

CAPITOL REPORT – WEEK 16

MAY 2, 2025

Weekly Overview: Another week of the 2025 legislative session has come to an end. There are now, only two weeks of session remaining. In a move that surprised many, the House only worked into the early afternoon on both Tuesday and Wednesday. The Senate passed a handful of House priorities while negotiations are ongoing for the partial repeal of Prop A (sick leave). Additionally, the Senate abruptly recessed Tuesday evening before returning to debate the Senate version of the FY2026 budget for nearly five hours. Wednesday saw the Senate begin the debate on the Open Enrollment bill and after five hours lay the bill over for further debate another day.

In Brief...

- On Tuesday, the Missouri Supreme Court upheld the November voter-approved ballot measure increasing Missouri's minimum wage and expanding sick leave, Prop A. The court opinion was unanimous and ruled challenges to Prop A were invalid. The decision, written by Chief Justice Mary R. Russell and five other judges, cited that Prop A's summary was "not misleading or inaccurate so as to constitute an irregularity casting doubt on the election." The ruling means paid sick leave will be mandatory in Missouri, starting May 1, 2025.
- The Office of Administration outlined a plan to switch to a new electronic court monitoring service from TCS Holdings, which has caused the previous vendor, EHawk, to express concerns crime victims could be cut off from notifications of a defendant's whereabouts. Commissioner Ken Zellers said the switch to the new service would take place April 30, whether or not all the state's circuit court systems were ready for the change. The switch could affect as many as 10,000 criminal defendants and an unspecified number of victims, who use the current system to track judicial proceedings in their cases or if defendants have entered a zone near the victim.

Budget Update

The Senate finished crafting their version of the FY2026 operating budget this week. All that remains are the three capital improvement bills, whose fate, at the time of this report, remain uncertain. Overall, the Senate-passed budget would spend \$1.6 billion more than the House-passed budget and \$575 million less than Governor Mike Kehoe requested. The General Revenue spent in the Senate is \$15.7 billion and is \$1.3 billion more than the House version. Additionally, the Senate version of the budget allocates almost \$300 million more than Governor Kehoe recommended for the public school foundation formula and cuts the \$50 million recommended by the Governor to enlarge a scholarship program for private school tuition.

Other glaring differences between the Senate and House include the state employee pay plan, new child care funding, higher education funding and earmarked projects. The House had 149 earmarks totaling \$295 million, of which the Senate cut 57, totaling \$126.3 million, but added 169 of their own earmarks totaling \$441 million.

All eyes will be focusing on the two chambers' conferees next week, as they come together to work out the differences for the FY 2026 budget before the constitutional deadline of Friday, May 9th.

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Agriculture Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1116](#), sponsored by Representative Kent Haden (R-Mexico). The bill allows real property owners building a fence to enter an adjoining property up to ten feet without liability for trespassing. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Farm Bureau who stated this legislation offers a middle ground for those attempting repairs on fences and protects neighboring property by allowing those fences to be maintained. Additional testimony was provided by the Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Cattlemen's Association and Humane World for Animals. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened on Wednesday morning to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to create an omnibus agriculture package. Specifically, the bill now includes:

- [SB 28](#), modifies provisions relating to cotton trailers;
- [SB 82](#), modifies and creates new provisions relating to water resources;
- [SB 105](#), modifies provisions relating to invasive plants;
- [SB 315](#), modifies the membership requirements of the State Fair Commission;
- [SB 466](#), modifies provisions relating to agricultural tax credits;
- [SB 760](#), creates a provision relating to the sale of wood products; and,
- [HB 544](#), modifies labeling for certain pesticides.

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

Animal Confiscation

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Pet Breeders Association, Missouri Federation of Animal Owners, Missouri Cattlemen's Association and Missouri Farm Bureau. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation who stated this legislation allows final dispensation of to the criminal side of the law rather than the civil side. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a private attorney, Humane World for Animals, Alliance for the Animal League Defense Fund and the City of Independence.

Bank/Trust Modifications

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [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

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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 depositaries for public funds to secure their deposits in lieu of the method provided by current law, known as the "single bank pooled method." A Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to modify provisions regarding certified funds and makes technical corrections within the Money Modernization Act. During debate, Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo) successfully amended the bill to remove provisions relating to debt collector fees. Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton) then amended the bill to include [SB 289](#), which seeks to modernize Missouri's estate planning laws to enhance clarity, transparency, and accessibility and [SB 658](#), which modifies provisions relating to the taxation of estates and trusts. Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove) further amended the bill to clarify transactions to settle any public debt are allowed, but for private debt it would only be at the discretion of the receiving entity. Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield) then amended the bill to include the Virtual Currency Kiosk Consumer Protection Act. Senator Tracy McCreery (D-Olivette) amended the bill to include [SB 399](#) which relates to the affordable housing assistance program. Once modified, the Senate referred the bill to the Committee on Fiscal Oversight. The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to revisit the bill. After little further debate, the bill was Third Read and Passed by a 20-11 vote. The bill now will return to the House for approval or conference.

Building Codes

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 743](#), sponsored by Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla) but presented by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). The bill establishes the Missouri Building Codes Act and seeks to create uniformity for both the state and political subdivisions for building codes when an inspection is required. Additionally, the bill creates the Missouri Building Code Commission to periodically review the code and handle any appeals of the code. Supporting testimony was presented by the St. Louis Chapter of the National Electrical Contractor Association and Safer Simpler Missouri who stated this legislation helps begin the process of crafting unified building codes that would still allow political subdivisions to tailor the code to their specific needs. Additional supporting testimony was provided by AIA Missouri, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mechanical Contractors Association of Eastern Missouri, Mechanical Contractors Association of Kansas City, the Plumbing Industry Council, the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning National Association and the Missouri Growth Association. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who stated cities follow uniform codes and then modify as needed and the current legislation would not allow for updates to those codes as drafted. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis.

Career-Tech Certificates

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [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. The bill also clarifies language specifying EMT and paramedic certification are offered. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry who stated this opens other avenues for a

robust workforce. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri NEA and the Missouri Hospital Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Catalytic Converters

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Recycled Materials Association. Informational testimony was presented by Advantage Metals Recycling who stated “detached catalytic converters” needs to be added to the bill so it does not affect salvaged vehicles. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Charter School Property

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [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. During discussion, it was announced negotiations are ongoing and a floor substitute will be offered. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Charter Schools – St. Louis

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 693](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St. Louis). The bill prohibits the establishment of new charter schools in St. Louis City. The bill does not apply to the renewal of charter contracts or transfers of sponsorship for any charter school established in St. Louis City prior to August 28, 2025. Supporting testimony was presented by St. Louis Public Schools who stated St. Louis has more school choice in the state with the exception of Kansas City and current charter schools are only hitting 50% capacity. Opposing testimony was presented by Opportunity Trust who stated the bill does not address the challenges of education in St. Louis, it only limits the options for students. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Momentum Academy, Missouri Charter School Association, Atlas Public Schools, Believe Academy and several parents.

