



CAPITOL REPORT – WEEK 11

MARCH 28, 2025

Weekly Overview: The Missouri Legislature returned to the Capitol this week after their week-long spring break. The House wasted no time and Perfected 33 pieces of legislation and sent over a dozen bills to the Senate for their consideration. Additionally, the House Budget Committee finalized their version of the FY26 Budget and voted the bills out of committee. The full House is expected to debate the budget and send it to the Senate next week.

The Senate also picked up where it had left off before spring break, Perfecting and sending to the House four pieces of legislation. With only seven weeks before the end of session and the budget still to tackle, the Senate will wrap-up work on Senate bills in the next week or so and will begin debating bills sent over by the House.

Also of note this week, Governor Mike Kehoe signed into law [HB 495](#). The omnibus crime bill requires law enforcement agencies to report the immigration status of suspected criminal offenders, expands the definition of a “dangerous felony” to include the offense of first-degree child endangerment, and adds fentanyl in the presence of a child to the list of actions that endanger a child. The main provision of the bill returns control of the St. Louis Police Department to a state board of police commissioners appointed by the governor. The change restores control back to the system that controlled the department from 1861 until 2012 when a statewide vote put the board under local control.

In the News...

- The Missouri Farm Bureau would be allowed to sell health benefits plans that exclude people with pre-existing medical conditions and limit benefits to less than what's permitted by federal law for health insurers, under legislation that passed the state Senate Thursday. Sponsored by Republican state Sen. Kurtis Gregory of Marshall, the [bill](#) would give the farm bureau a carveout to skirt the consumer protection requirements set by the Affordable Care Act, in an effort to provide affordable coverage options to members. The bill was passed by the Senate by a vote of 24 to 6 on Thursday.
- Accusations that a sexual predator is working in the Missouri Capitol Building with protection from “powerful people” abruptly ended state Senate debate Wednesday on a bill adding [physician assistants and emergency medical personnel](#) to medical providers covered by a peer review process. The Senate had just defeated an amendment to the bill offered by state Sen. Nick Schroer, a Republican from Defiance, to make some records from peer review proceedings available for lawsuits alleging deliberate acts against patients. Defeat of the amendment offended Democratic state Sen. Tracy McCreery of Olivette, and she was discussing the defeat with state Sen. Stephen Webber of Columbia when he dropped the accusation. “There are sexual predators who work in this building,”

Webber said. "There are powerful people who know who those people are and are protecting them. That is happening right now."

- A Republican-led push to overturn the paid sick leave law adopted by Missouri voters last year was debated and approved Wednesday by a state Senate committee. The [bill](#), sponsored by Republican state Rep. Sherri Gallick of Belton, was passed by the House earlier this month and would gut Proposition A, a voter-approved law requiring most employers starting May 1 to provide paid sick time off for hundreds of thousands of qualifying workers. The bill was passed out of committee Wednesday on a 5 to 2 vote party-line immediately following a contentious public hearing.
- On Tuesday, Triad Manufacturing, a leading, Missouri-based provider of custom retail displays and store fixtures, announced that it is expanding in St. Louis, investing \$1.78 million and creating 32 new jobs. The company's expanded operations will enhance its production capacity to meet rising demand while underscoring its commitment to the local workforce and manufacturing sector. Triad partners with major retail brands, offering design, engineering, manufacturing, logistics, and installation services. The company operates more than 2 million square feet of manufacturing space. Triad is also focused on sustainability, using eco-friendly materials and energy-efficient processes.
- The Missouri Department of Agriculture has lifted the suspension of poultry and waterfowl auctions, shows and swap meets in Missouri effective March 24, 2025. The Department suspended waterfowl activity in January in counties impacted by highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) to help prevent the spread of the virus. HPAI is known to be deadly for domesticated poultry. Missouri saw a significant increase in confirmed avian influenza cases over the winter, especially in southwest Missouri. Since the outbreak began in 2022, there have been 60 confirmed cases in Missouri flocks.

Budget Update

After a delay caused by a failure in the state's MOVERS accounting system, the House Committee on Budget completed the mark-up process this week. After a lengthy start-stop hearing that lasted late into the evening on Monday, the committee approved a \$49.7 billion budget and is approximately \$2.1 billion less than Governor Kehoe's initial recommendation and includes roughly \$750 million in GR spending.

The FY26 House version of the budget currently includes nearly \$196 million in GR spending for individual earmark projects. Two of the largest earmarks include \$15 million for a new state park in McDonald County and \$12 million for a climbing lane on Interstate 44. Both are in the southwest Missouri district of House Budget Committee Chairman Dirk Deaton (R-Seneca).

Additionally, despite repeated attempts by Democratic members through the amendment process, the foundation formula is not being fully funded through the state's new adequacy target. To fully fund the formula for the coming year, the adequacy target would be \$7,145 per student. To keep the cost down, Governor Kehoe and the House Budget Committee are funding a target of \$6,760 per student.

Continuing MOVERS issues and a Budget Chairman with laryngitis lead House leadership to make the decision to finish crafting their version of the FY26 budget next week before the full House chamber.

