bills which have yet to go through the full committee process and it is expected the mark-up process for those bills will take place next week.

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Abandoned Property

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 720](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill requires the Commissioner of Administration to submit an annual report to the General Assembly detailing each parcel of state property that has been abandoned or not utilized during the three-year period ending on August 28th of such year. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Wednesday afternoon to consider passage of [SB 720](#). After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-0 vote.

Access Missouri Scholarship

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 265](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). The bill seeks to raise the caps on the Access Missouri scholarship program. The sponsor informed the committee the caps have not been raised since 2013 and there are 40,000 students who use the program annually. Supporting testimony was presented by the Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri who stated the language does not require the legislature to fully fund the caps but the program has not kept pace with the cost of higher education. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Community College Association and the Missouri NEA. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Accounts Fraud

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 98](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill creates the offense of financial institution accounts fraud. The offense is committed if a customer or third-party accesses, uses or establishes an account and presents any type of fraudulent pretense to withdraw funds from the institution or other accounts. Additionally, the bill establishes criminal penalty provisions. Finally, the bill contains a provision exempting premium finance agreements from the commercial financing disclosure law. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Agency Interpretations

The House Judiciary Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 221](#) and [HB 663](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon) and Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill changes the standard for judicial review of state agency interpretations of laws, rules, and regulations. Courts and administrative hearing officers must interpret these matters independently (de novo) rather than deferring to agency interpretations. Any remaining doubt after applying standard legal interpretation methods must be resolved in a way that limits agency power and upholds individual liberty. Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from Associated Industries of Missouri, Americans for Prosperity, and a state public advocate. Supporters argue that the bill ensures courts independently interpret laws without deferring to state agencies, reinforcing the separation of powers and restoring checks and balances. They contend that it aligns Missouri with other states moving away from judicial deference to agencies, limiting agency power and protecting individual liberty. No opposing testimony was provided.

Alcohol Donations

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1340](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Myers (R-Warrenton). The bill allows beer, malt liquor or spirits to the list of alcohol-based beverages that may be donated and raffled off to charitable or religious

organizations or educational institutions. Supporting testimony was presented by Southern Glaziers Wine and Spirits. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Anesthesia Coverage

The House Committee on Insurance convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1126](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis) and [HB 932](#), sponsored by Representative David Tyson Smith (D-Columbia). The bills are identical and seeks to prohibit implementation of any policy by a health insurance which would place a time limit on anesthesia services provided during a medical or surgical procedure. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists who stated insurance companies should not be setting time limits for any procedures that are following best practice guidelines. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Jefferson City Medical Group, Missouri State Orthopedic Association, Missouri Gastroenterology Association, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, Missouri Hospital Association and Mercy Health System. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Animal Confiscation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 489](#), sponsored by Representative Dean Van Schoiack (R-Savannah). The bill modifies several provisions regarding the confiscation of animals. Specifically, the bill requires law enforcement to seek a warrant to enter private property in instances of abuse; prohibits the sterilization of an animal before a disposition hearing is held; allows third parties to care for confiscated animals; if an accused is found innocent the cost of care will not be billed to the accused; and requires a reasonable bond be posted within 72 hours of the disposition hearing. After a lengthy debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 108-31 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Anti-Red Flag Gun Seizure Act

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday for a public hearing on [SB 142](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bill establishes the "Anti-Red Flag Gun Seizure Act" which provides that any federal order of protection or other judicial order issued by a court to confiscate any firearm, firearm accessory, or ammunition from any law-abiding citizen shall be considered an infringement on the people's right to keep and bear arms. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Firearms Association and a private citizen. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Ballot Language

The House Committee on Elections convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 22](#), sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Lee's Summit). The bill prohibits the court from re-writing summary statements on joint resolutions, constitutional amendments or statutory language which requires a vote of the people if an official summary statement is submitted by the General Assembly. Additionally, in the event a summary statement is challenged in court, the Secretary of State may re-write the summary statement after two initial re-writes have occurred, if the General Assembly does not pass a resolution ten weeks before the election. Finally, the bill allows the Attorney General to immediately appeal injunctions granted by the courts and applies this provision retroactively. Supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri who stated this would ensure fair and balanced ballot language easily understood by the voters and ensure "activist" jurists would not unduly skew the

language. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Office of the Attorney General and Missouri Right to Life. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition who stated retroactively allowing the Attorney General to appeal injunctions interferes with the judicial process and has no basis in law. Additionally, this would directly give unprecedented authority to the Secretary of State. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the League of Women Voters, Missouri AFL-CIO, My Missouri Today, ACLU of Missouri and Jobs with Justice Voter Action. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities who stated with the ten week timeframe for printing of ballots they are neutral on the bill. Additional informational testimony was provided by the Office of the Secretary of State. The committee re-convened on Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of the bill. After a lengthy discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 8-4 vote.

Bank/Trust Company Modifications

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 754](#), sponsored by Representative Philip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill allows articles of agreement for banks and trust companies to provide for the issuance of additional shares of capital stock, if such terms are acceptable to the Director of Finance. Additionally, the bill allows directors to attend board meetings by phone or video. The bill also repeals a requirement for banks or trust companies to disclose the list of liabilities and indebtedness of their board and employees. Finally, the bill repeals provisions requiring financial reports of banks and trust companies be published in newspapers and repeals provisions regarding notification of dormant accounts. During bill progression, a provision allowing banks and credit unions to implement having a trusted contact on accounts and allows a surcharge to be charged to payees who pay debt collectors using credit cards was added. Additionally, the bill contains a provision which allows an alternative for banking institutions serving as depositories for public funds to secure their deposits in lieu of the method provided by current law, known as the "single bank pooled method." Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Bankers Association, Missouri Independent Bankers Association, Leading Age Missouri, Missouri Creditors Bar and Missouri Credit Union Association. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated this legislation removes transparency and could leave banks vulnerable to Chinese influence. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate.

Boycotts/DEI Initiatives

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 272](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Sullivan). The bill establishes new restrictions for entities conducting business with the state. It prohibits public entities from entering contracts with a company, unless the contract includes written certification the company is not currently engaged in any kind of economic boycott and will not engage in such practice for the duration of the contract. The bill also prohibits private businesses seeking to establish a contractual relationship with another private business to require or suggest data be provided regarding the extent to which its workforce, managers, executives, or ownership have policy that exhibits DEI classifications. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

Branson Designation

The House Special Committee on Tourism convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 109](#), sponsored by Representative Brian Seitz (R-Branson). The bill designates Branson as the Live Entertainment Capital of Missouri. Supporting testimony was presented by the City of Branson who

noted the combined live venues have more seating available than theaters on Broadway. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Building Codes

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 939](#) sponsored by Representative Mike Jones (R-Kansas City). The bill prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance, regulation or other policies that requires owners, builders or developers to implement green energy efficiency building design and construction practices for family dwellings if it threatens the affordability of the construction, maintenance repair or renovation. The sponsor stated these ordinances remove consumer choice and increases the cost of construction projects. Supporting testimony was presented by the Home Builders Association of Greater Kansas City who said that this will help to keep housing costs more affordable. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Ashlar Homes, the Builders' Association/KC Chapter AGC, and an individual homebuilder. Opposing testimony was presented by the American Institute of Architects-Missouri who said they do not agree with the costs being cited by the supporters because building permit issuance is actually up in the Kansas City area. They say the messaging about payback is not accurate and not supported by data, and that we should let the local communities make their own decisions about their building codes rather than forcing them to roll their codes back by nearly two decades across the state. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the City of Kansas City, residents of Kansas City, the American Chemistry Council, the Missouri Municipal League, American Institute of Architects-Central Region, City of Columbia, Institute for Market Transformation, Sierra Club, and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association.

Business (Youth) Licensure

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [SB 145](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). Current law authorizes cities to charge a business license tax. This act provides that no city shall require a business license for any enterprise owned by a person aged 18 years or younger. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Cardiac Emergency Response

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 232](#), sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). The bill requires public schools to develop a cardiac emergency response plan. During debate, several amendments were added to create an omnibus school safety package. Specifically, the bill now also contains:

- A recommendation that AED machines be accessible within 3 minutes of a cardiac event;
- Requires a comprehensive school safety plan for all school districts and charter schools; and,
- Removes the zero-tolerance bullying policies from school districts.

Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Career-Tech Certificates

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [SB 150](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). This is the companion to [HB 331](#), sponsored by Representative Ann Kelley (R-Lamar). The bill specifies that any student who has met the

qualifications for the A+ Scholars Program shall qualify for reimbursement for the costs associated with tuition, books, or fees associated with completion of an eligible certificate program from a public or private postsecondary institution, vocational school, community college, or certified training provider approved by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. Eligible programs include certificate or degree programs conferred by approved institutions of higher education for employment. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry who stated establishing these types of programs helps ensure Missouri higher education institutions are able to produce a talented workforce for high demand areas. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri NEA. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Catalytic Converters

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 42](#), sponsored by Representative Hardy Billington (R-Poplar Bluff). The bill requires that a record for the sale of a catalytic converter must include the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) of the vehicle from which the catalytic converter was removed. After a brief debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 146-7 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Charter School Property

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 1363](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis). The bill prohibits ordinances, resolutions and policies that prohibit school districts from leasing, selling or transferring property to a charter school for a lawful educational purpose. Additionally, the bill requires that deed restrictions or affirmative-use deed restrictions include educational use and that any agreement for the sell, lease, or transfer of property include provisions related to the maintenance and upkeep of the property. After a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Child Sexual Abuse

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to consider passage of [SB 589](#) and [SB 590](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair). The bills are similar and seek to address civil remedies for victims of childhood sexual abuse. [SB 589](#) eliminates the statute of limitations for civil actions related to childhood sexual abuse and [SB 590](#) seeks to find NDAs in cases of childhood sexual abuse to be judicially non enforceable. Although the bills were presented together, they were voted out of committee separately with the Chair acknowledging a floor sub will be offered in the future to combine the two. However [SB 589](#) was passed out of committee by a vote of 6-0 and SB 590 was voted out of committee by a vote of 5-1.

Department of Corrections

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to consider passage of [SB 378](#), sponsored by Senator Angela Mosley (D-Florissant). This act establishes within the Department of Corrections the "Office of State Ombudsman for Inmates in the Custody of the Department of Corrections" for the purpose of helping to ensure the adequacy of care received by inmates and to improve the quality of life experienced by them. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 774](#), [HB 729](#) and [HB 603](#), sponsored by Representatives Bill Allen (R-Kansas City),

Kimberly-Ann Collins (D-St. Louis) and Bill Lucas (R-DeSoto), respectively. The bills are identical and are the companions to [SB 378](#), highlighted above. Supporting testimony was presented by Fam.org who noted oversight of prisons is critical for family communication and guard and inmate safety. Additional supporting testimony was provided several family members of inmates, former guards, Justice for All, Breaking Generational Poverty, St. Louis City NAACP, Missouri Prison Reform, Missouri Justice Coalition, Missouri Appleseed, ACLU of Missouri and Empower Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Children's Home

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 43](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill strengthens child protection laws by modifying provisions related to child welfare, abuse prevention, and legal representation. It increases tax credits for youth programs, improves service contracts for child welfare providers, and establishes specialized care for youth with severe behavioral challenges. Additionally, it enhances child abuse investigation procedures, raises the minimum marriage age to 18, enforces custody and visitation orders, extends civil actions for childhood sexual abuse, and expands protections against child endangerment.

Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from Enough Abuse, BJC Healthcare Systems, Cox Health, Brighli, Family Forward, Children's Permanency Partnership, a private adoptive foster parent, Missouri Coalition of Children, Coyote Hill Foster Care, and Missouri Appleseed. They emphasized that the bill addresses critical foster care issues, including ensuring legal representation for children 14 and older, improving placement conditions for children currently housed in inappropriate settings like hotels or hospitals, and providing better residential care options. Additional testimony highlighted provisions strengthening protections for child sexual abuse victims, improving child custody enforcement, raising the age for certain criminal offenses, and limiting the use of non-disclosure agreements in childhood abuse cases. Supporters also praised efforts to reduce out-of-state foster care placements and mitigate associated costs. The bill also includes a provision granting a degree of qualified immunity in certain cases of accidental harm. Opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate, who expressed concerns about the bill's rushed nature, high financial costs, and lack of clarity regarding its amendments. The witness opposed provisions removing Guardians ad Litem, increasing law enforcement involvement in custody disputes, and adjusting the age for juvenile accountability. Additionally, concerns were raised about the bill's insufficient planning and funding for care facilities and mental health services, arguing that the legislation is not yet ready for implementation. An informational witness from the Department of Social Services testified to clarify questions, noting that prior concerns regarding the bill's language had been addressed through revisions.

Circuit Clerk Compensation

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 530](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill raises the compensation of circuit clerks for first class counties by \$5,000, second class counties by \$10,000 and third class counties by \$15,000. Additionally, the bill removes some obsolete statutes and duties of clerks. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 756](#), sponsored by Representative Sean Pouche (R-Kansas City). The bill modifies the base salary structure for circuit clerks by increasing the base salaries, depending on classification of county, starting

September 1, 2025. Additionally, the bill repeals a provision related to child support payments ordered by a judge in Marion County to be paid through the circuit clerk. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which mandates the raise be subject to appropriations. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-1 vote.