Child Protection Omnibus #1

The Senate took up and dedicate floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 737](#), sponsored by Representative Melissa Schmidt (R-Eldridge). The bill requires the Children’s Division to place into trust any benefits administered by the Railroad Retirement Board, the Social Security Administration, or the Veterans Administration and to assist children in state custody with applying for and receiving such benefits within 60 days after placement into custody. Additionally, the bill requires the Children’s Division to attempt to place foster children within a home of the same faith and modifies the abuse and neglect statutes to clearly define independent activities do not constitute abuse. The bill now includes:

- Requires the Department of Social Services to establish a program to provide a comprehensive system of service delivery, education, and residential care for youth with severe behavioral challenges or severe developmental disabilities;
- Indemnification clauses in certain service provider contracts;

- Removes youth with severe developmental disabilities and youth subject to a voluntary placement agreement from the program;
- Removes references to facilities owned and operated by the Department of Mental Health or the Division of Youth Services;
- Adds language allowing qualified service providers to be certified; and modifies qualified service provider liability;
- Modifies implementation date to start at the beginning of January 1, 2028, unless a judge is participating in a pilot project;
- Changes “shall” to “may” regarding the appointment of separate counsel in cases where a guardian ad litem is determined to be necessary;
- Authorizes the creation of a pilot project;
- Nondisclosure agreements in the event a child is sexually abused;
- Requiring law enforcement agencies to enforce visitation or custody agreements;
- Raises the age for sexual misconduct and marriage to 18,
- Increases the tax credit from 50% to 70% for contributions made to the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Fund;
- Requires a caseworker investigating child abuse to identify themselves;
- Requires the appointment of GAL in the event a child’s guardian is incarcerated;
- Removes liability from a service provider;
- Allows not-for-profits and for-profits to participate in certain programs; and,
- Adds language to the Amber Alert System to ensure awareness is brought to missing or abducted African American youth.

After a lengthy debate, the Conference Committee Report was adopted and then the bill was Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed by a 32-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Child Protection Omnibus #2

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 43](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill modifies several provisions relating to child protection. Specifically, the bill includes provisions regarding Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention tax credit; Children's Division service provider contracts; services for youth; child abuse investigations; child's counsel; age of marriage; enforcement of child custody and visitation orders; civil actions for childhood sexual abuse; and endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which made the following changes:

- [HB 782](#), prohibits the use of restraints on a child in juvenile court;
- Added provisions from [HB 326](#), regarding the CASA program, child advocacy and the crisis nursery program;
- Added language to mirror that of [HB 737](#), child protection omnibus bill;
- [HB 351](#), establishes antibullying requirements for school districts;
- [HB 234](#), Danny’s Law; and,
- Added provisions from [HB 615](#), regarding vulnerable children and the enticement language modifications.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-0 vote.

Coroners

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Coroners and Medical Examiners Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Cotton Trailers

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to debate [HB 169](#), sponsored by Representative Donnie Brown (R-New Madrid). Currently, the maximum speed at which cotton trailers may travel is 40 miles per hour. This bill increases the maximum speed to 70 miles per hour and removes the requirement that the trailer is to be used exclusively for transporting cotton. The bill also specifies that cotton trailers are not in violation of the provisions relating to securing of loads if certain conditions are met and no portion of the load becomes dislodged and falls from the trailer. After a brief debate, the Senate Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed the bill by a 31-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Defense/Energy Independence Act

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment Committee convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 537](#), sponsored by Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla). The bill establishes the Missouri Defense and Energy Independence Act, which authorizes a qualified company to claim a tax credit not to exceed \$6 million for qualified conversion costs incurred by the qualified company for converting such company to produce chemicals, metals, gases, or rare earth minerals that will be used for projects designed to decrease or eliminate reliance on foreign-produced materials. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-1 vote.

Design-Build Contracts

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections, and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 513](#) sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill repeals the sunset date of September 1, 2026, for political subdivisions' authority to utilize the design-build method for construction. As the bill advanced through the House, [HB 536](#) was added to the bill. While the language in [HB 536](#) is very similar to that of [HB 513](#), it contains the construction management at risk provision. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Education Omnibus #1

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 711](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bill allows nonresident pupils to enroll in public schools in the state with certain conditions and outlines the procedures and policies necessary to allow students to transfer between nonresident school districts. Specifically, the legislation would allow students to leave their resident school district to enroll in adjoining districts that opt into the open enrollment program, for a

total of up to 3% of the district's student population in the previous year. Transportation would be parents' responsibility, unless the child qualifies for free or reduced lunch or has transportation under an individualized education plan. The bill also establishes the "Parent Public School Choice Fund" to compensate districts for the costs associated with transporting students with specialized needs or who qualify for free and reduced lunch, subject to appropriation. Additionally, the bill prohibits a transferring nonresident student from participating in varsity athletics for at least 365 days and allows any student to participate in open enrollment as long as the transfer does not cause the district to conflict with a provision of an enforceable desegregation court ordered or a court approved desegregation plan. Finally, the bill requires students in a K-8 district wishing to transfer out of the district to do so before their sixth grade year and outlines the process for transportation reimbursement in the event the General Assembly fails to appropriate sufficient funds to the public school choice fund. During bill progression, the bill was modified as follows:

- Modified the definition of transfer student to include family-based education and non-public school kids and they will count for the 5% cap for the districts;
- Alters the timelines to one month earlier;
- Prohibits school districts from including in their model policy they will not take special education students but does allow for school districts to modify IEPs based on the resources available and allows the parent to decide to return to their original district or not;
- Modifies the timelines for acceptance or rejection of applications for school districts;
- Adds exemptions to the one year attendance requirement;
- Allows for districts to remove a child from open enrollment if their attendance rate falls below 80%;
- Clarifies children may open enroll to charter schools; and,
- Requires students who use the open enrollment portal to stay in the new district for two years rather than one.