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Angel Investment

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 461](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). This is the companion to [HB 235](#), sponsored by Sherri Gallick (R-Belton) and allows investors to claim a tax credit in an amount equal to 40% of an investment made into a qualified Missouri business or equal to 50% of an investment made into a qualified Missouri business in a rural county. Additionally, the bill specifies how to become a qualified Missouri business through the MTC. Supporting testimony was presented by Next Missouri who stated new and young businesses are the primary source of new jobs in Missouri and startups have created about 80% of all net new jobs in the state. Additionally, a new subset of businesses are developing and commercializing innovative technology, products and services which are engines to economic growth. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, BioSTL, Codify, Greater St. Louis Inc., City of Kansas City, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Civic Council of Greater Kansas City, KC Tech Council and Codify. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 235](#), sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). This is the house companion to [SB 461](#), highlighted above. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which changed the title to tax credits for improving communities, added [HB 682](#) regarding benevolent tax credits and expanded the counties eligible for the tax credit by 29 additional rural counties. Additionally, the substitute added [HB 326](#) which modifies provisions of the Champion for Children tax credit and the Donated Food tax credit relating to tax credit award denials. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

Animal Confiscation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Annexation

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened on Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 631](#) sponsored by Representative Richard West (R-Wentzville). Current law provides that a city, town, or village may annex an unincorporated area that is contiguous and compact to its existing corporate limits. The bill seeks to define the terms “contiguous” and “compact” as being 25% of the length of the perimeter of the unincorporated area that is contiguous with the annexing city, town, or village. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-4 vote.

Assessor Elections

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SJR 35](#), sponsored by Senator Joe Nicola (R-Grain Valley). Currently, assessors of all charter counties except for Jackson County are required to be elected officers. This proposed

Constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, removes this exception for Jackson County. Supporting testimony was presented by the City of Independence and ArmorVine. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Assistant Physicians

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1010](#), sponsored by Representative Matt Overcast (R-Ava). The bill modifies several provisions regarding assistant physicians. Specifically, the bill modifies the definition of assistant physician and assistant collaborative practice arrangement, modifies the reimbursement rates to match mid-level health care providers and provides two pathways for an assistant physician with a license in good standing to become a licensed physician. Supporting testimony was presented by an Assistant Physician who stated Missouri is populated with graduates from medical schools who did not obtain a residency spot or matched with a program and this would at least help fill the gaps for areas with a lack of primary care physicians. Additional supporting testimony was provided by an Assistant Physician. Opposing testimony was presented by a physician who stated Assistant Physicians do not go through the same rigorous training process and the current system sets up checks and balances which ensures patient safety. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Academy of Family Physicians, Washington University, Missouri College of Emergency Physicians and the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons.

Ballot Measures - Foreign

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [SB 152](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill seeks to create new provisions to restrict access from foreign entities to spend monies on local ballot measure elections. During debate, the sponsor offered a floor substitute to provide technical changes. Once modified, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after no further debate, the Senate Third Read and Passed the bill by a 28-2 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

Bank Escrow Accounts

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Born Alive Act

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HBs 195 & 1119](#), sponsored by Representatives Brian Seitz (R-Branson) and Representative Holly Jones (R-Eureka). The bills mandates a child born alive during or after an abortion or attempted abortion will have the same rights as any other person, including any other live-born child. Additionally, the bill requires healthcare providers present when a child is born alive must exercise the same skill to preserve the life and health of the born alive child as they would with other children. Finally, the bill enacts civil and criminal penalties. After debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill by a 109-39 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Boycotts/DEI Initiatives

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 272](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill establishes new restrictions for entities conducting business with the state. Specifically, the bill prohibits public entities from entering into 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. Additionally, the bill prohibits private businesses seeking to establish a contractual relationship with other private businesses to require or suggest information be provided regarding any DEI policies or classifications in place for its workforce, managers, executives, or ownership. Supporting testimony was presented by a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry who stated the legislation is an overly burdensome government overreach that restricts free enterprise and jeopardizes businesses stability for making private decisions on operational best practices. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Health Forward Foundation, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri State Conference of the NAACP, Missouri Sierra Club and the American Civil Liberties Union.

Building Permit Reform

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1309](#), sponsored by Representative John Hewkin (R-Cuba). The bill establishes the Building Permit Reform Act, which creates guidelines and protections for homeowners seeking to update and maintain their homes. Additionally, the bill restricts political subdivisions from requiring a homeowner to obtain a license, certification, or professional registration before requesting a building permit for certain activities. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-5 vote.

Charter School CON

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 177](#), sponsored by Senator Maggie Nurrenbern (D-Kansas City). The bill requires charter schools to obtain a certificate of need issued by the State Board of Education in order to be eligible to operate. The sponsor's intent with the legislation is to ensure there is a need in the community that can be backed up with quantitative research before opening new schools to receive Missouri taxpayer dollars. Supporting testimony was presented by the Kansas City School District who stated choice for parents is a good thing but costs for facility maintenance and management and transportation are not always factored when new Charter schools open. Additionally, this legislation adds another tool to ensure moving forward children, families and educators have the resources they need. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the St. Louis Public School District, Missouri NEA, Missouri School Boards Association, Columbia Public Schools and the Missouri Equity Education Partnership. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Charter School Association who stated there is already a checks and balances system in place and this bill only adds another layer of bureaucracy to the process. Additional opposing testimony was provided by parents and the Show Me Institute.

Child Abuse SOL/NDAs

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 589](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair) and [SB 590](#), also sponsored by Senator Brad Hudson. The bills addresses 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. Supporting testimony was presented by a victim's family member who stated the statute of limitations for childhood sexual abuse has not been modified since 1939 and NDAs only silence truth and protect bad actors. Additional supporting testimony was provided by numerous victims and Children's Justice Campaign. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Civil Justice Reform who stated the statute of limitations have already been removed for the criminal provisions of childhood sexual abuse and there needs to be a balance for businesses to ensure affordable insurance. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the American Tort Reform Association, Missouri Insurance Coalition and Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry (on [SB 589](#) only).

The House Crime and Public Safety Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 401](#), sponsored by Representative Phil Amato (R-Arnold). The bill removes the statute of limitations for prosecuting child abuse or neglect cases, allowing prosecutions to be commenced at any time. Supporting testimony was provided by the sponsor, who stated that the bill provides a legal remedy for victims of severe abuse. He shared that a constituent who had adopted his grandchild, a survivor of abuse, brought the issue to his attention. Discussions with law enforcement highlighted the need to ensure victims have legal recourse as they grow older. No opposing testimony was provided.