Civil Action Fees/Expenses

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 179](#), sponsored by Representative Cameron Parker (R-Campbell). The bill modifies the definition of "reasonable fees and expenses", as it relates to civil actions or agency proceedings, by removing the \$75 per hour attorney fee cap. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 124](#) which eliminates the sunset on the Basic Civil Services Legal Fund. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Civil Jurisprudence Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 176](#), sponsored by Representative Cameron Parker (R-Campbell). This is the companion bill to [SB 289](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton) and modifies provisions relating to estate planning, including notice for principal place of administration transfers, statutes of limitations for actions against trustees, electronic wills, and estate planning during the COVID-19 emergency. During debate, Representative Rudy Veit successfully amended the bill to create an omnibus civil jurisprudence package. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Specifies the fee for a birth, marriage or death certificate may be waived if requested by a circuit attorney, public defender or prosecutor;
- Adds the Uniform Fiduciary and Income Principal Act;
- Modifies the caps of attorney fees in worker's compensation cases;
- Allows for certain documents to remain confidential during certain civil matters;
- Removes the sunset on the Basic Civil Legal Services Fund;
- Provides a funding source for the St. Louis Law Library;
- Increases the compensation for jurors;
- Modifies provisions regarding confidentiality documents drafted by the Missouri Bar;
- Adds the Uniform Discovery Act;
- Modifies the Crime Victim Compensation Fund; and,
- Adds provisions protecting artistic expression in certain civil matters.

After a lengthy debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 142-9 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Civil Liability Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to debate [HB 1259](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). This legislation would ensure that resident trusts and estates receive the same income tax deduction as nonresident trusts and estates and only applies to the extent that it is not a determinant of the federal distributable new income of the estate or trust. During the bill's progression, several provisions were added, including:

- Changes the title to Civil Liability.
- Requires real property to have a title search performed before it can be placed into a trust.
- Adds a circuit judge in the 25th judicial district and an associate circuit judge in Miller County.

- [HB 723](#) Repeals provisions of law establishing the "Missouri Incarceration Reimbursement Act".
- [HB 543](#) Modifies provisions relating to civil detention procedures; and allows for electronic wills for estate planning, defines electronic wills and sets up the framework for procedure on electronic wills.

Supporting testimony was presented by Paul Vogel with Vogel Law, the Missouri Bar and the Association of Will and Trust. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Collateral Source Rule

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 69](#), sponsored by Representative Matthew Overcast (R-Ava). The bill modifies the rule for determining the admissibility of evidence of collateral source payments in civil actions. Additionally, the bill prohibits any party from introducing evidence of the amount billed for medical treatment if the amount has been discounted, written-off, or satisfied by payment of an amount less than the amount billed. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0-1 vote.

College Letter Task Force

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 442](#), sponsored by Representative Marla Smith (D-St. Louis). The bill establishes the “College Admission and Financial Aid Letter Consistency Task Force” whose purpose is to develop standardized forms for public colleges and universities to use for admission letters and student aid award letters. Supporting testimony was presented by the NAACP of St. Louis County. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri NEA, the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, the Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis, a state public advocate, parents and students. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Community Improvement Districts

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1416](#), sponsored by Representative Brian Seitz (R-Branson). This bill requires a community improvement district to provide notice to the governing body of the municipality in which the district is located of planned meetings and any associated meeting agendas at least ten calendar days prior to the meeting. If a district calls an emergency meeting it must provide notice as soon as possible. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Core Curriculum Transfer

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 183](#), sponsored by Representative Cameron Parker (R-Campbell). The bill modifies provisions of the Higher Education Core Curriculum Transfer Act to reduce barriers for students transferring between institutions, especially transferring between community colleges and four-year institutions. The bill ensures that the credits earned in core curriculum courses count towards the degree requirements at receiving institutions in five specific areas. Those five specific areas are general business, elementary education and teaching, general psychology, registered nursing, general biology or biological science. After a brief debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Coroners

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 1122](#), sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill requires candidates for coroner to provide evidence of certification to do death investigations when filing for candidacy. Additionally, the bill increases the statutory salary schedule for coroners by basing the salary on the assessed valuation of the counties they serve. Finally, the bill outlines the criteria for the 20 hours of classroom instruction required per year. During debate, the sponsor successfully removed the provision which increased the coroner salary based on the counties' valuation. After no debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 149-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Country of Origin Labeling

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HCR 9](#) and [HCR 15](#), sponsored by Representatives Keith Elliot (R-Doniphan) and Mazzie Christensen (R-Christensen). The resolutions are identical and urges the United States Congress to reinstate mandatory country of origin labeling. Citing congress repealed country of origin labeling for beef and pork in 2015, which lead to a crash in cattle prices paid to US cattle farmers. Supporting testimony was presented by several producers, ranchers and Cattlemen's Legal Fund, and Missouri Rural Crisis Center. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, Missouri Pork Association, Rolling Shoals Farm, Missouri Farm Bureau, and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce who stated while they support the concept of country of origin labeling, they support voluntary, industry led programs, not a federal mandate from the federal government as government led programs typically fail.

County Financial Statements

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [SB 2](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill allows certain counties to file abbreviated financial statements, requires publishers to charge market rates for this publication, and changes the publication date requirements. Additionally, the bill allows for a one-time fine forgiveness program for cities and counties that fail to timely file financial statements. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities, Missouri Association of County Auditors, Missouri Municipal League, and the Missouri Press Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

County Planning Board Notices

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 233](#) sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). The bill requires that notices of county planning board hearings be posted on the county's website, and it repeals the requirement that the notices be posted at least 15 days in advance of the hearing in at least two places in each township. Supporting testimony was presented by Cass County who stated this would allow for government efficiency. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Press Association and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Court Records

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 691](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St Louis). This act

modifies the provision to include information concerning a witness in a criminal case that is confidential as otherwise provided by law or rule and any other information redacted for good cause by order of the court. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Court Restraints - Juvenile

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 718](#), sponsored by Senator Steve Roberts (D-St Louis). This act provides that a child shall not be restrained during a juvenile court proceeding and, if restrained, the restraints shall be removed prior to the child's appearance before the court, unless the court finds the restraints are necessary. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen who stated restraints create an impression in juror's minds. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Crime – Face Covering

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee reconvened Wednesday to discuss passage of [HB 601](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Lucas (R-DeSoto), which creates a penalty enhancement for individuals who wear a mask, hood, disguise, or other clothing that conceals their identity during the commission of a misdemeanor or felony. The enhancement increases the penalty by one class higher than the underlying offense. If a defendant pleads guilty or no contest to the original offense but not guilty to the enhancement, a jury will determine the issue. After a brief discussion, they passed the bill with an 11-6 vote.

CROWN Act

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [SB 38](#), sponsored by Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas City). The bill creates the Missouri CROWN Act governing discriminatory practices relating to protective hairstyles. During the bill's progression, the title was modified and language was added to expand the provisions to include charter schools and charter school governing boards to the definition of "educational institution". Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri ACLU and the Missouri Equity Education Partnership. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Defendant Admissibility

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1389](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield) and [HB 1040](#), sponsored by Representative Michael Johnson (D-Kansas City). The bills are similar and establish the "Restoring Artistic Protection Act of 2025" which seeks to protect creative or artistic expression by excluding its admissibility against a defendant in criminal cases with certain exceptions. Additionally, the bill requires if such evidence is admitted, appropriate jury instructions must be given and the expression must be redacted in a limiting manner. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which combined the bills into one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 648](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield) and [SB 661](#), sponsored by Senator Brian Williams (D-Ferguson). These are the companion to [HB 1389](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield) highlighted above. Supporting testimony was presented by Free Our Art who stated the legislation strikes a balance between public safety and First Amendment freedoms and has passed in eight other states. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Arts KC, Missouri Artists

Coalition, Empower Missouri, Missouri Coalition for the Arts and several performing artists. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys who stated the legislation creates a large carve out and those who confess through lyrics or poetry would be harder to prosecute. The committee reconvened Wednesday to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which combined the bills together to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Dementia Services Coordinator

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 511](#), sponsored by Representative Travis Wilson (R-St. Charles) and [HB 1335](#), sponsored by Representative Keri Ingle (D-Lee's Summit). The bills are similar and create a full-time coordinator position within the Department of Health and Senior Services' Division of Senior and Disability Services. The coordinators duties will be specified towards dementia services and will include data analysis, strategy development, education, and evaluation. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which combined the bills into one legislative vehicle but used the language from [HB 1335](#). Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Dental Hygiene

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 327](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). This is the Senate companion to [HB 56](#). Currently, the Missouri Dental Board is allowed to grant licensure to a dentist who has been licensed in another state for at least five years if the Board is satisfied the qualifications are equivalent to Missouri standards. The bill repeals that provision and allows the Board to waive all exams and experience requirements for licensure to any person who has a valid current dentist or dental hygienist license issued by another state. The bill also enacts the Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact which allows those licensed in participating states to practice in other participating states. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Design-Build/Omnibus Sunset

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [SB 10](#), sponsored by Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield). The bill, as filed, repeals the sunset date of September 1, 2026, for political subdivision authority to utilize the design-build method for construction and repeal the expiration date allowing political subdivisions to continue to use the construction manager-at-risk method. The intent is to provide political subdivisions flexibility to use contracting options to ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness. During bill progression, the bill was expanded to create an omnibus sunset bill. Specifically, the bill removes the sunset on the wood energy producers tax credit; champion for children; diaper banks; meat processing facilities; motion media production project (Show Me Act); entertainment industry jobs act; higher ethanol fuel; biodiesel retail sales; biodiesel production; urban farms; financial incentives for relocated jobs; rolling stock; participation in athletic competitions designated for opposite sex; retirement benefits for substitute teachers; Missouri Save Adolescents from Experimentation (SAFE) Act; Medicaid Managed Care Organization Reimbursement; Missouri Emergency Response Commission; Pharmacy FRA; Specialty Agricultural Crops; electronic monitoring of persons found guilty of violating protection orders; basic civil legal services fund; alternative incentives under Missouri Works Program; intermediate care facility for the intellectually disabled FRA; ground ambulance FRA; nursing facility FRA; Hospital FRA; and agricultural production. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen and JE Dunn

Construction, American Institute of Architects, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Civic Council of Kansas City, Missouri Cattlemen Association, Railway Supply Institute, Missouri Forest Products Association, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Healthcare Association, Missouri Pharmacy Association, Missouri Fire Alliance, Ambulance District Association of Missouri, Naboltz Construction, Missouri Ambulance Association, Happy Bottoms KC, SEMA, DED, Missouri Motion Media Association, Builders Chapter of AGC of KC, Burns McDonald and the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities. Opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate, the Missouri Equity Education Partnership, PROMO and the ACLU of Missouri.

Disease Reporting

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening for a two hour public hearing on [HB 986](#), sponsored by Representative Matthew Overcast (R-Ava). The bill adds alpha-gal syndrome (AGS) and Lyme disease to the list of diseases that must be reported to the Department of Health and Senior Services. Committee members spent over an hour asking questions to familiarize themselves with the disease as many had never heard the term before. Supporting testimony was provided by dozens of citizens diagnosed with AGS who stated this would help bring awareness to the disease which could lead to increased funding and cures. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Distracted Driving Preemption

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee reconvened Wednesday to discuss passage of [HB 1489](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Verneti (R-Camdenton), which modifies the state's preemption on regulating the use of electronic communication devices by motor vehicle operators. The bill allows local laws, ordinances, or regulations as long as they do not conflict with state law. After a brief discussion, they passed the bill with a 16-1 vote.

DOR Fee Offices

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 3](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffer). The bill allows for Department of Revenue fee offices to raise the fees on certain transactions. Additionally, the bill specifies a fee office contract may not be awarded to any entity which is affiliated in any way to an employee of the Department of Revenue. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of License Offices who state the increases are necessary to be able to provide living wages and healthcare to fee office employees and the fees have not increased since 1999. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Drivers Licenses - Gender

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1362](#), sponsored by Representative Brandon Phelps (R-Warrensburg). The bill requires a person seeking to obtain a driver's license, nondriver's license, or instruction permit denoting a sex other than an applicant's biological sex assigned at birth to provide an amended birth certificate that reflects the sex designation requested. Supporting testimony was presented by private citizens and a state public advocate who stated this legislation would simply align government documents. Opposing testimony was presented by PROMO who stated not all states allow for amended birth certificates and this could make things difficult for those who move to Missouri and are transgender. Additional opposing

testimony was provided by a private attorney, private citizens. Missouri Chapter of ACLU, veterans and the Missouri Equity Partnership.