During debate, the bill handler, Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield), offered a Senate Substitute which propose the following changes:

- Modifies how student attendance is calculated;
- Adds [HB 1363](#), regarding charter school use of property;
- Adds several provisions from SB 68 regarding comprehensive emergency operations plans, cardiac emergency response plans, Stop the Bleed Act, school safety coordinators and school safety measures;
- Adds [SB 266](#), regarding virtual assessments;
- Adds [SB 639](#), regarding teacher certifications; and,
- Adds provisions regarding teacher externships.

Senator Joe Nicola (R-Grain Valley) further amended the bill to ensure districts that have four-day school weeks to continue to operate on four-days and allow the school districts of St. Louis City and County that operate on a five-day schedule to determine their own start date. Additionally, Senator Nicola amended the school board terms for Grain Valley School District by reducing the current 6-year terms down to three once their six-year term is over. Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield) then amended the bill by requiring the foundation formula to be fully funded before implementation of any open enrollment policies go into effect and also requires that the state aid for transportation be fully funded. After nearly five hours of debate, the bill was ultimately returned back to the calendar for further debate another day.

Education Omnibus #2

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 607](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly). The bill clarifies language regarding additional funding for teacher salaries that districts receive if the district has a school calendar with 169 school days. The clarification allows for inclement weather or authorized reductions to the number of days the district must be in session to qualify for the funding. During bill progression an education omnibus bill was formed. Specifically, the bill now includes:

- Title change to elementary and secondary education;
- [HB 220](#) which modifies assessment testing for virtual schools and allows small schools who host virtual schools that receive the 5% administrative fee will not be penalized for being outside the required monetary limit and adds [HB 941](#) which prohibits school districts from using a three-cueing system model of reading instruction;
- Makes a correction to [SB 727](#) (2024) to include school districts that have a board-approved school calendar that includes 169 school days and replaces inclement weather with exceptional or emergency circumstances;
- [HB 1238](#) which modifies provisions governing pupil attendance at nonresident schools;
- Adds a 5 year extension to the existing waiver for substitute teachers without impacting their retirement benefits; and,
- Adds provisions from [HB 712](#) regarding grade-school level equivalencies.

During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added the following provisions:

- Clarifies language regarding student safety incidents resulting in disciplinary action not impacting daily attendance funding for districts;
- Provides an active duty exemption for students regarding practice requirements for school activities;
- [SB 426](#), lowers the minimum age for those who may attend an adult high school to 18 from 21;
- Repeals the requirement for a teacher's master's degree to be in an academic teaching field directly related to the teacher's assignment in order for such teacher to qualify for the minimum salary for teachers with a master's degree and at least 10 years of teaching experience;
- Prohibits school districts from implementing zero-tolerance bullying policies that apply automatic penalties;
- [SB 63](#), modifies provisions regarding recovery high schools;
- Repeals the sunset on the teacher externship program;
- Adds charter schools to current provisions regarding background checks on school personnel;
- Modifies the funding method for the Principal-Administrator Academy;
- [SB 556](#), modifies provisions regarding reading instruction; and,
- Modifies provisions regarding teacher recruitment and retention grants.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

Education Omnibus #3

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 266](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill allows any virtual school provider participating in the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program to administer statewide assessments virtually under the supervision of a video proctor of no more than ten

students to each proctor. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added several provisions to create an education omnibus package. Specifically, the bill now includes:

- [HB 267](#), modifies provisions relating to Teacher Externships;
- [HB 368](#), changes provisions governing additional state aid provided to school districts for increasing teacher salaries;
- [HB 351](#), establishes antibullying requirements for school districts;
- Extends the sunset for certain provisions of the teacher retirement system;
- [HB 416](#), modifies provisions governing school safety;
- [HB 408](#), prohibits student use of telecommunications devices during regularly scheduled instructional activities;
- [HB 607](#), relating to elementary and secondary education;
- [HB 792](#), Modifies provisions relating to the Teacher Retention and Recruitment Act;
- [HB 1365](#), modifies provisions governing school administrator evaluations and contracts;
- [HB 1287](#), enacts the Missouri Educators and Parental Empowerment and Rights Act; and,
- [HB 1446](#), requires school districts and charter schools to notify parents if schools use tutoring services or programs owned by a foreign entity.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

Elections Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 507](#), sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrollton). This is the House companion bill to [SB 182](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo), 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 to be sent electronically.
- 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. This bill 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 offense.
- Expands a provision of law governing the casting and counting of provisional ballots to all public elections, rather than just primary or general elections.
- Adds provisions allowing election challengers in charter and first-class counties to be physically present and requires those who file for office in St. Louis City to be able to provide a no tax due statement.

During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added several new provisions. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Presidential preference primary provisions to ensure it references the first Tuesday in March and not the second Tuesday in March;
- Removes 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 offense;
- Current law allows voters to vote no-excuse absentee two weeks prior to the election. This extends that period to four weeks; and
- [SB 182](#), expands the offense of electioneering.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Emergency Services Omnibus

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 271](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). Current law provides fire protection district boards the power to adopt and amend fire protection and fire prevention ordinances. The bill prohibits fire protection district boards from imposing regulations or requiring permits for the building or alteration of farm buildings or farm structures. During the bill's progression, several provisions were added to create an omnibus emergency services package. Specifically, the bill now contains the following provisions:

- Allows the Board of Trustees of the Firemen's Retirement System of St. Louis ("Board") to simultaneously acting as the trustees of any other pension plan that provides retirement, disability, and death benefits for firefighters employed by St. Louis City;
- Authorizes ambulance districts to place a use tax on the ballot for emergency services;
- Modifies training requirements for members of an ambulance district board of directors by requiring the completion of three hours of continuing education for each term of office;
- Exempts non-acute care hospitals from forensic examination requirements for assault victims if a transfer policy is in place;
- Authorizes University of Missouri ground ambulance services to participate in the ground ambulance FRA; and,
- Allows certain ambulance and fire protection districts in certain counties to propose a sales tax at a rate of up to 1.0%.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Pork Association and the Missouri Ambulance Association who stated the ability to capture internet sales revenue for emergency services is critical and the fire suppression systems for agricultural buildings has been heavily negotiated. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Fire Service Alliance, EMS Legal Services, Ambulance District Association, Linn County Ambulance District, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Association of Career Fire Protection Districts, the Firefighter Retirement System of St. Louis, University of Missouri Health Care System, Missouri 911 Directors Association, Missouri Association for Public Safety Communication Officials, a state public advocate, the Missouri National Emergency Number Association and the Missouri 911 Service Board. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who cautioned the committee to be careful about calling bills a "Wayfair fix" because the original bill was constructed within the parameters of the South Dakota court case and if we begin tinkering with those provisions the state could become out of compliance. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately

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went into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-1 vote.