Circuit Clerk Compensation

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Sheridan County Circuit Clerk who stated they are still 17 counties which have their clerks performing the work of two offices and the pay has not been truly adjusted since 1993. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Polk County Circuit Clerk. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

Civil Action Fees

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Bar Association. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

Civil Jurisprudence Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Community Improvement

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning to discuss [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. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Auditor's Office regarding proposed implementation if the provisions were to go into effect. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Conferring Degrees

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 90](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City) and [HB 616](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). The bills are identical and the companions to [SB 11](#), sponsored by Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield) and seek to remove a provision limiting the conferring of post-graduate degrees or first-professional degrees in dentistry, optometry, engineering, pharmacy, chiropractic, podiatry, osteopathic or internal medicine, or veterinary medicine by public colleges and universities to only the University of Missouri or those engaged in a collaborative agreement with the University of Missouri. Supporting testimony was presented by a retired professor who stated Missouri has the most restrictive degree conferring laws in the country. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri State University, an education consultant and Southeast Missouri State University. Opposing testimony was presented by University of Missouri who stated passage of this legislation would require future investments from the state to assist additional colleges and universities launch their programs. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the University of Missouri Flagship Council.

Constitutional Amendments

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SJR 47](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). Current law provides that any constitutional amendment or new constitution takes effect when approved by a simple majority of the votes cast on the measure. This constitutional amendment requires any constitutional amendment or new constitution to be approved by both a simple majority of the votes cast on the measure statewide and a simple majority of the votes cast in at least three-quarters of the Congressional districts in the state.

During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added SJR 30 and SJR 10 to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-1 vote.

Coroners

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Cotton Trailers

The House Conservation and Natural Resources Committee convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 28](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb), which raises the maximum speed limit for cotton trailers from 40 mph to 65 mph, repeals the exclusive use requirement for transporting cotton, and establishes conditions for securing loads to ensure compliance with load safety laws. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill with a 20-0 vote.

Criminal Proceedings

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning to re-discuss passage of [HB 953](#), sponsored by Representative Bishop Davidson (R-Republic). Currently, in a criminal prosecution for murder in the first degree, the court must instruct the jury that, in the event it cannot reach a consensus on punishment, the court may assess punishment including death. The bill repeals that provision and instead the court must instruct the jury that, in the event a consensus on punishment cannot be reached, the default will be life in prison. Additionally, the bill seeks to establish a "Clean Slate" expungement program within the judiciary. During discussion, a new House Committee Substitute was adopted which phases in the program in four stages, requires the Joint Committee to establish an advisory committee for implementation of expungements, aligns the reporting dates with the phase in process and allows those eligible for automatic expungements to streamline the application process. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0-1 vote.

Defendant Creative Expression

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. 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 Missouri Artists Coalition, Empower Missouri 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.

Dementia Services

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Greater Missouri Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association who stated one of the duties of the dementia coordinator will be to evaluate services that already exist and make sure every resource is be used to its full potential. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Department of Corrections

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 378](#), sponsored by Senator Angela Mosely (D-Florissant). The bill creates 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. The Office will be required to establish and implement procedures for receiving and resolving complaints made by or on behalf of inmates in the custody of the Department as well as establish procedures for the resolution of complaints. Supporting testimony was presented by Our Lives Matter who stated this is one of the only state departments that has no direct oversight and there have been 27 lawsuits filed by both former staff and current and former inmates. Additionally, creating the Ombudsman allows for direct oversight and a go-between for inmates and families. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Empower Missouri, Missouri Chapter of the ACLU and several family members of inmates. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Design-Build Sunset

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 513](#), sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill 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. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 1370-1 vote, with Representative Mike Davis (R-Belton) being the lone no vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Digital Assets

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 1136](#), sponsored by Representative Tricia Byrnes (R-Wentzville). This legislation defines a variety of digital assets and prohibits the state or its municipalities from refusing to accept digital currency as payment for goods and services. The committee also heard [HB 1217](#) which is the Bitcoin Strategic Reserve Fund, and [HB 1428](#) creating the Virtual Currency Kiosk Consumer Protection Act. The chair said she heard these bills at the same time because she believes that they can work together and need to end up as a single legislative package pertaining to digital currency. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Distracted Driving Preemption

The House Committee on Crime and Public Safety convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1489](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Vernetti (R-Camdenton). Currently, the State preempts the field of regulating the use of electronic communication devices by the operators of motor vehicles. This bill changes the language of the preemption so that local laws, ordinances, or regulations are allowed as long as they do not conflict with the State's law on the subject. Supporting testimony was presented by the Sunrise Beach Police Department. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Driver's Licenses

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 206](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Hinman (R-O'Fallon). The bill adds attending religious services and traveling to essential business to the list where limited driving privileges may be granted. Additionally, the bill requires dispensation of all court fees for before limited driving privileges may be reinstated. Supporting testimony was presented by the O'Fallon Court Administrator who stated this is a way to ensure citizens dispose of moving violations timely. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the City of Independence Police Department.

Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

The committee then turned its attention to [HB 1531](#), sponsored by Representative David Dolan (R-Sikeston) and [HB 931](#), sponsored by Representative Tyson Smith (D-Columbia). The bills are similar and seek to allow offenders to petition the court for limited driving privileges upon successful completion of a Department of Corrections substance abuse treatment program or a 120-day institutional treatment program recommended by the Court. Supporting testimony was presented by the Office of State Public Defender who stated this would provide a starting point for someone who is trying to return to the community safely. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Criminal Defence Lawyers and a state public advocate. Informational testimony was presented by the Judicial Conference of Missouri.