Driving While Intoxicated

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 87](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City). The bill increases the penalties on intoxicated driving sentencing based on various aggravating factors. Supporting testimony was presented by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and SAFE Coalition who stated this would enhance penalties to hopefully deter future intoxicated drivers. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Drug Trafficking

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 1045](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill expands the offense of first-degree murder to include knowingly delivering or distributing fentanyl, carfentanil, or their derivatives or combinations when death results from using the substance. Supporting testimony highlighted the alarming rise in fentanyl-related child fatalities, nearly doubling overall, with a 500% increase among children under five. Given the severity of the crisis, the witness argued that those knowingly distributing fentanyl—especially when it leads to a child's death—should face the harshest legal consequences. Opposing testimony was provided by a representative from Missourians to Abolish the Death Penalty, who stated that the witness opposes the bill due to concerns over prosecutorial discretion and potential constitutional challenges. The witness suggested felony murder charges as a more appropriate alternative and warned against imposing the death penalty without clear intent.

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 49](#), sponsored by Representative Willard Haley (R-Eldon). The bill aims to stiffen penalties for fentanyl use and distribution by increasing the penalties for various amounts of fentanyl at the time of arrest. After no further debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 132-8 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Election Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 507](#), sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrollton). This is the House companion bill to [SB 182](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Bufferlo) and modifies several provisions regarding elections and election authorities. Specifically, the bill includes the following provisions:

- Currently, the filing period for candidates, unless otherwise specified, is from the 17th Tuesday prior to the election through the 14th Tuesday prior to the election. The bill moves the filing period by one week, from the 16th Tuesday to the 13th Tuesday prior to the election. The bill also provides that if the 13th Tuesday is a holiday, the next day will be the last day of filing;
- The bill allows election notifications be sent by email;
- Specifies that lists of absentee voters with permanent disabilities shall be kept confidential and shall not be posted or displayed in an area open to the public nor shown to any unauthorized person;
- Current law provides that votes for write-in candidates are only counted for candidates who have filed a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate. Language was added that provides an exemption to this requirement in instances where no candidate has filed for the office in

question. This repeals the exemption so that write-in candidates are only counted when a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate has been filed with the proper election authority;

- Adds threatening to harm or engaging in conduct reasonably calculated to harass or alarm an election official or a member of one's family as a class one election offenses; and,
- Expands a provision of law governing the casting and counting of provisional ballots to all public elections, rather than just primary or general elections; and,
- Prohibits electioneering within 50 feet of polling places rather than the current 25 feet, but provides an exception that allows candidates to remain within 25 feet.

During debate, the sponsor failed to amend the bill to prohibit public funds from being utilized to support or oppose ballot measures and prohibit those who leave office *quo warrento* from being able to serve in that office again. However, the bill was amended to add provisions allowing election challengers in charter and first class counties and requires those who file for office in St. Louis County to be able to provide a no tax due statement. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Electric Competition

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 487](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bill creates "The Electrical Choice and Competition Law" which aims to create a more competitive electricity market by allowing customers to choose their electricity supplier and requiring utilities to unbundle their rates, separating generation, transmission, and distribution costs. Supporting testimony was presented by NRG Energy Inc. and stated the reforms contained within the bill will help to move Missouri forward with a stronger competitive energy market that better serves businesses and residential consumers. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Retailer Utility Advancement League, Ford Motor Company, Missouri Solar Energy Industries Association, Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers, and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. Opposing testimony was presented by Evergy and stated that deregulation does not lower the cost of utility rates, citing deregulation started in the early 90's and about 13 states are currently deregulated and actually pay higher rates. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Ameren Missouri, a state public advocate, and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Informational testimony was presented by the Consumers Council of Missouri and MOST Policy Initiatives and stated that utility companies are still making the profits and any costs are just offset to the consumers.

Emergency Medical Services

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [SB 7](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). The bill requires ambulance district board of directors to complete three hours of continuing education for each term of office and failure to do so will result in a loss of office. It requires each ambulance district to arrange for an audit of the district's records and accounts every three years by a certified public accountant and make the results available to the public on the district's website or otherwise freely available by other electronic means. Additionally, specialty hospitals are not required to comply with certain statutory provisions relating to forensic examinations of victims of sexual assault if such hospital has in place a policy for the transfer of such victims to an appropriate hospital with an emergency department. Finally, the bill expands the liability protection for the good Samaritan law. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was

adopted which requires insurers to pay for a 12-month supply of oral contraceptives. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Ephedrine Sales

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1036](#), sponsored by Representative Tara Peters (R-Rolla). Current law prohibits the sale, purchase, or dispensation of ephedrine, phenylpropanolamine, or pseudoephedrine to the same individual in a 12-month period in an amount greater than 43.2 grams. The bill changes that yearly limit to 61.2 grams. Additionally, the bill requires any manufacturer of compounds, mixtures, or preparations specified in the bill to pay monthly fees to the administrator of the real-time electronic pseudoephedrine tracking system. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Escrow Accounts

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1211](#), sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau). Currently, a broker may commingle personal funds in with those funds held in an escrow account as long as that does not exceed \$1,000. The bill excludes any interest accrued on the sum deposited by the broker as long any payment of such interest is withdrawn from the account within 30 days of receipt. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarifies that a brokery may retain the interest on the entirety of the account, not just the broker's portion and gives them 30 days to transfer the interest out. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Eviction Petitions

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 400](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Amato (R-Arnold). Currently, property owners may file a petition to seek relief for removing "unlawful occupants" from property containing a residential dwelling. The bill expands these provisions to include private non-commercial property. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Expert Witness

The House Judiciary Committee reconvened Wednesday to consider the passage of [HB 263](#), sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater), which clarifies provisions regarding expert witnesses. The bill allows an expert to testify in the form of an opinion or otherwise if the proponent shows that it is more likely than not that the expert's qualifications will be met. After a brief discussion, the bill failed to pass, receiving a 6-6 vote.

Financial Institutions

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 707](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill creates the offense of financial institution accounts fraud and establishes non stackable criminal provisions. During Perfection, several amendments were successfully added to the bill. These included a title change, allowing campaigns and candidates to transfer funds by electronic means and exempts small payroll companies from certain regulations. Additionally, the bill now includes provisions from the Perfected version on [HB 754](#) which is the omnibus financial institutions package. After no further debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 142-9 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Firearm Suppressors

The House Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 548](#) and [HB 898](#), sponsored by Representatives Mike Costlow (R-Dardenne Prairie) and Ben Baker (R-Neosho), respectively. The bills are identical and expands the definition of “firearm silencer” to include firearm suppressor with regard to committing the criminal offense of knowingly possessing, manufacturing, transporting, repairing or selling a firearm silencer. Additionally, after August 2025, this will no longer be a crime in Missouri. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which combined the bills into one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-4 vote.

Firefighter BOR

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1190](#), sponsored by Representative Colin Wellenkamp (R-St. Charles). The bill establishes the “Firefighters Procedural Bill of Rights Act.” The bill covers firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, and emergency 911 dispatchers and offers protections to firefighters from punitive actions while in the performance of their official duties. The language does not grant immunity. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which aligns the language with the provisions included in [SB 143](#) an omnibus public safety bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

First Responder Assault

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 669](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-St. Louis). The bill creates the offense of interference with a first responder and deems it a class A misdemeanor. Additionally, a person commits the offense when they have received a verbal warning not to approach from a first and knowingly and willfully violates the verbal warning and approaches a first responder with intent to impede, threaten or engage in conduct that causes emotional distress. Supporting testimony was provided by the Ambulance District Association of Missouri, Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, Missouri Police Chiefs Association and the Missouri Ambulance Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Foreign Ownership of Property

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 993](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Irwin (R-Lee’s Summit). This legislation seeks to reduce the amount of land, not just agricultural land, that can be held by foreign ownership from 1% to .5% and requires that the sale or transfer of such land by an alien or foreign business be reported. In addition, this legislation prohibits foreign adversaries, as identified by the federal government, from purchasing any land in Missouri. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-1 vote.

Foster Health Screenings

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1227](#), sponsored by Representative Melissa Schmidt (R-Eldridge). The bill sets up a framework to establish time frames for the evaluation of children entering into the custody of the Children’s Division. Supporting testimony was presented by Kids Win Missouri, Burrell Behavioral Health and Preferred Family Health Care. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Fuel Source Regulations

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1455](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Knight (R-Lebanon). The bill prevents the State and all political subdivisions from making any law, rule, regulation, or ordinance that restricts based on fuel source the sale or use of motor vehicles; farm equipment; and tools, including by not limited to, generators, lawn mowers, pressure washers, chain saws, leaf blowers, and weed trimmers. Supporting testimony was presented by the American Petroleum Institute who stated this legislation ensures Missourians have the choice to purchase new fuel-powered equipment that best fits their needs. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Petroleum and Convenience Association, Freedom of the Road Riders and Abate Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Hazing

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [SB 167](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill provides a person who takes the initiative to call 911 when someone is in need of immediate medical assistance shall not be found guilty of the offense of hazing. Additionally, the bill provides immunity for the person who remains at the scene until medical assistance arrives, and to the person who rendered aid to the hazing victim before assistance arrived. Finally, the bill adds a definition of former member and provides further clarity to the offense of hazing by requiring someone to be knowingly, actively and not be under duress during the act. Supporting testimony was presented by the Mizzou Greek Alliance who stated this would provide narrow immunity for someone who is the first to call 911 for someone in distress. Additionally, the person the bill is named after, Danny Santulli, if aid had been given sooner would not be facing the physical and mental challenges he does today. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Health Care Worker Assaults

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1213](#), sponsored by Representative Brandon Phelps (R-Warrensburg). The bill requires health care facilities to display the penalties for assaulting health care workers and specifies the wording, dimensions and locations of the signage. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which narrows the scope to signage placed in labor and delivery wards and the emergency department and clarified the penalty language. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Homeowners' Association Act

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing [SB 481](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). The bill establishes the "Missouri Homeowners Association Act". During bill presentation, the bill sponsor stated the intent of the bill is to streamline statutes and create a standardization relating to the over 500 homeowners' associations in the state. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association Management who stated this legislation provides much needed improvements in the overall effectiveness of HOAs across the state and will reduce confusion and prevent disputes. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Community Association Institute. Opposing testimony was presented by the St. Louis Home Builders Association who stated this legislation was authored by HOA attorneys to increase revenues on expenses and fees associated with the creation and management of HOAs. Additional opposing testimony was presented by the Mortgage Bankers Association of Missouri, Missouri Land Title Association, Missouri Bankers Association, Missouri Independent Bankers Association, Missouri Association of Realtors and the America Resort Development Association.

Human Rights Act Fees

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 717](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). Currently, the Missouri Human Rights Act (MHRA) allows a prevailing party in any civil action brought to be awarded court costs and reasonable attorney fees. This bill only permits court costs and reasonable attorney fees in cases not involving a public employer. The sponsor informed the committee that in FY24, attorney fee payouts on MHRA cases made up close to 80% of all the MHRA expenditures and his intent is to curb this practice. Supporting testimony was presented by the Office of Attorney General who stated this would allow for the savings of taxpayer dollars in the Legal Expense Fund when the state is settling cases for a fraction of the cost, but lawyer's fees are costing more than the settlement. Opposing testimony was presented by a civil rights attorney who stated this would ensure no settlements occur and proceedings would have to be taken to trial. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Employee Rights Law Firm.

Human Trafficking

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 615](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Coleman (R-Grain Valley). This bill seeks to establish the "Committee on Sex and Human Trafficking Training" which will be composed of six members, including, among others, a representative of the Attorney General's Office, a representative of the Department of Public Safety, and a juvenile officer. The committee must annually evaluate and establish guidelines for required sex and human trafficking training. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse and the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers who stated they would like to see an additional member from the defense side added.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 262](#), sponsored by Representative Chris Brown (R-Kansas City). The bill establishes the Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act, which creates a fund to reimburse facilities that provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy to veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, and it is to be used to conduct studies on the use of alternative therapies for these conditions. During the sponsor's bill presentation he stated pre-clinical and clinical trials have shown that hyperbaric oxygen therapy can induce neuroplasticity and improve clinical outcomes of veterans with treatment-resistant PTSD. The biological effects of hyperbaric oxygen therapy include improved mitochondrial function, stem cell proliferation, angiogenesis, and neurogenesis. During debate, the bill was amended to remove the provisions regarding DHSS and requires the veteran's approval to share their data with the Veteran's Commission regarding treatment. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Insulin Coverage

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1195](#), sponsored by Representative Sean Pouche (R-Kansas City). The bill caps consumer copayments at \$100 for EpiPens and \$35 for 30-day supplies of prescription insulin, regardless of the quantity or type of covered prescription insulin dispensed. Supporting testimony was presented by Health Care Policy Pod who stated those who cannot afford insulin and manage their diabetes properly place a strain on the healthcare system and this legislation would place minimal increases on insurance

premiums. Additional supporting testimony was provided by private citizens and a state public advocate. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Insurance Coalition.