Financial Institutions Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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. During debate, several amendments were adopted which made the following changes:

- Changes the title to financial institutions;
- [HB 754](#), modifies standards for certain financial organizations;
- Modifies the definition of certified funds;
- Establishes the Virtual Currency Kiosk Consumer Protection Act;
- Modifies provisions regarding the resident trust tax credit;
- Modifies provisions regarding payroll processors;
- Modifies provisions regarding pool securities;
- Adds the commercial financial disclosure fix and allows campaigns to use electronic means; and,
- Modifies provisions regarding trusted contact for banks and credit unions.

Once modified, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 145-2 vote. The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to revisit the bill. After a brief debate, the Senate concurred with the House changes and Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed the bill by a 29-2 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Hazardous Waste Fund

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment Committee convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 516](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Matthiesen (R-O'Fallon). The bill modifies criteria of hazardous waste investigations and increases the hazardous waste fund appropriations. MO Coalition for the Environment, and the Sierra Club supported the bill. Associated Industries of MO opposed the bill and highlighted that fund referenced in the provisions is currently funded by local businesses and advocated the need that the fund needs to be funded by the Federal government instead of being funded by local businesses. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately went into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. During committee discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to provide grammatical changes by changing "testing" to "cleanup" to allow funds to be used for cleanup purposes. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Hazing, and More!

The House Committee on General Laws convened Thursday morning 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

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hazing by requiring someone to be knowingly, actively and not be under duress during the act. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 782](#) prohibiting the use of restraints on a child in juvenile court and [HB 489](#), modifies provisions relating to the confiscation of animals. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Healthcare Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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 and requires insurers to pay for a 12-month supply of oral contraceptives. During debate, numerous amendments were adopted which made the following changes:

- Adds [HB 325](#), creates provisions relating to the practice of certain licensed professions;
- Adds [HB 991](#), air ambulance memberships and [HB 1213](#) regarding signage for assaulting healthcare workers;
- Adds [HB 618](#), modifies provisions relating to prior authorization;
- Adds [HB 784](#), modifies provisions relating to 340B modifications (adds pickpocketing portion);
- Adds [HB 1104](#), modifies provisions regarding county hospital boards;
- Modifies provisions relating to the requirements for a Master's of Social Work;
- Adds [HB 929](#), modifies the scope of practice of optometry;
- Adds [HB 58](#), creates provisions relating to emergency suspensions or restrictions for massage therapists and chiropractors;
- Seeks to resolve the language conflict between [SB 7](#) and [SB 271](#);
- Designates the last full week of April as Infertility Awareness Week;
- [HB 870](#), designates the month of September as Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month
- Modifies provisions regarding telehealth questionnaires;
- Modifies provisions regarding public health funding;
- Modifies provisions regarding HIPAA and first responder records;
- Modifies provisions regarding community paramedic services;
- Modifies provisions regarding pain management and the use of non-opioids;
- Modifies provisions relating to prescription drug license drug wholesaling; and,
- Modifies provisions regarding doula services.

Once modified, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 116-37 vote. The bill now will return to the Senate for approval or conference.

Higher Education Omnibus

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 419](#), sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The bill clarifies that certain military service personnel, their spouses, and their unemancipated children under 24, Missouri National Guard members, and any individuals serving

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in the reserves, be considered Missouri residents for the purposes of any undergraduate or graduate degree program in Missouri institutions of higher education. During debate, the handler, Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffer), offered a Senate Substitute which made the following changes:

- Prohibits statewide activities associations from requiring active duty students to attend a minimum number of practices as a condition of the student's membership for the group or team;
- [SB 11](#), repeals provisions relating to the authority to confer degrees at public institutions of higher education;
- Designates the eleventh day of November each year as a public holiday for all University of Missouri employees in observance of Veteran's Day;
- [SB 627](#), requires the University of Missouri to enter into an agreement with the State Treasurer to establish a separate custodial account for moneys in the University's Seminary Fund;
- [SB 243](#), requires public institutions of higher education to adopt a policy relating to International Baccalaureate examinations;
- [SB 71](#), establishes the Public Safety Recruitment and Retention Act;
- [SB 279](#), changes the mission of Missouri Southern State University; and
- [SB 635](#), modifies the "Health Professional Student Loan Repayment Program."

After the adoption of the substitute, the bill was immediately referred to the Senate Committee on Fiscal Review. The Senate revisited the bill on Thursday and, after a brief debate, Third Read and Passed the bill by a 27-4 vote. The bill now will return to the House for their approval or conference.

Industrial Hemp

The House Committee on Agriculture convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 422](#), sponsored by Representative Matthew Overcast (R-Ava). The bill seeks to modify the definition of commercial animal feed to allow industrial hemp specifically for equine, pet, specialty pet, and laying hens. During committee discussion, a committee substitute was adopted in an attempt to address FDA concerns by narrowing the language to ensure it applies only to pet, specialty pet, and laying hens. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-8 vote.

Initiative/Referendum Petitions

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 575](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Banderman (R-St. Claire). The bill requires petition circulators to be citizens of the United States, residents of Missouri for at least 30 consecutive days prior to the collection of signatures, and prohibits them from being compensated based on the number of signatures collected. Additionally, the bill specifies only Missouri residents may challenge the official ballot title or fiscal note and such challenges be adjudicated at least eight weeks before the election. Finally, the bill requires initiative and referendum petition sample sheets to be submitted to the Secretary of State six months prior to the next general election and if a change occurs that substantively changes the title, all signatures collected are rendered invalid. During bill progression, language was adopted which added [HB 551](#) to the title to create one legislative vehicle as the bills are similar. Additionally, the provision prohibiting the removal of federal regulations or rules and the provision which closes the records on initiative petitions was removed and the provision under which signatures would be invalidated if the title is substantively changed was also removed. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition who stated the residency requirement is still an open question judicially. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the

League of Women Voters and the Jobs with Justice Coalition and ACLU of Missouri. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Jackson County Assessor

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HJR 23](#), sponsored by Representative Carolyn Caton (R-Blue Springs). Upon voter approval, the constitutional amendment requires Jackson County to have an elected assessor. During debate, Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas City) successfully amended the bill by specifying the assessor must comply with all training provisions required by general law. Once modified, the bill was Third Read and Passed by a 33-0 vote. The House took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to revisit the bill and, after a lengthy debate, Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed the bill by a 129-0-18 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Library Districts