Drug Distribution Licensure

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensure convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1465](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis). Currently, no person or outlet can act as a wholesale drug distributor, pharmacy distributor, drug outsourcer, or third-party logistics provider without obtaining a license from the Missouri Board of Pharmacy. The bill seeks to allow wholesale drug distributors and third-party logistics providers with a current and valid drug distributor accreditation from the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy or its successor to be eligible to distribute products in Missouri. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Drug Trafficking

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. There was little debate before the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

DWI Diversion Program

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 353](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). The bill creates a DWI diversion program which allows a prosecuting or circuit attorney to divert the case to a DWI diversion program if certain criteria are met. Additionally, the bill sets forth the framework for the program. Finally, the bill allows for domestic violence victims to present that evidence during sentencing hearings. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added SB 434 to the title, as it is similar, to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

Election Authority Prohibitions

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 debate, 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. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by a voice vote.

Emergency Department Staffing

The Senate Committee on Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 520](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). This is the companion bill to [HB 1013](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis) and requires hospitals with emergency departments to have at least one physician on site, on duty and be responsible for the duration the emergency department is open. Supporting testimony was presented by the College of Emergency Physicians who stated physician-led treatment teams lead to better patient outcomes and receiving mid-level care could lead to higher healthcare costs for the patient. Additional supporting testimony was provided by emergency physicians, the Missouri State Medical Association and the Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Hospital Association who stated there are already regulatory requirements for critical access hospitals which include rules for access to qualified medical providers within 30 minutes and this would eliminate care for rural areas.

Emergency Medical Services

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 206](#), sponsored by Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas 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. Additionally, the bill 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. Lastly, the bill modifies provisions relating to certification of community paramedics and the provision of community paramedic services and modifies the State Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services by changing the number of council members from 16 to no more than 23. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Ambulance Association, Bethany Ambulance Service, Ambulance District Association of Missouri and the Mehlville Fire Protection District. Opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate.

Employment Security

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 202](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge). The bill establishes the “Employment Security Program Integrity Act of 2024” to establish methods to ensure identity verification and outlines the responsibility of companies regarding new hires and their wages. During bill progression, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added clarifying language and rearranged two sections to ensure consistency throughout the bill. During the lengthy debate, Representative Bruce Sassmann (R-Bland) successfully amended the bill to require the Division of Employment Security to codify the best management practices of ensuring no fraud, waste or abuse occurs. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 101-46 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1281](#), sponsored by Representative Bruce Sassmann (R-Bland). The bill establishes the “Employment Security Program Integrity Act of 2024” to establish methods to ensure identity verification and outlines the responsibility of companies regarding new hires and their wages. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added provisions from HB 202 regarding reasons a claimant is disqualified for unemployment compensation. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-5 vote.

EMS State Advisory Council

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 313](#), sponsored by Representative Bennie Cook (R-Houston). The bill modifies provisions relating to the State Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services. Specifically, the bill changes the amount of council members from 16 to no fewer than 13 and removes the requirement that one member must be from St. Louis City. Additionally, the bill alters the procedure for electing a chairperson and removes the provision that the regional EMS advisory committees must serve as resources for identifying potential members of the council. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 119-15 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Entertainment Districts

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 1524](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge) and [HB 1580](#), sponsored by Representative Marlon Anderson (D-St. Louis). The bills are similar and add definitions for entertainment districts and specifies they are not required to file a petition that has been signed by more than 50% per capita of all owners of real property within the district’s boundaries. Additionally, the bill outlines the powers each district has within its boundaries. Finally, the bill allows state departments may fund the districts if

approved by DED and subject to appropriations. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which removed the rulemaking of the entertainment district's board, prohibited the board from being able to levy taxes and allows for the hiring of post-certified security within the district's boundary. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Ephedrine Sales

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Consumer Healthcare Products Association who stated the original six manufacturers of these products voluntary paid for the system to track the sales and purchase of these products but now, other manufacturers are entering the market and not paying into the system. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Haleon. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Erosion Control

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1461](#), sponsored by Representative Colin Wellenkamp (R-St. Charles). The bill creates the "Soil Erosion Control Fund", which is to be used to better equip neighborhoods and communities to reduce sedimentation and erosion of creeks, streams, and waterways. Additionally, the bill specifies the types of projects that are eligible for the program.

Finally, the bill outline the criteria for which an application may be developed for the program. Committee members expressed concerns the legislation does not specify the terms of the loans or where the funding would originate for the loans. Supporting testimony was presented by Community Associations Institute who stated this would provide another tool for HOAs with 25 houses or less to address erosion issues with loans at lower interest rates. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Corn Growers Association and Missouri Coalition for the Environment. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Estate Planning

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 289](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill 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. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Farm Bureau Health Plans

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [SB 79](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 366](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia) and provides Missouri Farm Bureau and other not for profit organizations the authority to offer affordable and quality health benefits to their members, and allows them to work with reinsurance companies and third party administrators to ensure consumers have access to nationwide network of providers and claims are paid. During debate, the sponsor offered a substitute to modify the

title, provide consumer protections to ensure a person is not dropped due to a medical event, includes prompt pay provisions, includes surprise billing clause, requires plan provider must adhere to reinsurance laws of the state and transparency, requires plans to use a regulated third-party administrator that's going to help with administering the plans. Additionally, the substitute includes disclaimer provisions that need to be acknowledged by the consumer, stating the plan is "not health insurance and it is not subject federal or state laws relating to health insurance. This contract may offer fewer benefits than an ACA-compliant health plan and may exclude coverage for pre-existing conditions. You may qualify for income-based subsidies through the Affordable Care Act health insurance marketplace. This contract is not covered by the Missouri Insurance Guarantee Association. Lastly, the substitute creates a complaint process with the participation of the Department of Insurance and includes a 1% fee paid by the Farm Bureau to the Department of Insurance to help administer or to cover the costs. After nearly six hours of debate, the sponsor further amended the bill to provide technical changes and also expand the provisions to include telehealth services. Once modified, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes. On Thursday, the Senate dedicated floor time to revisit the bill and, after no debate, Third Read and Passed the bill by a 24-6 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