Jackson County Assessor

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HJR 23](#), sponsored by Representative Carolyn Caton (R-Blue Springs). Upon voter approval, the constitutional amendment requires Jackson County to have an elected assessor. Supporting testimony was provided by a member of the Jackson County Legislature. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Judicial Proceedings

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 794](#), sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Harrisonville). The bill establishes that pro-life individuals and organizations may intervene in actions in which a provision of the Missouri Constitution, statute, or rule involves the regulation of abortion or where the rights of an unborn child is at issue. Campaign Life Missouri, Missouri Right to Life, and a state public advocate testified in support of the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

Law Enforcement Reporting

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee reconvened Wednesday to discuss passage of [HB 591](#), sponsored by Representative Richard West (R-Wentzville), which requires law enforcement agencies to track and report clearance rates for crimes starting January 1, 2026. The Department of Public Safety will publish quarterly reports and provide annual updates to key government bodies. The bill also creates the "Missouri Violent Crime Clearance Grant Program" to fund initiatives that improve clearance rates, with priority given to certain agencies, and requires grant recipients to report their progress annually. A substitute was offered and after a brief discussion, they passed the bill with a 17-0 vote.

Library Districts

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 396](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). This is the companion bill to [HB 369](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Banderman (R-St. Clair). Currently, statute sets the fiscal year for each consolidated public library district as July first to June 30th. The bill allows boards of trustees of consolidated public library districts to set the dates of their own fiscal years. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Library Association who stated this makes financial sense for the districts. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee immediately moved into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill with consent status by a 13-0 vote.

Limited Driving Privileges

The House Judiciary Committee reconvened Wednesday to discuss passage of [HB 931](#) and [HB 1531](#), sponsored by Representatives Tyson Smith (D-Columbia) and David Dolan (R-Sikeston), which allows offenders to petition the sentencing court for limited driving privileges after successfully completing a Department of Corrections substance abuse treatment program or a 120-day institutional treatment

program recommended by the court. A substitute was offered that combined the two bills, and after a brief discussion, they passed the bill with an 11-0 vote.

Line of Duty Compensation

The House Judiciary Committee convened Wednesday to discuss [HB 365](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Amato (R-Arnold). The bill increases the line-of-duty compensation benefit for claimants from \$25,000 to \$100,000 for deaths occurring on or after August 28, 2025, subject to appropriation. Starting in 2026, the benefit will be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers, ensuring it does not drop below \$100,000. These provisions are set to expire on December 31, 2031. Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, Missouri Fire Service Alliance, and Missouri Ambulance Association. Supporters emphasized the urgency of renewing the program before it expires in June, which requires an emergency clause to ensure continued benefits for families. One witness, representing the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, highlighted that similar programs already assist families, and the increase would not significantly impact the state budget, as last year's total payouts were around \$350,000. No opposing testimony was provided.

Local Election Authority

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 794](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bill prohibits any government entity from soliciting, accepting, or using any funds or in-kind goods or services for election administration unless they are in kind services or low value. Additionally, the bill prohibits any election authority from joining a membership or purchasing a subscription to any partisan entities. As the bill progressed, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarifies the definition of election administrator. Additionally, the substitute clarifies it only impacts memberships when it is an organization that engages in election administration and receives any foreign funding. Finally, the substitute clarifies the provision of the bill do not apply to private memberships and the penalty provisions are only enforceable if an administrator knowingly accepts foreign-influenced funds for election administration. During Perfection, the bill was successfully amended to change the title to Local Election Authorities, allows for election challengers to be present on election day in Charter and First Class counties and adds [HB 793](#) which prohibits foreign influence in elections. After a brief debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 99-48 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Local Government Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss [HB 352](#) sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrollton). The bill is the House Companion to [SB 2](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo) and allows certain counties to file abbreviated financial statements and requires publishers to charge market rates for this publication. Additionally, the bill allows for a one-time fine forgiveness program for cities and counties that fail to timely file financial statements. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute which added several provisions regarding local government to create an omnibus package. Specifically, the bill now contains the following provisions:

- [SB 271](#), modifies provisions relating to fire protection ordinances;
- [SB 388](#), modifies provisions relating to deteriorated or abandoned property;
- [SB 514](#), modifies provisions relating to the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System;

- Modifies provisions relating to the board of trustees for the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System;
- Modifies provisions governing land banks in certain areas;
- [SB 797](#), modifies provisions relating to regional planning commissions; and,
- [SB 530](#), modifies the compensation of circuit clerks.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Long-Term Care

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 390](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Amato (R-Arnold). The bill sets forth a series of disclosures that individuals or entities must provide to prospective residents or their families. These disclosures include documentation of the existence of any relationships between the referral agency and the assisted living facility, if the referral agency receives a fee from the assisted living facility for the referral and written documentation of the agreement between the referral agency and the prospective resident or representative. Additionally, the bill sets forth some prohibitions and requirements that assisted living facilities are required to meet. These include a prohibition of payment of fees to referral agencies under certain conditions, a prohibition of the selling or transferring of contact information to third parties and a requirement to maintain a written or electronic copy of the agreement between the referral agency and the prospective resident or resident's representative. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added independent living facilities to the bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Marriage Age

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 66](#), sponsored by Senator Tracy McCreery (D-Olivette). Currently, no marriage license shall be issued in Missouri for individuals under 16 years of age or issued when one party to the marriage is under 18 years of age and the other party over 21 years of age. Additionally, no marriage license shall be issued if any party to the marriage is under 18 years of age without parental consent. The bill repeals those provisions and no marriage license shall be issued in Missouri for individuals under 18 years of age. Supporting testimony was provided by Unchained At Last, AHA Foundation, child marriage survivors, Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence and the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Marriage Dissolution

The Senate Committee on Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 243](#), sponsored by Representative Cecelie Williams (R-Dittmer). The bill requires MO HealthNet to pay the fee for the portion of clinical pathology services that involves the pathologist's professional expertise in interpreting and supervising laboratory tests, excluding the technical component of performing the laboratory tests that are provided by hospital-based pathologists for inpatient services. Supporting testimony was provided by Abortion Action, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the Rape and Abuse Crisis Service of Jefferson City and the Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Maternal Health Services

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1095](#), sponsored by Representative LaKeySha Bosley (D-St. Louis). The bill requires insurance coverage for childbirth education classes. Additionally, the bill establishes the “Doula Reimbursement Act” which allows doulas to be reimbursed under MO HealthNet and from health benefit plans. Finally, the bill establishes the services the services they may provide and specify they are not allowed to engage in the practice of medicine. Supporting testimony was presented by SSM Health who stated this legislation simply codifies what MO HealthNet already has in place through the state plan amendment. Additional supporting testimony was provided by dozens of private citizens, doulas, the Health Forward Foundation, League of Women Voters of Missouri, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Health Care Policy Pod. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Mental Health Coverage

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 567](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill prohibits insurers from imposing greater cost-sharing requirements for mental health treatment if a hospital is out-of-network and requires insurers to reimburse at the Medicaid rate. Additionally, the bill specifies that insurers who maintain inadequate behavioral and mental health provider networks is an unlawful practice enforceable under the Missouri Merchandising Practices Act. Supporting testimony was presented by Royal Oaks Hospital and the Missouri Hospital Association who stated there are an inadequate amount of psychiatric beds across the state and patients are often transferred around before a bed is found. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. Informational testimony was presented by Americas Health Insurance Plans who suggested changing the rate from Medicaid to MO HealthNet rate and possibly mandate hospitals maintain a certain number of psychiatric beds within their facilities. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Additional informational testimony was provided by the Missouri Insurance Coalition.

Mental Health Treatment Courts

The House Judiciary Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 218](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill establishes a mental health treatment court within circuit courts to provide an alternative case resolution for criminal defendants whose offenses stem from mental health or co-occurring disorders. It expands the existing specialized treatment courts, which address substance abuse and related issues, to include a dedicated focus on mental health. Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from the Judicial Conference of Missouri, a state public advocate, and The REACH Healthcare Foundation. Supporters argue that adding mental health courts to Missouri’s existing treatment court system will be cost-effective, reduce recidivism, and help offenders stay connected to their communities. They believe these courts will lower societal costs related to crime, family separation, and substance abuse while providing comprehensive treatment to prevent the negative impacts of incarceration. The bill also clarifies waiving court costs for veterans in treatment courts, allows mental health courts to access funding from the Treatment Court Resource Fund, and expands resources to establish new mental health courts in underserved areas. Overall, supporters emphasize that the bill will save taxpayer money in the long run. No opposing testimony was provided.

Missouri Southern State University

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HCR 6](#), sponsored by Representative Cathy Jo Loy (R-Carthage). The resolution approves the expansion of the

mission designation for Missouri Southern State University. The sponsor informed the committee the mission expansion was approved by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education in 2023. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 15-0 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to the public hearing on [SCR 3](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). This is the companion to [HCR 6](#), highlighted above. Supporting testimony was presented by the President of Missouri Southern State University who stated the purpose of expansion is to be able to offer health and international education. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Missouri-Kansas Border War

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1350](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Sharp (R-Kansas City). Current law establishes restrictions on economic incentives for jobs relocating from a “Kansas border county” to a “Missouri border county.” The bill extends the deadline on these restrictions from 2025 to 2035. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added definitions for sports teams and events held at stadiums. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-0 vote.

Motor Fuel Tax

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 572](#), sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville). The bill requires internal and external expenditures be included in the MoDOT annual report. Additionally, for every year internal expenditures exceeds 18% of its total expenditures, the Motor Fuel Tax will be reduced by \$.01 per gallon the following fiscal year, but the tax may not be reduced more than \$.05 per gallon. Finally, in any fiscal year following a rate reduction, if the Department's internal expenditures are less than 18% of its total expenditures, the Motor Fuel Tax will be increased by \$.01 per gallon or up to the rate as of August 28, 2025, whichever is less, in the following fiscal year. During debate numerous amendments were added to create an omnibus transportation package. Specifically, the bill now contains the following provisions:

- [HB 61](#), regarding the \$25 fee for Conservation Heritage Foundation license plates;
- [HB 81](#), regarding signage for Congressional medal of Honor recipients;
- [HB 169](#), modifies provisions regarding cotton trailers;
- [HB 239](#), requires MoDOT to publish cost estimate and completion dates for all projects on its website;
- Requires city population signs to be placed on city limit signs on state highways;
- Modifies highway dynamic messaging boards;
- Modifies the definition of “outdoor advertising” to exclude signs or devices attached to fencing or walls on an athletic field owned by a school;
- Waives the \$200 outdoor advertising fee and biennial inspection fee for certain highway signs if the permit holder is also the landowner where the sign is placed;
- Requires marketing signs to designate the Ozark Highland Spirits Region;
- Modifies the memorial highway designation process;
- [HB 538](#), regarding school bus endorsements and background checks for school bus drivers;
- [HB 671](#), requires drivers stop at railroad grade crossings when on-track equipment is oncoming;
- [HB 745](#), modifies commercial towing provisions;
- [HB 775](#), standardizes automobile and motorcycle registration fees;
- Modifies provisions regarding motor vehicle inspections;

- Modifies provisions regarding temporary tags;
- Modifies several provisions regarding disability placards;
- [HB 928](#), modifies the Waterways and Ports Trust Fund to include the City of St. Louis; and,
- Modifies several provisions regarding specialty license plates.

Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Motor Vehicle Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 378](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bill authorizes law enforcement officers to stop, inspect, or detain someone solely to determine whether a temporary permit is current. If it has expired, the law enforcement officer must issue a citation and assess a penalty of \$250. Additionally, if the person fails to register the vehicle within 30 days, the person's driving privileges will be suspended. Finally, if the person receives additional citations for a temporary permit the vehicle may be impounded until properly registered. During debate, several amendments were adopted to create a motor vehicle omnibus package.

Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Title changed to motor vehicles;
- [HB 799](#), phases in a repeal on motor vehicle inspections and allows for the creation of a Space Force license plate;
- Modifies the process for renewal of disability placards;
- Includes trailer dealers and modifies the maintenance fee for the point of sale system;
- [HB 1048](#), allows occupational therapists who may issue a statement for a patient to receive temporary and permanent disabled placards; and,
- Modifies the third-party fee system for those seeking a Heritage Conservation Foundation license plate.

After a brief debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 127-19 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Motor Vehicle Tracking

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 971](#), sponsored by Representative Cecelie Williams (R-Dittmer). The bill seeks to establish the offense of unlawful tracking of vehicle without the owner's consent. Supporting testimony was a private lawyer who represented the sponsor in her case and a member of the public whose family is a victim of the issue at hand. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Motor Vehicles - Inoperable

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 40](#), sponsored by Representative Hardy Billington (R-Poplar Bluff). The bill changes from 10 to 20 years the age at which an inoperable car must be before a scrap metal operator can purchase the vehicle without the original certificate of ownership, salvage certificate of title, or junking title. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarified a title would not be necessary in order to junk an inoperable car for scrap metal. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 15-0 vote.

MU Seminary Fund

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1172](#), sponsored by Representative Willard Haley (R-Eldon). The bill requires the University of Missouri to enter into an agreement with the Office of the Treasurer to directly manage and operate the land-grant funding directly by the University of Missouri. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Nontraditional Students

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 63](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill removes a requirement for parents to submit a declaration to homeschool to the county recorder or residing school district superintendent. Additionally, the bill prohibits school districts from being members of statewide activities associations which prohibit virtual or home-school students from participating in any event or activities. Finally, the bill outlines how virtual instruction program or home-school students may participate in a resident district school-sponsored activity, athletic team, or extracurricular club or event. Supporting testimony was presented by children, parents and former teachers. Opposing testimony was presented by the Christian Home Education Fellowship Family Covenant Ministries who stated homeschool parents do not want governmental oversight when it comes to their children or their educations.