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss [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. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which allows various libraries to be added to the provisions of the bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Licensed Profession Preemptions

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 325](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill prohibits local governments from interfering in the course of practice with any medical professional, including the practice of veterinary medicine. During bill progression, podiatrists were added and a provision to allow for cross reporting of both child and animal abuse was also added. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation, A Humane World for Animals and Alliance for Animal Legal Defense Legislative Fund who stated veterinary medicine is not regulated the same as human medicine. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Pet Breeders Association who stated they are not in favor of the cross reporting provision. Additional informational testimony was provided by the Missouri Federation of Animal Owners. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Liquor Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1041](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). Currently, the Department of Revenue collects \$1.86 per barrel for all malt liquors. The bill requires \$.62 per barrel be collected for all malt liquor manufactured in an American brewery and \$1.86 per barrel for all foreign import malt liquor. The fees collected are for the inspection and gauging of malt liquors. During the bill's progression the title was changed to alcoholic beverages and [HB 1265](#) which authorizes a temporary extension of hours for alcoholic beverage sales by certain liquor licensees for the duration of the 2026 FIFA World Cup Tournament was added. Additionally, [HB 1340](#) which modifies provisions relating to the donation of alcoholic beverages to certain organizations for nonresale purposes and added provisions allowing beer to provide consumer cash rebate coupons was also added to the bill. Supporting testimony was presented by Anheuser-Busch who stated the percentage of beer being imported into the

United States has doubled from 11% to 24% with the majority of the importing originating in Mexico where it is cheaper to produce. Additionally, forcing American brewers to pay the same rate of excise tax as imports gives an advantage to foreign producers. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Petroleum and Convenience Association, Missouri Retailers Association, Missouri Retailers Association, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Associated Industries Missouri, Southern Glazers Wine and Spirits, Dierbergs Market, Plumbers and Pipefitters St. Louis and the AFL-CIO. Opposing testimony was presented by the Wine Institute who stated no other state has taxed domestic versus foreign alcohol differently and the Supreme Court has struck down any attempts by other states to do so. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Grape and Wine Association, Missouri Vintners Association and the Missouri Wine and Grape Board. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately moved into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no further discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Motor Vehicle Insurance

The House took and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. During the bill's progression, a Senate Substitute was adopted to add [SB 385](#), which establishes the "Insurance Data Security Act." After a brief debate, the House adopted the Senate Substitute and Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed the bill by a 145-2 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Nontraditional Student Participation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. During the bill's progression, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added definitions for "athletics," "event" and "activity," clearly defined FPE schools, removed the provisions referencing MSHA, added co-curricular events to the list that schools may not restrict participation and removed provisions requiring background checks of parents and children doing FPE. Additionally, the substitute clarifies participation requires a try-out for certain activities. Finally, the substitute broadens who can be a sponsoring entity for recovery high schools. During debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to clarify the right to participate in school sports activities is contingent on the successful completion of a tryout for the activity. Once modified, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 91-53 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for approval or conference.

Pension Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [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. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added several provisions to create an omnibus retirement package. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Adds the negotiated language for the Sheriff's Retirement System;
- [SB 514](#), modifies provisions relating to the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System;
- Modifies the Cost of Living adjustment for LAGERS be tied to the CPI;
- Allows investment decisions made by the Board of LAGERS be conducted in a closed meeting in certain circumstances;
- [SB 357](#), modifies the definition of "earnable compensation" for the Police Retirement System of St. Louis;
- [SB 255](#), modifies provisions relating to the administration of other pension plans by the Firemen's Retirement System of St. Louis;
- [SB 389](#), modifies provisions relating to duties of fiduciaries for public employee retirement systems; and,
- [SB 529](#), clarifies state of local public retirement systems are restricted from investing in certain restricted entities.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Political Subdivisions Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 199](#) sponsored by Representative Bill Falkner (R-St. Joseph). This legislation would give political subdivisions the option of issuing a payment bond for development projects or they could decide to go with a lien. Additionally, the bill contains a provision During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added several provisions to the bill to create an omnibus local government package. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Changes the title to relating to political subdivisions;
- [HB 816](#), removes the exclusive use of NADA for car assessments;
- Adds provisions relating to salary schedules for third class counties;
- Adds provisions modifying compensation for county coroners;
- Modifies provisions regarding county financial statements;
- Modifies provisions regarding county auditors;
- Adds a provision relating to the salary of the Boone County Sheriff;
- Modifies provisions relating to county planning board notices;
- Modifies provisions relating to nuisance actions;
- Modifies a provision relating to neighborhood improvement districts;
- Modifies a provision relating to law enforcement sales taxes;
- Adds the construction manager at-risk corrected language;
- Modifies a provision relating to a hospital services sales tax;
- Modifies provisions relating to the Clay County Sports Complex Authority;
- Modifies provisions relating to the St. Charles County Convention and Sports Facility Authority;
- Modifies provisions relating to transient guest taxes;
- Modifies provisions relating to theater, cultural arts and entertainment districts;
- Modifies a provision relating to land banks;

- Modifies a provision relating to consolidated public library districts;
- Modifies a provision relating to regional jail districts;
- Modifies provisions relating to the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority; and
- Modifies provisions relating to jails.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Professional License Omnibus

The House Committee on Professional Registration convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 61](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). 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. Finally, upon the temporary license expiring, the person shall be required to apply for a permanent license. During the bill's progression in the Senate, the title was modified to "reciprocity for professional licensing", added modified provisions relating to profession-specific examinations, included [HB 946](#), which creates a waiver for resident spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers, included [SB 431](#), which modifies the requirements for licensure as a speech pathologist or audiologist by providing for completion of a clinical fellowship under the direct supervision of a licensed speech-language pathologist in good standing, rather than under the direct supervision of a person licensed by the state of Missouri in the profession in which the applicant seeks to be licensed, includes the "Money Transmission Modernization Act of 2024" (MTMA) which replaces existing money transmission laws and ensures that states coordinate in areas of regulation and licensing to eliminate unnecessary regulatory burden, protect the public from financial crime, and protect customer funds and includes [SB 292](#), which modifies provisions of rulemaking authority for pharmacy services within hospitals and attempts to streamline the process for licensure for physicians. Supporting testimony was presented by FGA Action and the Independent Payroll Providers and the Missouri Speech-Language Hearing Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. The committee reconvened on Thursday afternoon to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 56](#), the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact, [HB 478](#), modifies licensing for embalmers and funeral directors and allows pharmacists to administer the chikungunya vaccine. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 22-0 vote.