Financial Statements

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Press Association. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of County Auditors, Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities, the Missouri Municipal League, and the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Firearm Restrictions - HOA

The House General Laws Committee convened Tuesday for a public hearing on [HB 1415](#), sponsored by Representative Brian Seitz (R-Branson). The bill prohibits homeowners' associations and similar entities from restricting the concealed carry rights of lawful permit holders who own or occupy property within their jurisdiction. It ensures that the right to carry extends to private property, common areas, parking lots, and all access routes. Supporting testimony was provided by the State Public Advocate and a private citizen. Witnesses argued that homeowners' associations should not have the authority to restrict a concealed carry permit holder's right to carry a firearm on private property or in common areas. They emphasized that the bill protects Second Amendment rights and ensures HOA rules do not infringe on gun owners' ability to access parking areas or protect themselves. One witness further contended that HOAs in villa or condo communities should not impose restrictions on property owners' access to common areas, particularly when those areas are deeded to them. They argued that such limitations violate constitutional rights and should be subject to legal challenges in state or county courts. Opposing testimony was provided by a child who expressed fear and concern after experiencing an active shooter drill at school, stating that it was a frightening experience.

Firearm Rights - Employee

The House General Laws Committee convened Tuesday for a public hearing on [HB 39](#), sponsored by Representative Hardy Billington (R-Poplar Bluff). The bill prevents employers from terminating employees for having a legally owned firearm in their vehicle while arriving at or leaving work. It also provides liability protection for employers against any injuries or damages resulting from the firearm's use. Supporting testimony was provided by representatives from Women for Gun Rights and the State Public Advocate, who argued that the bill strikes a balance between individual rights and workplace safety. They emphasized that responsible gun owners should not fear losing their jobs for legally carrying a firearm in their vehicle and that the bill clarifies concerns regarding safety and liability. No opposing testimony was provided.

Firearm Suppressors

The House General Laws Committee convened Tuesday for a public hearing on [HB 548](#) and [HB 898](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Costlow (R-Dardenne Prairie) and Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bills legalize firearm suppressors in Missouri starting August 28, 2025, exempt suppressors made and kept in-state from federal regulation, prohibit state and local governments from enforcing federal suppressor laws with penalties for noncompliance, and authorize the Attorney General to enforce these provisions. Supporting testimony was provided by a State Public Advocate and private citizen Susan Meyers of the 131st District. Witnesses argued that firearm suppressors should be legal in Missouri without federal restrictions, emphasizing that suppressors reduce noise for hearing safety but do not silence gunfire. They contended that the bill challenges the Commerce Clause's application, citing a similar Texas law, and expressed confidence that legal challenges would uphold state authority. Additionally, they asserted that Missouri-made suppressors would benefit the state's economy and that law-abiding citizens should have unrestricted access to gun accessories. Supporters also advocated for an amendment to exempt all firearms, suppressors, and accessories from state sales tax. No opposing testimony was provided.

Firefighter's Bill of Rights

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri State Council of Firefighters who stated this legislation would provide a framework that would universally help firefighters across the state to understand the rules of engagement in the employer-employee relationship. Additional supporting testimony was provided by active firefighters. Opposing testimony was presented by the Melville Fire Protection District who stated this legislation would conflict with collective bargaining agreement capabilities and adds another layer of bureaucracy for political subdivisions. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Robertson Fire Protection District.

Fireworks

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [SB 81](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). 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

discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which made a technical change to ensure the word licensure was included in the legislation. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-1 vote.

Foreign Ownership Property

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 993](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Irwin (R-Lee's Summit). This legislation seeks to reduce the amount of land, not just agricultural land, which 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. Supporting testimony was presented by former state Representative Mike Hafner who said the bill is needed as a matter of national security and to protect our critical infrastructure. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Farm Bureau. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Fraud Offenses

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 debate, several amendments were successfully added to the bill. These included changes the title, 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. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Bankers Association and the Missouri Credit Union Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Health Care Assaults

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri College of Emergency Physicians and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists who stated this legislation is a beginning point which will not place hospitals at risk of an EMTALA violation, but still signal to health care workers that we do care about them and we want them to be able to be in a safe environment. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Hospital Association, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians, SSM Health, Cox Health, BJC Healthcare and nurses. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Health Care Decision-Maker

The Senate Families, Seniors and Health Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 356](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill establishes the Designated Health Care Decision-Maker Act, allowing health care providers to rely on designated decision-makers for incapacitated patients without a legal guardian or power of attorney. It also outlines a priority list for selecting decision-makers, their responsibilities, and conditions for withholding nutrition or hydration, while protecting healthcare providers from liability for reasonable efforts to identify decision-makers. Supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Life Care, Campaign Life Missouri, and Leading Age Missouri. The witnesses stated their support for the bill as it creates a clear process for making medical decisions for incapacitated patients lacking legal representation. They emphasized the importance of prioritizing decision-makers, protecting healthcare providers, and ensuring patients receive appropriate care. They highlighted real-life cases of patients left without care due to decision-making gaps, and pointed out that Missouri is one of only four states without a solution to this issue. No opposing testimony was provided.

Healthcare Omnibus

The Senate Families, Seniors and Health Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 178](#), sponsored by Senator Patty Lewis (D-Kansas City), which modifies several provisions relating to healthcare. Specifically, the bill includes provisions allowing partner therapy, sexual offense forensic examinations, prenatal testing for certain diseases, insurance coverage for self-administered hormonal contraceptives, and mammogram notifications. A substitute was offered that ensures mothers can give consent for treatment, and after a brief discussion, they passed the bill with a 6-0 vote.