Obsolete Boards

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon to discuss [SB 729](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill requires each state department with oversight of an administrative entity to submit an annual report to the General Assembly detailing any administrative entity that has not convened a public meeting or conducted public business during the three year period ending on August 28th of such year. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Wednesday afternoon to consider passage of [SB 729](#). After brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

Optometrists

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 219](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). This is the companion bill to [HB 929](#). Currently, optometrists are prohibited from performing surgeries, including the use of lasers for treatment of any disease or condition or for correction of refractive error. This bill allows optometrists to perform certain surgical procedures for correction and relief of ocular abnormalities. Additionally, the bill allows the use of injectable agents, except as otherwise specified and limited by the Board of Optometry. Supporting testimony was provided by several optometrists. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, UMKC, Missouri State Orthopedic Association, Missouri Gastroenterology Society, Missouri Society of Anesthesiologists, Missouri State Medical Association and Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons.

The House Committee on Professional Registration convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 929](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). Currently, optometrists are prohibited from performing surgeries, including the use of lasers for treatment of any disease or

condition or for correction of refractive error. This bill allows optometrists to perform certain surgical procedures for correction and relief of ocular abnormalities. Additionally, the bill allows the use of injectable agents, except as otherwise specified and limited by the Board of Optometry. After a lengthy discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 14-5 vote.

Paid Sick Time

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1414](#), sponsored by Representative David Dolan (R-Sikeston). The bill would add barge employees and operators to the current list of those exempt from the earned paid sick time law. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-3 vote.

Pathology Coverage

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1599](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis). The bill requires MO HealthNet to pay the fee for the portion of clinical pathology services that involves the pathologist's professional expertise in interpreting and supervising lab tests, excluding the technical component of performing the lab tests that are provided by hospital-based pathologists for inpatient services. Additionally, the rate is set at 30% of the approved outpatient fee schedule based on Medicare's clinical lab fee schedule. Supporting testimony was provided by the St. Louis Pathology Associates, Inc., several pathologists, a state public advocate, Missouri Society of Pathologists who stated pathology work is critical for patients and deserves to be compensated accordingly. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 974](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill seeks to address the car leasing components by articulating the liability of a shared vehicle and does not include the Uber provisions. Additionally, the bill contains compromise language to ensure the provisions contained within the bill do not conflict with existing statute and includes underinsured motorists. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Insurance Coalition who stated while this provides a framework it allows flexibility for the various peer-to-peer platforms. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Shelter Insurance, Enterprise Mobility, a state public advocate, Missouri Association of Insurance Agents, Associated Industries of Missouri and American Property Casualty Insurance Association. Informational testimony was presented by Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys who stated this provides safety measures and reliability for providers, insurers and consumers. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Pension Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 147](#), sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater). The bill modifies the calculation of earned compensation for members of the city of St. Louis Police Retirement System to include any compensation awarded as part of a judgement or settlement to a member of the System who is involved in a legal challenge based on their rank. During debate, numerous amendments were adopted to create an omnibus pensions package. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Title changed to Pensions;
- [HB 976](#), adds the corrective language for LAGERS;

- [HB 44](#), seeks to equalize the tax burden for private and public pensions;
- [HB 657](#), requires pension funds to obtain shares in the economic interest of the participants (no ESG);
- Provides the COLA fix for the teacher retirement system; and,
- [HB 977](#) modifies provisions regarding investments in foreign entities or funds on the adversarial watch list.

After a brief debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 147-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Playground Materials

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1244](#), sponsored by Representative Raychel Proudie (D-St. Louis). The bill requires all newly constructed playground areas and surfaces to comply with the 2010 ADA standards for Accessible Designs and all relevant regulations issued by the Department of Justice. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Equity Education Partnership, Missouri Disability Empowerment Foundation and several parents who stated this would allow children with small to major disabilities to be able to play equally and safely. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Political Subdivision Omnibus

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 532](#), sponsored by Representative Ann Kelley (R-Lamar). The bill as filed, modifies several provisions relating to political subdivisions. Specifically, the bill includes:

- [SB 1](#), relating to compensation for county officials
- [SB 2](#), relating to financial statements
- [HB 727](#), relating to sales tax for hospitals in Bates County
- [HB 149](#), modifies provisions relating to the recreation sales tax
- [HB 228](#), Authorizes Harrisonville and Jackson to impose a transient guest tax for tourism
- [HB 171](#), authorizes a transient guest tax upon voter approval for the purposes of law enforcement and tourism
- [HB 687](#), modifies a provision authorizing a transient guest tax
- [SB 169](#), authorizes Ste. Genevieve and Perry Counties to impose a transient guest tax
- [HB 73](#), specifies that certain residency requirements of a city of the fourth classification may be satisfied by certain conditions
- [HB 237](#), modifies provisions governing the use of county developmental disability resource board tax levies.
- [HB 643](#), modifies provisions relating to the establishment of lakefront entertainment districts; and
- [HB 667](#), modifies provisions relating to jails.

During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which removed all provisions regarding sheltered workshops and added provisions regarding specialty taxes for certain municipalities. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Port Authorities

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 715](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill modifies several provisions regarding port authorities. Specifically, the bill clarifies the powers of the port rangers; clarifies the powers of the port authorities regarding housing projects, land clearances and industrial developments; narrows the scope of the grants to exclude the funding of housing projects; allows for funds to be deposited into a financial institution or escrow account by the department or office of which the appropriation is made; clarifies how a board is created under a charter form of government; raises the project amount to \$50,000 when a competitive bid must be secured; modifies the definition of “new job” in AIM Zones; and, modifies which records may remain closed. The sponsor’s intent is to protect public resources, ensure responsible management and accountability, promote economic development and enhance public safety. Supporting testimony was presented by Port KC who stated the underlying statute the ports are governed by has remained largely unchanged for 50 years and this legislation would streamline the process in regard to growth, logistics and increasing the workforce. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Missouri Port Authority Association and JE Dunn Construction. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Presidential Preference Primary

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 126](#), sponsored by Representative Rudy Veit (R-Wardsville). The bill reinstates the presidential preference primary election to be held statewide on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each presidential election year. Additionally, the bill contains a provision which extends the no-excuse in-person absentee voting period from two weeks to six weeks prior to the date of the election. During debate, several amendments were adopted which added clean up language requested by the county clerks and election authorities regarding school board election dates, notice of elections by email and adds election offenses with penalty provisions. Additionally, the bill now contains provisions from [HB 638](#) which allows election challengers on election day in charter and first class counties. Finally, the bill now prohibits public pensions from using funds for political purposes. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Professional License Reciprocity

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 283](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). Current law requires an oversight body for professional licenses to waive any examination, educational, or experience requirements within 30 days for a resident military spouse or a nonresident military spouse and issue the applicant a license if the applicant meets all other requirements. The bill seeks a waiver for resident spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Professional Licensing Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 478](#), sponsored by Representative Phillip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill provides that any person with at least 3 years of work experience in an occupation or profession in another state that does not use a license to regulate that occupation or profession may submit an application for licensure in Missouri. Additionally, the relevant oversight body shall require applicants to take a profession-specific exam. If a license is issued, it shall

be a one-time, non-renewable temporary license for two years. During debate, numerous amendments were adopted to create an omnibus package. Specifically, the bill now contains the following provisions:

- [HB 834](#), modifies provisions for licensure for embalmers and funeral directors;
- [HB 58](#), emergency suspensions or restrictions for chiropractors and massage therapists;
- [HB 268](#), modifies the Masters of Social Work program at Missouri Western University;
- [HB 765](#), modifies provisions relating to clinical fellowships required for licensure as a speech-language pathologist;
- [HB 766](#), repeals provisions relating to suspension of professional licenses for failure to pay state taxes or file state tax returns;
- [HB 946](#), provides for certain license reciprocity waivers for spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers;
- [HB 1445](#), removes the expiration date for the RX cares for Missouri program;
- Allows pharmacists to administer certain vaccines; and,
- Language from [SB 61](#) regarding temporary licensure.

Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Professional Registration Omnibus

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 834](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Farnan (R-Stanberry). The bill modifies the process for obtaining a license to practice embalming and to practice funeral directing. Specifically, the bill repeals the current requirements to become a licensed embalmer and to practice funeral directing and replaces them with new requirements. Additionally, the bill now contains provisions from [HB 58](#) regarding emergency suspensions or restrictions for massage therapists and chiropractors. Finally, the bill now contains [HB 268](#) which modifies provisions regarding the Masters of Social Work degree program. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association who stated the bill clarifies and removes unnecessary roadblocks for people entering the funeral directing or embalming profession. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated the provision regarding suspension or restriction of licenses need to be removed as they could be weaponized against doctors. The committee reconvened on Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added [SB 568](#) which creates a process for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to issue a temporary childcare facility license to a childcare provider. Additionally, the substitute added [SB 431](#) which modifies requirements for licensure as a speech pathologist or audiologist. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

Property Assessments

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HJR 4](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Coleman (R-Grain Valley). Upon voter approval, the resolution changes how real property is assessed and reassessed. It places a cap on valuation increases but allows for limited increases to reflect the value added to the property because of new construction or improvements. After no discussion, the committee passed the resolution by a 4-0 vote.

Public Bathrooms

The Senate Committee on Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SJR 57](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). Upon voter approval, this constitutional amendment specifies what spaces receiving public funds are allowed to guarantee the public does not have to share those spaces with persons of the opposite sex. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Catholic Conference who stated this would protect women and children from predators. Opposing testimony was presented by private citizens and medical professionals.

Public Health Services

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 973](#), sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill allows the Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) to contract with a non-profit organization, affiliated with the National Network of Public Health Institutes. Additionally, the bill requires the designated agency to provide annual reports to the General Assembly regarding funds received, spent and recommendations for improving services. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence who stated the issue at hand is certain federal grants to address public health issues require a certain number of FTEs and DHSS does not have the FTEs needed to administer the grants nor the capacity to apply for them. Additional supporting testimony was provided by REACH Healthcare Foundation. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Public Office Qualifications

The House Committee on Elections convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1005](#), sponsored by Representative Nick Kimble (R-St. Louis). The bill requires any person who files as a candidate for a public office that performs county functions in the City of St. Louis to provide copies of paid receipts or no-tax-due statements for local personal and real property taxes received from the Assessor to the election authority. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Public Safety Omnibus

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1505](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). The bill modifies several provisions regarding public safety. Specifically, the bill requires the Department of Public Safety to publish quarterly clearance rates on their website; prohibits the use of restraints on children during a proceeding in a juvenile court with certain exceptions; requires the Department of Corrections to provide electronic copies of offender medical records when requested; allows offenders to designate a personal representative; requires an automatic investigation into deaths of those under the age of 50 at correctional facilities; requires reasonable access to phones at jails and correctional centers; develops a hospice care training program for offenders; prohibits the use of restraints on pregnant offenders with certain exceptions; expands the definition of dentistry to allow for the practice within correctional facilities. Supporting testimony was provided by Action Now Initiative, a state public advocate, Empower Missouri, FAMM and Niskanen Center. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Pyramid Schemes

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 1120](#) and [HB 1138](#), sponsored by Representative Holly Jones (R-Eureka) and Renee Reuter (R-Imperial). The bills are

similar and modifies the definition of “pyramid sales scheme” to specify it is a plan or operation that gives consideration for the opportunity to receive compensation from bringing persons to the plan or operation rather than from the sale and consumption of goods, services or intangible property by a participant or other persons introduced into the plan or operation. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Retailers Association who stated this would allow direct sales consumers to be able to differentiate between the good and bad actors. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Railroad Safety

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 396](#), sponsored by Representative Tara Peters (R-Rolla). Currently, railroad cars must maintain a distance of 250 feet from any crossing. The bill expands the distance for railroad cars to 500 feet. The sponsor’s intent with the legislation is to prevent deaths and ensure a clear line of visibility for those crossings without a gate. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarifies rolling stock may be stored within 250 to 500 feet from crossings which contain safety features such as lights and gates. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

Reproductive Health Care

The House Committee on Legislative Review convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HJR 54](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). Upon voter approval, this constitutional amendment prohibits abortions with certain exceptions. The amendment requires the abortion be performed no later than 12 weeks. Additionally, the amendment prohibits public funds from being used to pay for abortions; prohibits the use of surgeries, hormones, or drugs to assist a child with a gender transition; specifies which circuit court challenges shall be brought to; and holds that any person who intentionally or negligently causes damage to another person relating to the provision of reproductive health care or the performance or inducement of an abortion is liable for damages and subject to suspension or revocation of his or her medical license. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Right to Life who stated they were against any changes to the current substitute. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then immediately moved into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a new House Committee Substitute was adopted which made the following changes:

- Addresses parental consent for reproductive health care, ensuring that parents are able to give consent for those types of health care and except in the case of a medical emergency;
- Specifies that reproductive health care and matters related to reproductive health care shall mean health care relating to a woman's potential or actual pregnancy;
- Ensures in cases of negligence or intentional harm, malpractice suits may be utilized; and
- Specifies nothing in the constitution shall be interpreted to require public or private funding.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-3 vote.