Public Safety Omnibus #1

The House took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to debate [SB 71](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-Ballwin). The bill creates the "First Responder Recruitment and Retention Act" to provide free college tuition at public colleges and universities in the state for police officers, firefighters, paramedics, other emergency response professionals, and their dependents. Under the bill, any eligible first responder, emergency response professional, or their dependent may qualify for a waiver of the full cost of tuition at any in-state community college, 4 year college, or university for up to 5 years or 120 credit hours so long as they have not previously completed a bachelor's degree and maintain residency in the state for 5 years following the completion of their program of study. During bill progression, the funding mechanism changed by providing waivers only in the event funding is available and appropriated, instead of requiring schools to cover the costs. Additionally, the bill requires veterans to pursue veteran's benefits first and clarifies the tuition waiver is applicable for five years or until 120

credit hours are achieved. Finally, the bill contains an updated definition of telecommunicator and clarifies the college or university must be located in Missouri and donations may be made into the fund. A House Committee Substitute was adopted which added the following provisions:

- [SB 669](#), modifies provisions regarding the HALO Act;
- [SB 192](#), modifies provisions relating to the sheriff of St. Louis's compensation;
- [HB 1218](#), modifies the offense of burglary in the second degree;
- [HB 714](#), modifies provisions regarding veteran preferences for contracts;
- [HB 205](#), allows the boards of trustees of The Firemen's' Retirement System of St. Louis City to act as trustees and administer other pension plans;
- [HB 147](#), modifies the definition of "earnable compensation" for the police retirement system of the City of St. Louis;
- [HB 117](#), modifies and establishes provisions regarding motor vehicle offenses; and,
- [HB 992](#), modifies provisions relating to criminal history background checks; and,
- [HB 981](#), allows the director of the department of public safety to deny a peace officer license if an applicant is not a US citizen or has had a license permanently revoked or suspended.

During debate, the bill was successfully amended by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis) to remove [HB 714](#) regarding veteran preference for contracts and [SB 192](#) regarding the sheriff of St. Louis's compensation and added the negotiated language regarding the offense of second degree burglary. The bill was further amended by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater) who added [HB 976](#) regarding public employee retirement systems, [HB 147](#) regarding earnable compensation for the St. Louis City police retirement, [HB 70](#) regarding reauthorization for MERC to collect fees, [HB 559](#) regarding LAGERS and [HB 457](#) regarding access to first responder health records. Additionally, Representative Mike Costlow (R-Dardenne Prairie) amended the bill by adding [HB 134](#) establishing the Missouri Task Force on Nonprofit Safety and Security. Finally, Representative Dave Hinman (R-O'Fallon) amended the bill by allowing independent higher education institutions to participate in the First Responder Recruitment and Retention Act. Once modified, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 112-33 vote and adopted the Emergency Clause. The bill now will return to the Senate for approval or conference.

Public Safety Omnibus #2

The Conference Committee for [SB 81](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall) convened Thursday morning to discuss the negotiated differences in the bill. The bill modifies several definitions regarding fireworks standards, manufacturers and sellers of fireworks and other pyrotechnic definitions and updates the American Fireworks Standards Laboratory from the 2012 edition to the 2022 edition. During the bill's progression, technical changes to ensure the word licensure was included in the legislation were made. Additional provisions were added to create a safety omnibus package. After the negotiations were completed, the bill now includes:

- Changes the title to public safety;
- Extends the sunset for the Emergency Response Commission and reauthorizes the ability to collect the fee;
- [HB 946](#), provides for certain license reciprocity waivers for spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers;
- [HB 992](#), modifies provisions regarding criminal history background checks;
- Extends the sunset and capacity for the Line of Duty Compensation Fund and adds an Emergency Clause;

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- [HB 709](#), modifies nondisclosure agreements for victims of childhood sexual abuse.

The conference committee report must now be agreed upon by both chambers before being sent to the Governor for final consideration.

Reproductive Healthcare

The Senate Committee on Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HJR 73](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly). Upon voter approval, the bill would repeal Amendment 3 and prohibit abortions, except in the cases of medical emergencies, fetal anomalies, rape or incest. Supporting testimony was provided by several private citizens, Missouri Right to Life, Freedom Principal Missouri, Campaign Life Missouri and the Missouri Catholic Conference. Opposing testimony was provided by several OB-GYNs, several faith leaders, Abortion Action Missouri and dozens of private citizens. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately moved into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no further discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

School Cardiac ER

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 232](#), sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). The bill requires public schools to develop a cardiac emergency response plan. During bill progression, an omnibus school safety package was created. Specifically, the bill now 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.

During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which expanded who may enroll in the School Protection Officer Program and modifies provisions regarding master key box access. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

School Discrimination

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 937](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-S. Louis). The bill defines "antisemitism" and requires that public schools, school districts, and public institutions of higher education integrate the definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct and prohibit antisemitic conduct. Additionally, the bill establishes the "Missouri Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair (Missouri CROWN) Act", which governs discriminatory practices as they relate to "protective hairstyles." After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

School Personnel

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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. During debate, Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall) successfully amended the bill to change the title to school personnel and include [SB 460](#) which modifies provisions relating to public school background checks. The bill was further amended by the bill handler, Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe), who added [SB 708](#), which modifies

the expiration date of the waiver of the working after retirement limitations for substitute teaching. Once modified, the bill was Third Read and Passed by a 30-3 vote. The House took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to revisit the bill. After a brief debate, the House Truly Agreed to and Finally Passed the bill by a 133-8 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Governor for signature or veto.

Sewage Disposal

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee met Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 601](#), sponsored by Senator Gregory Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill is the companion to [HB 200](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Falkner (R-St. Joseph). Currently, a state standard for the location, size of sewage tanks, and length of lateral lines is based partially on the percolation or permeability rate of the soil, as well as other specified factors. This bill modifies this provision to state that the standard is based partially on soil properties and also establishes the costs associated with testing. Additionally, the bill creates a mandatory registration program requiring continuing education for on-site wastewater treatment system professionals. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Sports Omnibus

The House Committee on Legislative Review convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 80](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill extends eligibility for a high school student athlete to earn compensation for the use of the Name, Image, or Likeness, if they have signed a letter of intent with an accredited university or college and intend to participate in athletics sponsored by the signing institution. The bill also allows student athletes who attend public schools to use their image or likeness as identified by the high school they attend for the purpose of negotiating compensation with a college or university. During previous debate, the bill was amended to include [SB 713](#), relating to Clay County sports complex authorities, [SB 676](#), relating to convention and sports facility authorities, and [SB 184](#), relating to tax credits for certain sporting events. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote, with Chairman Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia) being the dissenting vote.