High Schools - Recovery

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1386](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill expands the definition of "sponsoring entity" for recovery high schools to include the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, magnet schools, charter schools, and public and private schools. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 16-0 vote.

Hospital Price Transparency

The Senate Families, Seniors and Health Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 336](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove), which specifies that if a hospital is not in material compliance with federal hospital price transparency laws when a patient utilizes services or makes purchases, the hospital shall not be permitted to pursue collections for debts owed for that service or purchase. A substitute was offered and adopted, and following a brief discussion, the committee decided to reject the bill.

Hospitals – County

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1104](#), sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The bill specifies who is prohibited to be elected or appointed to the board of trustees for a hospital and how a member may be removed from the board. Additionally, the bill changes the schedule of meetings from at least once a month to quarterly. Finally, the bill specifies what records, data and information are not subject to sunshine laws. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which changed the title to hospitals,

added regional hospital districts and made a clarification to the conflict of interest provision. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-5 vote.

Initiative Petitions

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [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, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 551](#), sponsored by Representative John Martin (R-Columbia) to the title to create one legislative vehicle as the bills are similar. Additionally, the substitute removed the provision prohibiting the removal of federal regulations or rules and the provision which closes the records on initiative petitions. Finally, the substitute removes the provision under which signatures would be invalidated if the title is substantively changed. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 103-49 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Intimate Digital Depictions

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 604](#), sponsored by Senator Tracy McCreery (D-Olivette) and [SB 411](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). These are the companion bills to [HB 362](#), sponsored by Representative Cecelia Williams (R-Dittmer) and seek to address the issue of the unauthorized disclosure of intimate digital images. Individuals impacted may bring a civil action against the person who disclosed the image without their consent. Violators can be charged with a class E felony on the 1st offense and a class C felony on a subsequent conviction. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence who stated ever changing technology requires updated laws to protect both minors and adults. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Jackson County Conveyance

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 247](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill authorizes the conveyance of specific state property located at Lee's Summit within Jackson County. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Joint Employers

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 320](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bill provides that neither a franchisee nor a franchisee's employees shall be considered employees of a franchisor for any purpose unless the franchisor exercises direct and immediate control over the hiring, termination, discipline, and direction of the employees of a franchisee. Supporting testimony was provided by the US Chamber of Commerce and the American Hotel Lodging Association, who stated that it clarifies the distinction between franchise owners and corporate headquarters, ensuring that a franchisor is not considered the employer

of franchise employees unless they exercise direct and immediate control over hiring, termination, discipline, and employee direction. They note that nearly half of the states have passed similar legislation, and previous attempts to pass it in both chambers have been successful individually but not together. The witness also discusses how independent contractors, such as delivery drivers or gig workers, operate separately from corporate entities and retain control over their work schedules based on contractual agreements. This bill seeks to solidify these distinctions, preventing unnecessary liability for franchisors while maintaining flexibility for contractors, and it provides clarity and certainty for businesses in Missouri by aligning state law with existing federal standards. They emphasize that the bill simply codifies current federal law regarding substantial direct and immediate control over employees, noting that other states have already passed similar legislation. Opposing testimony was not provided by any witness.

KC Transportation Authority

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 858](#), sponsored by Representative Sean Pouche (R-Kansas City). The bill changes provisions relating to the Kansas City area transportation authority. The legislation states if there is a commissioner vacancy on the Kansas City Area Transportation Authority that was appointed from Platte or Clay County, the mayor of Kansas City must appoint a successor from the panel submitted by the county commission of the county wherein the vacancy occurred. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Kratom

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 1037](#), sponsored by Tricia Byrnes (R-Wentzville). This bill outlines a regulatory framework for the sale of kratom products. Specifically, the bill details the labeling requirements and prohibits any sales of products adulterated or contaminated with nonkratom substances. Additionally, the bill prohibits the sale of kratom products to anyone under 21 years of age and outlines the penalty provisions. After a brief debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

LAGERS Modifications

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections, and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 514](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 976](#), sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater) and provides statutory updates to the Local Government Employees' Retirement System to account for federal changes and outdated/obsolete provisions. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which codifies what information may be provided and what personally identifiable information may not be shared regarding the plan's investments. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

LE Reporting

The House Committee on Crime and Public Safety convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 591](#), sponsored by Representative Richard West (R-Wentzville). This bill creates provisions related to law enforcement "clearance rates", defined in the bill as the rate at which law enforcement agencies clear an "offense by arrest" or an "offense cleared by exceptional means". Supporting testimony was presented by the Freedom Principle Missouri who stated the legislation is a step in the right direction to coordinate information between law enforcement and victims and their families.

Additional supporting testimony was provided by Right on Crime, the Council of State Governments Justice Center, and Empower Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Legal Aid Services Fund

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 355](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Sullivan) and [SB 391](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bills are identical and remove the sunset date for the Basic Civil Legal Services Fund. This provision has already been added to [SB 10](#). During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added [SB 391](#) to the title, as it is identical, to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 124](#), sponsored by Representative Rudy Veit (R-Wardsville). This is the companion bill to [SB 355](#), highlighted above. Supporting testimony was presented by Legal Services of Southern Missouri who provided information on cases adjudicated to highlight the need for ongoing funding. Additional supporting testimony was provided by an additional attorney from Legal Services of Southern Missouri, Mid-Missouri Legal Services and a state public advocate. Informational testimony was presented by Mark Rhoads who represents all four legal aid offices and informed the committee no state funding is provided for this fund as it is all court fee generated. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Library Districts

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 145-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [SB 396](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). This is the companion bill to [HB 369](#), highlighted above. After little debate the Senate Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 31-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