Residency Requirements

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 73](#) sponsored by Representative Tim Taylor (R-Bunceton). The bill applies to fourth class cities with a population of 3,000 or less and seeks to change the requirement of being a resident of the city to be appointed to a non-elected local board or commission. Speaking in favor of the

bill was the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities and the Missouri Municipal League who said this could help up to 250 cities across the state. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Retirement Credited Service

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1526](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Knight (R-Lebanon). Currently, for the Year 2000 plan, a member's normal retirement eligibility is a member's age of at least 67 and the completion of at least 10 years of credited service, or the member's age of at least 55 with the sum of the member's age and credited service equaling 90. The bill changes the retirement eligibility to a member's age of at least 62 and the completion of at least 10 years of credited service, or the member's age of at least 48 years with the sum of the member's age and credited service equaling 80. Additionally, the bill seeks to modify retirement plans for multi county circuit employees to ensure employees receive the credit for all of their time served. The sponsor informed committee members that he plans to offer a House Committee Substitute to remove the Year 2000 plan provisions. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Juvenile Justice Center. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Revitalizing Downtowns

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 35](#), sponsored by Senator Steven Roberts (D-St. Louis). The bill establishes a tax credit for developers to convert abandoned buildings in downtown areas to living spaces, stores, etc. and is set to sunset on December 31, 2033. The intent is to revitalize downtown areas and incentive investments. Supporting testimony was presented by Greater St. Louis Inc. who stated this legislation would allow for both rural and urban neighborhoods and restore economic activity. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Historic Revitalization for Missouri, Missouri Main Street Connection, City of Kansas City, Missouri Municipal League, Missouri Bankers Association, and the City of Independence. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Rulemaking Authority

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 609](#), sponsored by Representative Terry Thompson (R-Lexington). The bill modifies the definition of “hospital” for purposes of dispensing controlled substances. The bill modifies provisions which prohibit providers from accepting unused portions of controlled substances unless prescribed. Additionally, the bill requires candidates applying for licensure as a physician to submit to a criminal background check and furnish educational and experience documents. Finally, the bill modifies rulemaking authority regarding pharmacy services in hospitals. During discussion, a substitute was adopted which removes the provisions regarding physician licensure and the provisions regarding unused portions of controlled substances. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

School Bus Endorsements

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 296](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Kalberloh (R-Lowry City). The bill changes the age to 75 from 70 for the number of years the license may be renewed for school bus endorsements on a driver’s license. Additionally, the bill allows endorsements to be renewed every two years rather than annually. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-1 vote.

School Cell Phone Use

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 408](#), sponsored by Representative Jamie Gragg (R-Ozark). The bill requires school districts to adopt a policy on electronic telecommunication devices. The policy is required to prohibit the use of phones during regularly scheduled instruction time. During debate several amendments were adopted to create an omnibus school safety package. Specifically, the bill now contains the following provisions:

- Requires public and charter schools to report incidents that impact school safety;
- Prohibits the use of zero-tolerance policies in public schools;
- Adds the Educators and Parents Bill of Rights;
- Modifies provisions regarding disciplinary procedures in public and charter schools for bullying; and
- Requires all instances of bullying be reported to the child's parent or guardian.

Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Wednesday, the bill was revisited and, after a lengthy debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 132-11 vote.

School Safety Omnibus

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 68](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). The bill requires local education agencies (LEA's) to report all safety incidents or threats to student safety to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) annually. Additionally, the bill bans the use of electronic devices by students during instructional time, requires local school boards to develop processes and policies governing allowable electronic device use in schools and appropriate punishment for students found in violation of the policy. During the bill's progression, the sponsor successfully offered floor substitute which removed the requirement for DESE to maintain a regularly updated database of school safety incidents. Finally, the bill contains an August 28, 2032 sunset. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added several provisions to create a school safety omnibus package. Specifically, the bill now includes:

- [HB 408](#) regarding electronic device usage in schools;
- [HB 416](#) regarding comprehensive school safety plans;
- Stop the Bleed Act;
- [HB 232](#) regarding cardiac emergency response plans;
- Modified provisions regarding school safety training requirements;
- [HB 712](#) regarding open enrollment;
- [HB 607](#) regarding grade-level equivalencies;
- [HB 32](#) regarding modifications to adult high schools;
- [HB 220](#) regarding modifications for virtual school testing;
- Modifications regarding the number of days for schools to not have state aid affected;
- Modifications regarding testing for lead in school drinking water;
- Modifications regarding out of school suspension of students;
- [HB 1287](#) regarding Teachers and Parents Bill of Rights;
- Modifications for the Teacher Retention and Recruitment Act; and,
- Modifications for school purchasing cooperatives.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 16-0 vote.

Secretary of State Fees

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 770](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Banderman (R-St. Clair). Currently, numerous fees collected by the Secretary of State and credited to the Secretary of State's Technology Trust Fund are set to expire in 2026. The bill extends the date of expiration on these funds to 2030. There was no debate before the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the House revisited the bill, and without further debate, Third Read and Passed the bill by a 147-6 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Self Defense

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 1374](#), sponsored by Representative Bennie Cook (R-Houston). The bill expands the right to use deadly force to include situations where a person unlawfully enters a place of employment, retail establishment, or other business where the individual using force has a right to be. It also removes the duty to retreat from such places if the person is not unlawfully entering or remaining. Supporting testimony was provided by the sponsor, who stated that the bill ensures employees and business owners can lawfully protect themselves and others from imminent threats. By expanding the castle doctrine, the bill provides legal clarity and reinforces the fundamental right of self-defense in work and business settings. Opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri NAACP, who stated that the witness opposes the bill's expansion of the castle doctrine to retail spaces, arguing it could increase violence and disproportionately affect people of color. While they may support workplace protections, they believe broadening it to public areas makes communities less safe.

Self-Service Storage

The House Committee on Economic Development met Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 668](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill updates the notice requirements for final notices of sale by operators of self-service storage facilities for the sale of personal property of an occupant in default. The sponsors intent with the legislation is to modernize notices to allow modern technology. Supporting testimony was presented by Storage Mart who stated the bill provides options for facilities that best fits their community rather it be newspaper or online. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Self Storage Units. Opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Press Association and a local publisher in Osage County and stated that foreclosure notices should remain in newspapers to avoid conflicts of interest and highlighted some parts of Missouri do not have reliable internet.

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 513](#), sponsored by Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla). The bill modifies the requirements of notice for sale by an operator of a self-service storage facility for the sale of personal property of an occupant in default. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-1 vote.

Sex Offender Registry

The House Judiciary Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 882](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill prohibits registered sex offenders from petitioning the court for a name change until they are no longer required to register. Violating this provision is

classified as a class E felony. Amending language was added to clarify provisions related to sex offender registry removal. Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from the Missouri Alliance for Family Restoration and a state public advocate. Supporters argue that the bill strengthens safeguards by preventing registered sex offenders from changing their names while still required to register. Additionally, they support the bill's amendment, which clarifies a 2018 law that allowed individuals convicted of less severe sex offenses (Tier 1 and Tier 2) to petition for removal from the sex offender registry. The original law intended to provide a pathway for compliant individuals to seek removal after 10 to 25 years, depending on the offense, but conflicting language in the statute led to a Missouri Supreme Court ruling that hindered its intended effect. The bill aims to correct this issue and restore legislative intent. No opposing testimony was provided.

Soil Erosion Control Fund

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1461](#), sponsored by Representative Colin Wellenkamp (R-St. Charles). The bill During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which set the threshold at 10 years. once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

Solar Pilot Program

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 662](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill establishes a community solar pilot program requiring each retail electric supplier to implement a three-year community solar pilot program during calendar years 2026-2028. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which corrected a drafting error. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-3 vote.

Sovereign Immunity

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1067](#), sponsored by Representative Cameron Parker (R-Campbell). The bill expands sovereign or governmental tort immunity to private contractors acting within the scope of a government contract. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys who stated the broad language of the legislation would limit the amount of discovery available to those who have been harmed. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Asphalt Pavement Association who informed the committee that currently there are caps on the amount of funding a plaintiff may seek from government entities and, more often, those who had no stake in an accident are being included in lawsuits to ensure larger payouts. Additional supporting testimony was provided by several private contractors, Associated General Contractors of Missouri and the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Sports Complex Authorities

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 710](#), sponsored by Senator Maggie Nurrenbern (D-Kansas City) and [SB 713](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bills are similar and authorizes Clay County to establish a county sports complex authority for the purpose of developing, maintaining, or maintaining sports, convention, exhibition, or trade facilities. Additionally, the bill establishes a Convention and Sports Complex Fund, which are separate from the general funds of the county. The sponsors' intent with the legislation is to create as many tools as possible to ensure the Chiefs and Royals consider Kansas City their forever home. Supporting testimony was presented by Clay County Presiding

Commissioner Jerry Nolte who stated this is not about county competition but about cooperation and retaining important franchises in Missouri. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Clay County Western Commissioner Scott Wagner. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Sports Facility Authorities

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1229](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Costlow (R-Dardenne Prairie). Current law authorizes St. Charles County to establish the St. Charles County Convention and Sports Facilities Authority for the purpose of constructing, operating and maintaining convention, visitor, and sports facilities. This bill authorizes the authority to designate a project area for the acquisition, planning, construction, equipping, operation, maintenance, repair, extension, and improvement of a regional sports facility intended to provide year-round sports opportunities and draw participants from outside of the state. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Statute of Limitations

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 68](#), sponsored by Representative Matthew Overcast (R-Ava). The bill amends the law by requiring an injured party to act within two years of an injury instead of 5 years for personal and bodily injury. Additionally, the bill contains a provision which removes the statute of limitations for adult victims of childhood sexual abuse. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

STL Public School Retirement

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning to for a public hearing on [HB 404](#) and [HB 1504](#), sponsored by Representatives Doug Clemens (D-St. Ann) and Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater), respectively. The bills are identical and seeks to change the employer contribution rates to the St. Louis Public School retirement system by increasing it from 9% to 14%. The sponsors stated that the system is currently only being funded at 62% and is starting to lose their base. Additionally, it was noted that the system has not had a COLA since 2006 due to declining of employees and lowering of rates. PSRS of the St. Louis Public School System, MO Retired Teachers Association, American Federation of Teachers, and the Board of Education for the City of St. Louis supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented. The MO Public School Charter Association provided informational testimony and stated the charter schools currently have paid about 35% of the funds in 2023 and have less than 3.5% of the retired employees. Additionally, it was noted they currently do not have any representation on the board to advocate on their behalf as current statute has not been updated to include a charter school member.

Student Associations

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [SB 160](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair). The bill prohibits public institutions of higher learning from discriminating against a religious student association or denying a religious student association any benefit available to any other student association. Additionally, the bill contains language that prohibits the provisions of the bill to apply to a belief-based student association if there is substantial evidence that such association's viewpoint or expression of the viewpoint would materially and substantially disrupt the educational environment or interfere with the rights of others. Supporting testimony was presented by Chi Alpha Campus Ministries USA who stated without this legislation religious organizations could have their First Amendment rights impacted. Additional supporting testimony was provided by First Amendment Partnership, a private citizen and Alliance Defending

Freedom. Opposing testimony was presented by PROMO. Additional opposing testimony was provided the Missouri Equity Education Partnership.

Student Loan Repayment

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 635](#) sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill expands the Student Loan Repayment Program to additional healthcare professions including nurse practitioners, certified nurse midwives, physician assistants, registered dental hygienists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers, psychiatric nurses, licensed professional counsellors, marital and family therapists, registered nurses and pharmacists which would help to encourage more health care practitioners to rural areas and would also help to draw down additional federal dollars. About 35% of the funds each year will be used specifically for primary care physicians and general dentists. Supporting testimony was presented by the Department of Health and Senior Services, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Academy of Physician Assistants, the Association of Students of the University of Missouri, and Jefferson City Medical Group. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Sunset Repeals

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon to discuss [SB 757](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill is the Senate companion to HB 2319, sponsored by Representative Bill Owens (R-Springfield) and is a result of a working group that met throughout the interim. After looking at the numerous tax credits in the State, the committee discovered that there are currently nine tax credits that have zero oversight, 24 tax credits that have zero caps, 34 tax credits that have no sunsets, and several that are extinct. The bill seeks to provide a consistent structure and accountability for all tax credits by implementing caps, sunsets, proper oversight, and remove expired sunsets from statute. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Wednesday afternoon to consider passage of SB 757. During committee discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to remove several additional obsolete sections. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Sunshine Law

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 145](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Falkner (R-St. Joseph). The bill allows for the closure of records if it contains the personally identifiable information of a minor 17 years of age and under if the record is held by a public governmental body, if the public governmental body is a city, town, village or park board. As the bill progressed, substitute language was adopted which added [HB 59](#), adding an exemption to the sunshine law for state parks records. During debate, several amendments were adopted which added certain utility records and county and municipal park records to the allowable closure of records. Additionally, the records of any endangered plant or wildlife species may be closed if knowing the location further endangers the species. After no further debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 138-15 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Tax Commission

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 999](#), sponsored by Representative Ron Fowler (R-Blue Springs). Currently, the State Tax Commission (STC) has the power to issue orders to county assessors and Boards of Equalization. This

bill allows counties a minimum of 90 days to comply with orders from the STC and if a county fails to comply, the STC may direct the Department of Revenue to withhold local sales tax moneys that the county would otherwise be entitled to. Additionally, the county is entitled to a judicial review of the STC's determination of non-compliance and if the STC is found to be in error, any revenues withheld may be returned with any interest accrued while withheld. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated the Commission is full of unelected members who directly impact citizen's lives. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri State Assessors Association.