St. Louis Consolidation

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HJR 27](#), sponsored by Representative Ian Mackey (D-St. Louis). Currently, St. Louis City and St. Louis County function independently from one another. Upon voter approval, this Constitutional amendment merges the county and city. St. Louis County, so expanded, will continue its corporate existence as a new political subdivision, hereafter known as the "Metropolitan City" of St. Louis. The sponsor stated he wanted to focus on improving the St. Louis region and streamlining government services and create efficiencies. Opposing testimony was presented by Stop City County Merger who stated they do not want to merge the county and city police together. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Freedom Principal, the Mayor of Webster Groves, the Mayor of Brentwood, Municipal League of Metro St. Louis, the Mayor of the City of Beverly Hills, 24-1 Municipal Partnership and a state public advocate. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Sunset Extension Omnibus

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [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. During the lengthy discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added the following provisions:

- Reauthorizes the cybercrimes grant program fund and adds [HB 70](#) which extends the sunset for the MERC fee;
- Extends the sunset on the Missouri Deal Closing Fund;
- Adds the ShowMO Act and removes the sunset;
- Removes the sunset for the Rx Cares Program;
- [HB 513](#), changes provisions relating to design-build contracts;
- [HB 682](#), modifies provisions relating to the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Tax Credit Act;
- [HB 1350](#), modifies provisions relating to incentives for interstate business relocation;
- [HB 770](#), extends the sunset date on various fees collected by the Secretary of State;
- Extends the sunset on the Community-Based Faculty Preceptor Tax Credit; and,
- Extends the sunset on the diaper bank tax credit.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-5 vote.

Sunshine Law

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 145](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Falkner (R-St. Joseph). The bill allows for closure of records if they contain personally identifiable information of minors, and the record is held by a city or park board. The bill also includes an exemption to the sunshine law for state parks records and exempts utility records, county and municipal park records, and records regarding endangered plants or animals. During committee discussion, a committee substitute was adopted to include language prohibiting a public body from closing the municipality or zip code of residents visiting state parks. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

Tax Credits - Benevolent

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 828](#), sponsored by Representative Becky Laubinger (R-Park Hills). This is the House companion to [SB 67](#) and exempts taxpayers from penalties or interest on an income tax balance due if the taxpayer is denied part or all of a tax credit which they have qualified for due to the lack of available funds for the credit. During the bill's progression, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which aligns the language [with SB 67](#), which is the Senate companion bill. Additionally,

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the substitute clarifies penalties may still be applied to other balances owed that are not tax credit related. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Soybean Association, Feeding Missouri, Missouri Society of CPAs, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Cattlemen's Association and Missouri Farm Bureau. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Upon the conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately moved into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no further discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

Tax Exemption Omnibus

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment Committee convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 493](#), sponsored by Representative Dean Van Schoiack (R-Savannah). The bill creates a sales tax exemption on tangible personal property that is sold a second or any number of subsequent times after the original point of sale, at an auction. Additionally, the bill includes provisions exempting broadband equipment from tax. Supporting testimony was provided by T-Mobile, Missouri Broadband Providers, Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, MCTA, AT&T, and Associated Industries of Missouri and stated they supported the exemption of broadband equipment provisions in the bill. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxation Omnibus #1

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [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. Finally, the bill now includes [HB 682](#) regarding tax credits for the Neighborhood Assistance Act and the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Tax Credit Act. During debate, Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green) successfully amended the bill to modify the circuit breaker tax credit, allow a tax deduction for property tax payments and modifies provisions regarding capital gains. Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon) further amended the bill by adding [HB 1259](#), which modifies taxation of estates and trusts. Finally, Representative Jeff Farnan (R-Stanberry) amended the bill by adding provisions which allows trust to utilize the beginning farmer tax credit. Once modified, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 92-58 vote. The bill now will be returned to the Senate for approval or conference.

Taxation Omnibus #2

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 660](#) sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). This legislation would make numerous changes to the law regarding taxing districts and, according to the sponsor, is identical to his [HB 2058](#) from 2024. Additionally, the bill specifies that if a political subdivision submits a tax proposal for a new or increased tax and it does not pass, the proposal cannot be submitted again for two years following the rejection. During the bill's progression in the House, the bill also now contains the following provisions:

- [HB 119](#), which modifies adjustments to the tax ceiling when new taxes are levied;

- [HB 411](#), which requires tax district mapping on the DOR website;
- [HB 708](#), which allows for prorated property tax payments for totaled vehicles;
- [HB 783](#), which requires adjustments to the tax ceiling be made in the same election cycle;
- [HB 816](#), which removes the requirement the assessors use the NADA when assessing vehicles;
- [HB 1086](#), which seeks to simplify taxing on short-term rentals;
- [HB 999](#), modifies provisions relating to the state tax commission's equalization authority and enforcement authority, authorizing withholding of certain revenues as a result of noncompliance;
- Adds a provision regarding non-profits in CIDs; and,
- Requires political subdivisions rather than election authorities to title taxing initiatives.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Show-Me Institute who stated voter fatigue from political subdivisions repeatedly placing issues on the ballot have been proven and modifications of TDDs and CIDs are necessary as auditors have found abuses statewide. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Stowers Institute. Opposing testimony was presented by a retired teacher who stated an exception for the two-year moratorium on tax issues is needed. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Municipal League, Municipal League of Metro St. Louis and City of Springfield.

Time-Limited Demands

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 437](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). The bill replaces the term "time-limited demand" with "settlement demand". The bill specifies that, in any lawsuit alleging damages outside of the norm of the contracted insurer, any prior settlement demand to settle a claim will not be considered to have been a reasonable opportunity to settle the claim unless the demand was made in writing, was sent certified mail, or remained open for acceptance by the liability insurer for at least 90 days from the date the demand was received by the insurer. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

Tobacco Regulations

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 344](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill specifies that the state shall preempt any local laws, ordinances, orders, rules, or regulations enacted by a county, municipality, or other political subdivision regulating the sale of tobacco products, alternative nicotine products, or vapor products and sets a statewide standard to purchase tobacco to 21 years of age. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

Transportation Omnibus #1

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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 exceed 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 the bill's progression, numerous provisions were added to create a transportation omnibus 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.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Department of Revenue, Missouri Trucking Association, BMWED Teamsters Rail Conference and the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Tow Truck Association, Missourians for Transportation Investment, Missouri Tow Drivers Association, Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Municipal League, Municipal League of Metro St. Louis and the American Council of Engineering Companies. Informational testimony was presented by MoDOT who cautioned the committee regarding the provisions impacting internal spending on future staffing.