License Fee Offices

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 207](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Hinman (R-O'Fallon). The bill increases the fees on certain transactions and applies one dollar from every increased fee to the newly created "License Office Distribution Fund." Additionally, the bill specifies the Director of the Department of Revenue is prohibited from awarding fee office contracts to entities affiliated in any manner with a current employee of the Department or with a former employee of the Department for the one-year period following the employee's termination of employment. During debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to ensure the \$3 fee remains in the fee office performing the service. Representative John Black (R-Marshfield) further amended the bill by requiring non-profits be given 5% credit in valuation when awarding contracts for license fee offices. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, with no further debate, Third Read and Passed by a 114-28 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

License Reciprocity Waivers

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [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 debate, the sponsor offered a floor substitute to modify the title to “reciprocity for professional licensing,” modified provisions relating to profession-specific examinations, and included [HB 946](#), which creates a waiver for resident spouses of Missouri law enforcement officers. Senator Tracy McCreery (D-Olivette) then amended the bill to include [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. Senator Stephen Webber (D-Columbia) also amended the bill to include 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. Finally, Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo) amended the bill to include [SB 292](#), which modifies provisions of rulemaking authority for pharmacy services within hospitals and attempts to streamline the process for licensure for physicians. Once modified, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after no further debate, the Senate Third Read and Passed the bill by a 28-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

Massage Therapists

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 58](#), sponsored by Representative Bruce Sassmann (R-Bland). provides that the Board of Therapeutic Massage ("Board") may apply to the Administrative Hearing Commission ("AHC") for an emergency suspension or restriction of a massage business or massage therapist license. After a brief debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 121-28 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Missouri Ethics Commission

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 374](#), sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrolton). Currently, governing bodies of political subdivisions with general operating budgets in excess of \$1 million are required to file financial interest statements with the Missouri Ethics Commission. The bill alters this by requiring governing bodies to submit an attestation to the Commission if the operating budget is expected to exceed \$1 million. Additionally, the bill requires election authorities and other entities to submit to the commission a list of those required to submit financial interest statements within two days of the closure of candidate filing. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Missouri Southern State University

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the President of Missouri Southern State University who stated this expanded mission would allow the University to not only focus on international education but also include health and life sciences with immersive experiences. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Missouri Survivors Act

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 989](#), sponsored by Representative Renee Reuter (R-Imperial). The bill allows for domestic violence victims to present such evidence during sentencing hearings. Additionally, the bill allows those convicted prior to the bill's implementation that can present domestic violence evidence may apply for a resentencing. Supporting testimony was presented by an appellate attorney in the public defender system who stated this would provide judges who are convinced by a preponderance of the evidence that the criminal defendant is a survivor of domestic abuse options to give a sentence within an appropriate range of punishment under the circumstances, and to give hope to some previously incarcerated persons that are infrequently granted options of commutation and pardon. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Forward Us, Empower Missouri, Missouri Appleseed and the Rape and Abuse Crisis Center. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Motor Vehicle Inspections

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 247](#), sponsored by Representative Bob Bromley (R-Carl Junction). The bill would allow drivers with a vehicle aged up to five years old be able to pay for vehicle registration up to five years. Additionally, the bill contains [HB 246](#), which allows individuals to obtain a two-year registration on their vehicle was added. The bill also includes [HB 799](#) which modifies when motor vehicles require inspections and establishes a Space Force license plate. Finally, the bill contains [HB 61](#) which allows for the collection of a fee for the Heritage Conservation Foundation license plate.

Supporting testimony was presented by Carvana who stated they specifically supported the provisions which help vehicle franchise license holders and speeding up the delivery of vehicles. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri County Collectors Association who stated current law encourages citizens to pay their tax bills on-time. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Stoddard County Collector and the Benton County Collector. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Licensed Offices who stated the fees have not been included in the current legislation. Additional informational testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Counties.

Motor Vehicle Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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.

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

Motor Vehicles - Inoperable

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. Opposing testimony was presented by Advantage Metal Recycling who stated this will not address the issue of the car theft for scrap metal and the current law was carefully crafted to ensure only inoperable vehicles whose only value is scrap were included in the definition. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Recycled Material Association and CoPART. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Insurance Coalition.

MU Seminary Fund

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 627](#), sponsored by Senator Stephen Webber (D-Columbia). 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. Supporting testimony was presented by the University of Missouri System who stated this would allow for better fund management while still giving state oversight of the funds. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1172](#), sponsored by Representative Willard Haley (R-Eldon). This is the companion bill to [SB 627](#), highlighted above. Committee discussion and testimony mirrored that of the Senate hearing.

Murder in the First Degree

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 531](#), sponsored by Representative Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bill modifies the offense of murder in the first degree to include individuals who knowingly distribute or deliver any substance containing fentanyl resulting in death. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

Newspaper Modifications

The House Local Government Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 353](#), sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrolton). Currently, in order to qualify as a newspaper legally acceptable to run public notices and advertisements, a newspaper must have been published regularly for a period of three years; or must be the successor newspaper to a defunct newspaper and begin publication no later than 30 days after the termination of the prior newspaper. The bill reduces the time period of regular publication from three years to one year and increases the time period from 30 days to 90 days within which a successor newspaper must begin publication. The bill also allows a newspaper that has been purchased or newly established by another newspaper that satisfies these conditions to qualify. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Non-Profit Task Force

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 173](#), sponsored by Senator Stephen Webber (D-Columbia). The bill establishes the "Missouri Task Force on Safety and Security for Nonprofit Organizations" within the Department of Public Safety. The Task Force shall study and make recommendations regarding security needs of nonprofit organizations at risk of terrorist attacks in Missouri. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

Paint Recycling

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1216](#), sponsored by Representative David Dolan (R-Sikeston). This legislation authorizes the producers of architectural paint sold at retail to either establish or join with a nonprofit organization to create a plan for a post-consumer paint recycling program. The plan will be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources for approval and must be structured to reduce the generation, promote the reuse and recycling, and manage the waste stream of post-consumer paint. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added aerosol cans to the program and clarifies DNR would ultimately oversee the program. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-3 vote.