Tax Credit – Angel Investments

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 461](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill creates the Missouri Angel Investment Incentive Act, which allows investors to claim a tax credit in an amount equal to 40% of an investment in a qualified Missouri business, or 50% of investment of a Missouri business located in a rural area. During committee discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to provide technical changes and clarifications. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Tax Credit – Child Care

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 455](#), sponsored by Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield). This is the Senate companion to [HB 269](#). The bill establishes the "Childcare Contribution Tax Credit Act". Beginning January 1, 2025, a taxpayer may claim a tax credit for verified contributions to a childcare provider in an amount equal to 75% of the contribution. The minimum amount of any tax credit issued shall not be less than \$100 and shall not exceed \$200,000 per tax year. The tax credit has a sunset of December 31, 2030. Additionally, the bill also establishes the "Employer Provided Childcare Assistance Tax Credit Act". Beginning January 1, 2025, a taxpayer with two or more employees may claim a tax credit equal to 30% of the qualified childcare expenditures paid or incurred to a childcare facility and shall not exceed \$200,000 per tax year. The tax credit has a sunset of December 31, 2030. Finally, the bill also establishes the "Childcare Providers Tax Credit Act". Beginning January 1, 2025, a childcare provider with three or more employees may claim a tax credit equal to the eligible employer withholding tax and may also claim a credit in an amount up to 30% of the capital expenditures but not if expenditures are less than \$1,000. The program has a sunset of December 31, 2030. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

Tax Credit – Diaper Bank

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1522](#), sponsored by Representative Becky Laubinger (R-St Louis). This bill reauthorizes the provisions of the "Diaper Bank Tax Credit" by extending the sunset date to December 31, 2031. Supporting testimony was provided by the St Louis Area Diaper Bank, Council of Churches of the Ozarks, Campaign Life Missouri and Happy Bottoms. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Credit - Penalties

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 67](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). Currently, when all claims against benevolent tax credits and the Champion for Children Tax Credit are finalized and all tax credits are claimed, if the credits needed to be apportioned, the tax credits are apportioned among all individuals

that claim them and those that owe taxes receive a notice from the state of Missouri that you owe your taxes plus interest and penalties. The bill seeks to clarify when all tax credits are claimed and they're apportioned among everyone, the taxpayer has 60 days to pay the taxes that they owe when they get the notice in July, without any penalties or interest. Additionally, the bill includes [SB 682](#), which seeks to clarify current law that was passed in 2023 that authorizes an income tax deduction for certain income received for the sale or lease of farmland to beginning farmers. The bill adds a definition of "taxpayer" to such deduction. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Soybean Association and the Missouri Farm Bureau. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Thursday morning to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which adds [HB 682](#) regarding tax credits for the Neighborhood Assistance Act and the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Tax Credit Act. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Tax Deduction – Capital Gains

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon to debate [HB 594](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). For all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2025, the bill authorizes an income tax deduction for 100% of all income reported as capital gains for federal income tax purposes. During debate, the sponsor successfully offered a Senate Substitute to include [SB 547](#), modifies provisions relating to law enforcement sales taxes; [SB 510](#), authorizes collected transient guest taxes to be used for the operating costs of a community center; [SB 169](#), authorizes Ste. Genevieve and Perry Counties to impose a transient guest tax; [SB 104](#), adds the village of Sunrise Beach and the cities of Hannibal, Moberly, Nevada, and Joplin to the list of cities authorized to impose a sales tax for the purposes of public safety; authorizes a sales tax exemption for retail sales of diapers, feminine hygiene products and incontinence products; and SB 64, seeks to adjust the "circuit breaker" tax credit annually to account for inflation. After two days and nearly 10 hours of debate, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes, which immediately prompted a referral to the Senate Committee on Fiscal Oversight.

Tax Deduction – Dependents

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday to discuss passage of [SB 371](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove). Currently, a taxpayer has the ability to claim a \$1,200 exemption for each eligible dependent. The bill would allow a tax payer to claim the exemption for each unborn child up to \$2,400, and allows the deduction to be used the year the child was born. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

Tax Deduction – National Guard

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [SB 163](#), sponsored by Senator Adam Schnelting (R-St. Charles). The bill adds National Guard state active duty and state emergency duty pay to income that is tax-exempt. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill without consent status by a 6-2 vote.

Tax Deduction – Research

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 136](#), sponsored by Representative Doyle Justus (R-Troy). The bill de-couples Missouri from the provisions of the "Tax Cuts and Jobs Act" of 2017 and allows taxpayers to deduct specified research and experimental

expenditures from their Federal adjusted gross income, beginning January 1, 2026. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Tax Elimination – Income

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 798](#), sponsored by Representative Christopher Warwick (R-Bolivar). Currently, the top rate of income tax may be reduced over a period of years if certain triggers are met. The bill simplifies income tax collections by implementing a flat tax rate of 4.7% on all taxable income and removes all tax deduction triggers and removes all existing taxable income brackets. During the bill's House progression, the bill was amended to repeal the Missouri Working Family Tax Credit Act, phases out capital gains, modifies penalties for tax penalties incurred when a tax credit cap is reached, lowers the corporate income tax rate from 4% to 3.75%, and modifies the pregnancy and maternity homes and diaper bank tax credits by allowing taxpayers to claim 100% rather than 75% of contributions. Supporting testimony was provided by Campaign Life Missouri, Happy Bottoms, Council of Churches of the Ozarks, a state public advocate, Americans for Prosperity, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Associated Industries of Missouri. Opposing testimony was presented by Abortion Action Missouri, Missouri Equity Education Partnership, Empower Missouri and several private citizen whom all stated their dislike of the inclusion of the pregnancy resource center tax credits.

Tax Elimination – Veterans

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HJR 6](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City). Upon voter approval, the resolution exempts 100% disabled service-connected veterans and veterans that were prisoners of war, from property taxes on primary residents. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Tax Exemption – Medical Device

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 653](#), sponsored by Representative Mike McGirl (R-Potosi). The bill expands current law to specify all durable medical equipment, including wheelchair accessories, is exempt from sales tax. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which changes the title to sales tax exemptions and provides a sales tax exemption for non-operable vehicles during the recycling process. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-0 vote.

Tax Exemption – Public Service

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 650](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-St. Louis). The bill creates the Retaining Missouri Workers Act, which exempts the first \$100,000 of income for first responders, certain trade professions, veterans, child care providers, truck drivers, and nursing home employees. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Exemption – Tips/OT

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 860](#), sponsored by Representative John Simmons (R-Washington). Beginning January 1, 2026, this bill allows taxpayers to subtract from their Federal adjusted gross income 100% of overtime compensation and tips. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee

reconvened on Thursday morning to discuss passage of the bill. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-3 vote.

Taxation – Emergency Services

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 895](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Knight (R-Lebanon). Current law authorizes ambulance and fire protection districts in certain counties to propose a sales tax at a rate of up to 0.5%. This bill increases that authorization to a rate of up to 1%. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Ambulance Association who stated this legislation requires a vote of the people and only allows an increase. It does not mandate one. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Ambulance Dispatch Association of Missouri and the Missouri Association of Career Fire Protection Districts. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

Taxation – Parks

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1271](#), sponsored by Representative Colin Wellenkamp (R-St. Charles). The bill allows sales taxes collected for county parks to be used for storm water management projects or other infrastructure projects that would augment or otherwise benefit the park or the surrounding area. The bill applies specifically to the St. Louis Metropolitan Area. Supporting testimony was presented by a St. Charles County Councilman who stated the largest constituent complaints concern storm water. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities.

Taxation – Pink Products

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 483](#), sponsored by Representative Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters). The bill authorizes a sales tax exemption for all sales of diapers, incontinence products, feminine hygiene products and vitamins or minerals used to support prenatal and menstrual phases. Supporting testimony was presented by Haleon and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists who stated anything that reduces cost barriers for consumers can only increase their health and wellbeing. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Kids Win Missouri, Missouri Catholic Conference and a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxation – Private Pension

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 44](#), sponsored by Representative Mike McGirl (R-Potosi). The bill increases the maximum amount to be subtracted from a taxpayer's adjusted gross income for tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, to the first \$12,000 of any retirement allowance received from any privately funded sources. The current maximum is \$6,000. After no debate, the bill was Third Read and Passed by a 147-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Taxation – Recreation

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 149](#), sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater). Currently, certain adjoining counties may jointly impose a sales tax throughout each of their respective counties for public recreational purposes including the financing, acquisition, construction, operation and maintenance of recreational projects and programs. This bill changes the authorization language so that the counties do not have to act jointly

and allows each county to individually impose, upon voter approval, its own tax for public recreational purposes. If enacted, this bill will initially only apply to Bollinger and Cape Girardeau counties. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which adds HB 48 regarding a tax exemption for Bingo cards, adds HB 493 regarding a tax exemption for certain auction items and adds HB 653 regarding a tax exemption for durable medical equipment including wheelchair accessories. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-3 vote.

Taxation – Supplements/Vitamins

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing [HB 1107](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St Louis). Currently, a tax is levied on the retail sale of food at a rate of 1%. This bill changes the definition of food for this purpose to also include all dietary and nutritional supplements. Supporting testimony was provided by 1st Phorm, Pantheon, and the Missouri College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Telehealth Services

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [SB 94](#), sponsored by Senator Patty Lewis (D-Kansas City). This is the Senate Companion Bill to [HB 822](#) and [HB 825](#) and modifies the definition of “telehealth services” to include audiovisual and audio only services and expands which third-party platforms “telehealth services” may be provided. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Psychological Association, the Missouri Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Missouri Nurses Association, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, Missouri Academy of Family Physicians, SSM Healthcare, REACH Foundation, National Association of Social Workers, Missouri Association of Rural Health Clinics, BJC, Rankin, Cox Health, Mercy Health Systems, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Missouri Hospital Association and the Health Foundation of KC. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Telemedicine

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 710](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Knight (R-Lebanon). The bill modifies the patient-physician relationship by no longer requiring a physical examination unless it is needed to meet the standard of care. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which adds compromise language regarding the adaptive questionnaire and those offering them being required to be employed or contracted with specific business entities. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Tourism Fund

The House Special Committee on Tourism convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 967](#), sponsored by Representative Brian Seitz (R-Branson). Current law establishes the Division of Tourism Supplemental Revenue Fund, and provides for appropriations to the fund from certain tourism-related taxes. The bill repeals this language and provides that the fund will consist of any moneys appropriated by the General Assembly and any gifts, contributions, grants, or bequests from federal, private, or other sources. The sponsor’s intent with the legislation is to allow those most invested in promoting tourism to be able to capture as much funding as possible. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau, City of Branson and Missouri Hotel and Lodging Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tuition Contributions

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1272](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Owen (R-Springfield). Currently, taxpayers may claim deductions for contributions to any state's 529 college savings plan, not just Missouri's own Most 529 plan. The bill seeks to ensure the tax deduction will only apply towards contributions to Missouri's Most 529 plan. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Tutoring Programs

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1446](#), sponsored by Representative Brandon Phelps (R-Warrensburg). The bill requires school districts which contract with online tutoring companies that have a majority ownership outside of the United States to disclose this information to parents. Additionally, the information disclosed to parents must include whether or not the majority ownership is based in an adversarial country as designated by the US State Department. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarified how notification be delivered to parents and what information must be included. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-4 vote.

Underground Facilities

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 752](#), sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville). The bill is the House companion to [SB 133](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit) and updates the current 8-1-1 system. Additionally, the bill requires any underground facility owner to ensure that all new and active underground facilities installed after August 28, 2025, be installed with a trace wire unless the facility currently is capable of being detected from above ground with an electronic locating device. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which carved out sewer lines from the provisions of the bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

Unused Fund Reporting

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 722](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill requires the State Treasurer to submit an annual report to the General Assembly detailing each fund established in the state treasury from which a disbursement has not been made during the five year period ending on June thirtieth of each year. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Wednesday afternoon to consider passage of [SB 722](#). After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Unused Tax Credit Reporting

The Senate Committee on Government Efficiency convened Monday afternoon to discuss [SB 723](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill requires the Office of Administration to submit an annual report to the General Assembly detailing each tax credit program for which no tax credit has been authorized or redeemed during the five year period ending on June thirtieth of such year. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened Wednesday afternoon to consider passage of [SB 723](#). After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-0 vote.