Transportation Omnibus #2

The Conference Committee for [SB 28](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb) convened Thursday morning to discuss the negotiated differences in the bill. The bill increases, from 40mph to 65mph, the maximum speed at which cotton trailers may travel, and repeals a requirement that cotton trailers be used exclusively for transporting cotton. Additionally, cotton trailers shall not be in violation of the law regulating the securing of loads provided that certain conditions are met, no portion of the load becomes dislodged and falls from the cotton trailer, and the goods or material is secured. During the bill’s progression an omnibus motor vehicle package was created. After the negotiations were completed, the bill now includes:

- Changes the title to transportation;
- Modifies provision regarding the integrated system house at the Department of Revenue to remove the need for temporary tags;
- Modifies the definition of trailers;

- Modifies provisions regarding manufacturer and franchisee agreements; and,
- Changes the speed limit maximums from 65 to 70.

The conference committee report must now be agreed upon by both chambers before being sent to the Governor for final consideration.

Underground Facilities

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 133](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill updates the current 8-1-1 system and 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. Supporting testimony was presented by Tweehouse Excavating, the Associated General Contractors of Missouri and Missouri 811. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Upon conclusion of the hearing, the committee immediately went into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no further discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

Water Projects - Therapeutic

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 776](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). This is the companion to [HB 1534](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Meirath (R-Excelsior Springs). Currently, third class cities are authorized to acquire any real and personal property for the purpose of the construction of various water projects and for the laying of pipelines for the distribution of mineral waters, provided that the properties are acquired, constructed, and maintained and operated without increasing the indebtedness of the city and are not paid for, maintained, or operated by taxes. This bill repeals the prohibition on the use of indebtedness or taxes for the construction and operation of such projects. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Wood Products

The House Committee on Agriculture convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1537](#), sponsored by Representative Tony Harbison (R-Arcadia). The bill is the House companion to [SB 760](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton) and requires any person advertising or selling wood products shall not misrepresent a product as a wood product if the product is not derived or harvested from wood. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

Hearing Schedules:

[House](#)

[Senate](#)

Calendars:

[House](#)

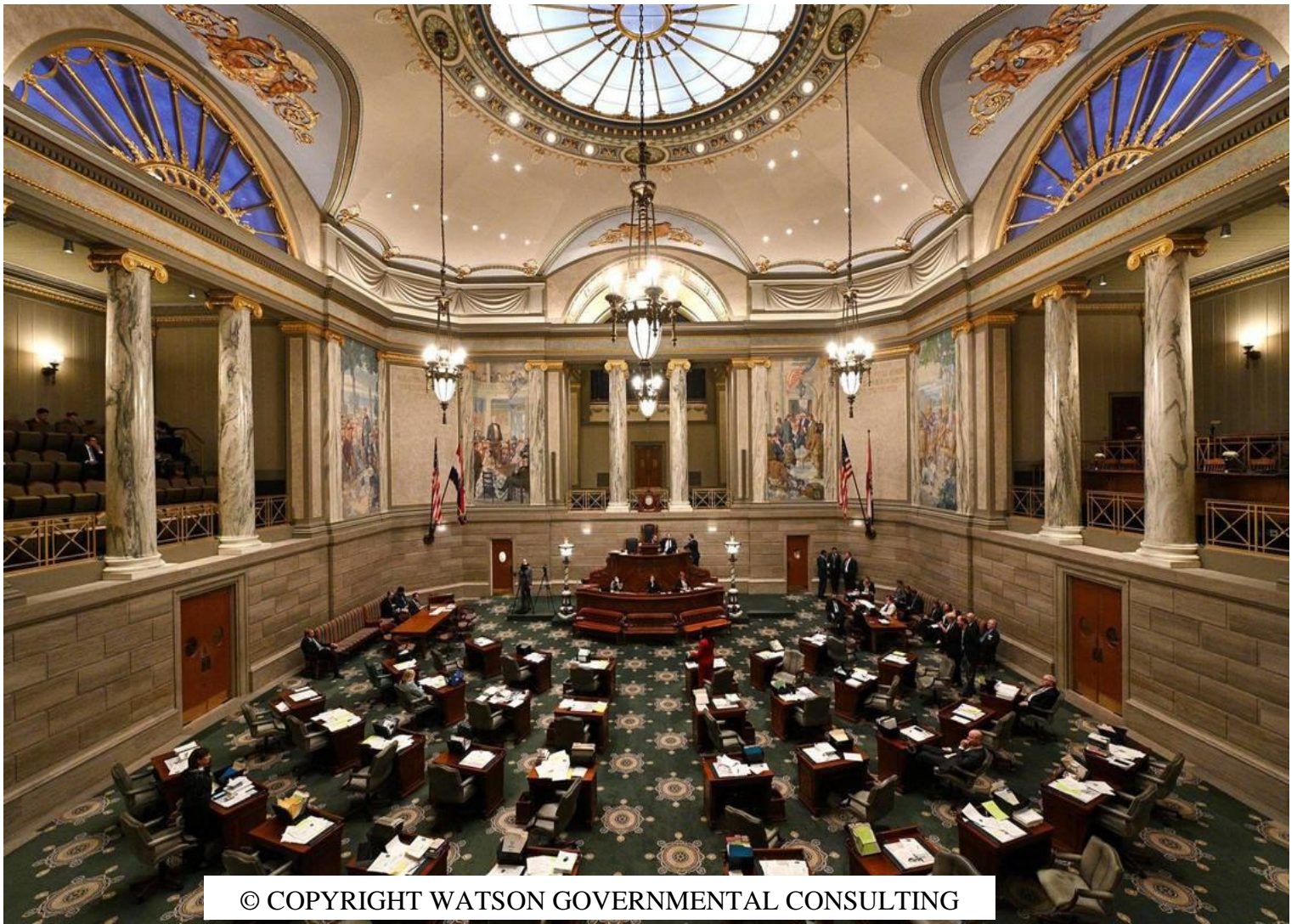
[Senate](#)

Key Upcoming Dates:

- 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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112 E. High Street
Jefferson City, MO



trent@trentwatson.com



(314) 606-0141



www.trentwatson.com