Utility Easement Relocation

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 144](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Falkner (R-St. Joseph). During bill presentation, the sponsor stated if you have a landlocked piece of property and there is already an existing easement and the easement needs to be modified, the intent of the legislation is to provide a set of guidelines for each property owner. Supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Utility Facility Relocation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 661](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). Under this legislation, municipalities and the Missouri Department of Transportation would be required to reimburse non-regulated utilities for the costs associated with relocating their infrastructure from the public right of way. As the bill progressed, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarifies the language and sectional references for small broadband providers. During Perfection, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to correct a spelling error. After a lengthy debate, the House FAILED to Third Read and Pass the bill by a 66-77 vote.

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 489](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 661](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield) and requires municipalities, counties and the Missouri Department of Transportation to reimburse non-rate regulated utility providers, including telecommunications, Internet, and cable providers, for facility relocation due to road maintenance or construction. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-2 vote.

Utility Infrastructure Security

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1231](#), sponsored by Representative John Simmons (R-Washington). This bill creates the "Missouri Critical Infrastructure Protection Act", which prohibits a company or other entity constructing, repairing, operating, or otherwise having significant access to critical infrastructure or a governmental agency from entering into an agreement relating to critical infrastructure in this State with a foreign principal from the country of a foreign adversary if the agreement would allow the foreign principal to directly or remotely access or control critical infrastructure in this State. Additionally, the bill creates the "Missouri Secure Communications Act", which requires that all critical communications infrastructure located within or serving this State cannot include any equipment manufactured by a federally banned corporation, as defined in the bill. Finally, the PSC must develop and publish, on a quarterly basis, a map of known prohibited communications equipment of all communications providers within or serving this State. The sponsor stated that his intent with this bill this year was to start a conversation on this topic and acknowledged that this effort will likely take several years. Supporting testimony was presented by State Armor Action. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Informational testimony was presented by the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives and the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities.

Utility Omnibus

The House Committee on Legislative Review convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 440](#) sponsored by Representative Kent Haden (R-Mexico). This is the House companion to [SB 213](#) and

seeks to create and clarify new provisions relating to electric utilities associated with a project that uses solar energy by aligning solar with wind energy and places it on the same tax schedule. Additionally, the bill clarifies that the assessment of solar needs to be done at the county level not on a statewide assessment and places a 2% cap on property used for solar energy per county. A House Committee Substitute was adopted in the bill's previous Committee on Tax Reform which increased the 2% to 4% and change the setbacks to make residential, churches and schools all 500 feet. During discussion, a new House Committee Substitute was adopted which included the previously adopted substitute but added several new provisions to create an omnibus utility package. Specifically, the bill now includes:

- [HB 475](#), regarding eminent domain for utility purposes;
- [HB 923](#), modifies requirements for votes required to dissolve a public water supply district;
- [HB 752](#), modifies provisions relating to underground facilities; and,
- [HB 1263](#), requires wind energy systems to apply to the FAA for light-mitigating technology.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-0 vote.

Veteran Benefits

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1102](#), sponsored by Representative Sean Pouche (R-Kansas City). This is the companion bill to [SB 316](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe) and prohibits a person from receiving compensation for referring any individual or assisting an individual with any veterans benefit matters. Additionally, if a person seeks to receive compensation, a clear and concise written agreement must be signed by both parties. The sponsor's intent with the legislation is to protect the earned benefits of veterans, but also provides as many options as possible to obtain those benefits. Supporting testimony was presented by the Veterans Guardian who stated this ensures companies providing these services operate ethically and be required to disclose benefits may be obtained for free. Additional supporting testimony was provided by United Veterans Benefits Agency and several veterans. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Veterans who stated this legislation would help ensure predatory companies are not able to help themselves to future benefits that veterans have rightfully earned.

Virtual School Access

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1516](#), sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville). The bill allows adults over 21 without a high school diploma to enroll in state approved virtual courses or full-time virtual programs offered by their resident district or charter school. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which ensures the program does not exceed the state adequacy target and limits the funding which may be used from the foundation formula. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-6 vote.

Vlogging – Child Labor

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1245](#), sponsored by Representative Becky Laubinger (R-Park Hills). The bill modifies the Child Labor Laws. Additionally, the bill includes definitions for various terms such as "family", "vlog", "vlogger", and "online platform." Finally, the bill specifies minors who engaged in online platforms for business purposes, upon reaching their majority, may request all previous online activity be permanently deleted. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 832](#) and [HB 706](#) to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-0 vote.

Voting Rights

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 847](#), sponsored by Representative Marlon Anderson (D-St. Louis) and [HB 790](#), sponsored by Representative Kimberly-Ann Collins (D-St. Louis). The bills are identical and would allow a person on probation or parole to vote while they are on probation or parole, with exceptions. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri State NAACP who stated this would help promote community engagement and civic duty. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Breaking Generational Poverty, Creative and Innovative LLC, St. Louis NAACP Chapter, Secure Democracy USA, Missouri Appleseed, Jefferson City NAACP and several private citizens. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

The Committee then turned its attention to reconsider passage of [HB 617](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). Currently, a person on probation or parole for a felony conviction is not entitled to vote until he or she is finally discharged. The bill allows a person on probation or parole to vote, unless they were convicted of a felony or misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage. During previous discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted to provide clarity in the definitions and remove the references to misdemeanors. During this discussion, the bill was revisited to adopt a new House Committee Substitute which added HB 790 and HB 847 to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified again, the committee passed the bill by a 10-0 vote.

Vulnerable Person Protection

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 1049](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Owen (R-Springfield). This bill authorizes banks to offer a “trusted contact” program to customers who can designate one or more trusted contacts for the bank to contact in the event of an emergency, loss of contact with the customer or suspected third-party fraud activity or financial exploitation targeting the customer. Additionally, the bill states the bank is not liable for the actions of a trusted contact and neither is the bank liable for declining to interact with a trusted contact if the bank determines such trusted contact is not acting in the best interests of the customer. Finally, the bill allows a credit union to offer a trusted contact program to members similar to that offered by a bank. After a brief debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Water Exportation

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 82](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill specifies that it is unlawful for any person to withdraw from any water source for export outside the state of Missouri unless a water export permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources is held. Additionally, the bill requires a permit application recommendation be submitted to the General Assembly and the permit is deemed denied if the General Assembly does not take action on the recommendation within sixty days. Finally, the bill outlines the process for renewing issued permits. During the bill’s progression, substitute language was adopted to clarify the Department of Natural Resources must notify the county commission within 30 days of receiving a permit application, allows designees to be assigned for the members of the Missouri Water Resources Commission to ensure representation and removed a redundant statutory reference. Additionally, the bill contains language which renders it unlawful for any person to withdraw water for exportation by use of a pipeline facility, unless the withdrawal and

ultimate end use of the water by a pipeline facility is within 30 miles of the state border. Such withdrawal of water shall be annually reported to the Department in a manner and on timelines determined by the Department. This provision has a severability clause. Finally, the substitute requires the Director of the Department of Natural Resources to review each water exportation permit application and all supporting documents to ensure the required conditions have been met prior to accepting a water exportation application for public comment and review by the State Soil and Water Districts Commission. The bill also requires any reports issued be made available to the public on the department's website. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Soybean Association who stated knowing water usage and where it is being distributed is critical for future planning. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Missouri Cattlemen's Association, Missouri American Water and the Nature Conservancy. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated there is no need to alter the current riparian water rights. Informational testimony was presented by the City of Kansas City who provided background information on the exemption in the bill.

Water Supply District

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 365](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). Currently, the decree of dissolution of a public water supply district shall not be final until it is assented to by a majority of two-thirds of the voters of the district. The bill decreases the threshold to four-sevenths of the voters of the district. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri American Water. Opposing testimony was presented by the Association of Municipal Water Districts who stated it takes two-thirds of voters to approve bonding and take on debt and should remain at that threshold to dissolve the district. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Rural Water Association and a state public advocate.

Workers' Compensation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to revisit [HB 497](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis). The bill seeks to modify several provisions relating to workers' compensation. Specifically, the bill seeks to clarify the prevailing factors standards, to ensure injuries, medical conditions, and disabilities, and the need for treatment are truly the result of a work place accident and not preexisting conditions that may have been exacerbated. Additionally, the bill adjusts how insurance savings are considered in awards, to prevent situations where employees receive compensation for medical expenses that were already covered by other sources. The bill also creates an early motion to dismiss mechanism for cases that are fundamentally deficient such as those filed untimely, an employee was intoxicated, or the accident did not occur during the course of employment. Finally, the bill allows for appeals of temporary awards and eliminates the penalty that employers must pay in the event they appeal the decision. During Perfection, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to modify the administrative review function within the bill to reduce the fiscal note. Additionally, Representative Aaron Crossley (D-Independence) further amended the bill to add a renewal to the Line of Duty Compensation Act with an Emergency Clause. After a lengthy debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by an 83-66 vote and adopted the Emergency Clause 145-7. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Hearing Schedules:

[House](#)

[Senate](#)

Calendars:

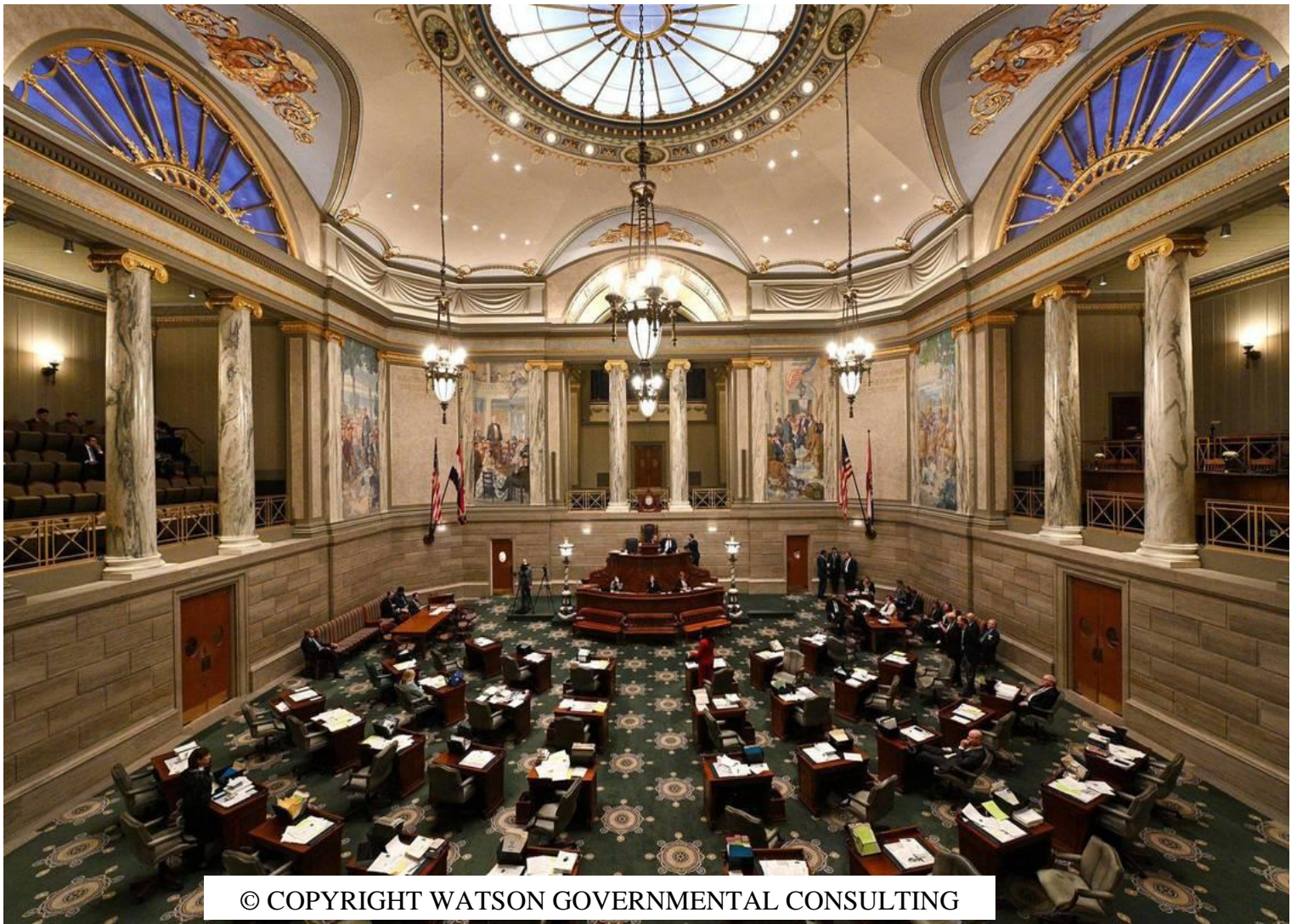
[House](#)

[Senate](#)

Key Upcoming Dates:

- April 21, 2025 – Easter Holiday – No Session
- May 9, 2025 – Fiscal Year 2026 budget bills must be passed by 6 pm
- May 16, 2025 – Last day of Legislative Session – adjourn by 6pm
- July 14, 2025 – Last day for the Governor to sign or veto legislation
- September 10, 2025 – Veto Session

-End of Report-



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