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment met Tuesday morning to discuss [SB 239](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 1216](#), highlighted above. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Parents/Educators Rights

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1287](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly). The sponsors intent with the legislation is to develop framework that includes respecting the authority of teachers in public and charter schools and promoting safe, respectful and orderly learning environments while enhancing parental involvement. Additionally, he would like to see policies set forth regarding disciplinary issues and student codes of conduct. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 744](#) to the title and pairs the Parental with that language. Additionally, the substitute adds clarity to the definitions. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 18-0 vote.

Patients First Act

The House Committee on Insurance convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 530](#) sponsored by Representative Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters). The bill establishes the “Patient First Act” which prohibits group or individual health plans from discriminating against providers who are acting within the scope of their license or certificate with respect to reimbursement or participation in any plan or insurance program. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted that removes physicians from the bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-2-1 vote.

Pensions Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes.

Pesticide Labeling

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 544](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill’s language states a pesticide registered by certain federal agencies or a pesticide label consistent with federal pesticide labeling requirements shall satisfy any warning label requirement regarding cancer under any other provision of law. Supporting testimony was presented by Bayer who answered any committee questions. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Cattlemen’s Association, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Pork Association, Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Associated Industries of Missouri. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment who stated there is a duty to warn of potential dangers to the public. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a private attorney and the Missouri Sierra Club.

The committee immediately entered executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-2 vote.

Political Subdivision Budgets

The House Local Government Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 749](#), sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). This legislation seeks to ensure that members

of a governing body of a political subdivision receive proposed budget documents within seven days of voting on the budget. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

Political Subdivisions Omnibus

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [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.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Municipal Metro League of St Louis, L.J Hart and Company, the City Council of Joplin, the Missouri County Collectors Association, and the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

Port Authorities

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1346](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Steinmeyer (R-Sugar Creek). The bill expands opportunities for private investments for Port KC. The sponsor stated his intent with the legislation is to remove restrictions and provide Port KC additional tools it needs to drive an even greater economic impact for Missouri. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which expanded the provisions to include all ports instead of limiting to just Port KC. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Prison Dental

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 122](#), sponsored by Representative Rudy Veit (R-Wardsville). The bill exempts corporations contracted with the state to provide dental care in correctional centers from the requirements for corporation licensure to practice dentistry. There was little debate before the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 150-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Professional License Preemption

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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 debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to include podiatrists. Representative Holly Jones (R-Eureka) further amended the bill by adding a provision to allow for cross reporting of both child and animal abuse. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by a voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 103-30 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Professional Registration Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 268](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). Currently, an individual can become a social worker if he or she has received a baccalaureate or master's degree in social work. The social work programs must be accredited and approved by the Council on Social Work Education. This bill allows individuals to get a master's degree from a social work program in pre-candidacy for accreditation that is recognized and approved by the committee for social workers. During debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to add several provisions regarding professional registration to create an omnibus bill. Specifically, the bill now includes the following provisions:

- Changed the title to professional registration;
- Adds fingerprinting and background check modifications for certain professions;
- Adds license reciprocity for law enforcement spouses;
- Adds a dietitian compact and license reciprocity;
- Modifies provisions regarding the practice of dentistry within correctional facilities; and,
- Modifies educational and apprenticeship requirements for the practice of embalming and funeral directors.

Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 127-24 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Property Assessment Limitations

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 780](#), sponsored by Representative Darin Chappell (R-Rogersville). Effective January 1, 2026, the bill seeks to limit property assessment values by clarifying that for any person purchasing a home, the assessment value cannot be more than the purchase amount. During the lengthy debate, Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis) successfully amended the bill to require assessors to disclose how the valuation of the property was determined and any third-party documentation utilized. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 90-56 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HJR 4](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Coleman (R-Grain Valley). This Resolution seeks, upon voter approval, to change how real property is assessed and reassessed. Additionally, the Resolution seeks to place a cap on increases of valuation but allows that limited increase may be

exceeded to reflect the value added to the property as a result of new construction or improvements. Supporting testimony was presented by a member of the Jackson County Legislature who stated this finally allows for protections for individuals in Jackson County who may not have the financial means to file an appeal of the assessed valuations of their homes. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by Property Assessment Review who stated this would create an imbalance on assessments and potentially lead to higher taxes. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri State Assessors Association.

Property Tax Payments

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 388](#) sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrollton). This legislation would allow township counties to pass an ordinance allowing taxpayers to pay their real and personal property taxes on an annual, semi-annual or quarterly basis. The sponsor said that larger counties have more flexibility in how they allow people to pay their taxes and township counties would like the same ability. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 143-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Proposition A Modification

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 567](#), sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). The legislation alters Proposition A, which voters approved by a statewide vote in November 2024, by delaying the effective date of the increased \$15 minimum wage to January 1, 2027. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Restaurant Association who stated the legislation directly impacts small businesses and allows time to plan with a delayed implementation. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Grocers Association, NFIB, Missouri Retailers Association and Marquette Transportation Company. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Jobs with Justice who stated this countermands the will of the voters and hurts employees in Missouri. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Family Health Council, Abortion Action Missouri, ACLU of Missouri and Action St. Louis.

The committee immediately entered executive session to discuss passage of the bill. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-2 vote.

Public Safety Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 143](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). This bill includes 50 various provisions relating to public safety, all of which the committee is familiar with and have been presented during previous sessions. Specifically, the bill seeks to modify provisions relating to juvenile offenders, bench warrants for non-moving traffic violations, wrongful conviction, persistent offenders, armed criminal action, cyberstalking and harassment task force, endangering the welfare of a child, unlawful discharge of a firearm, unlawful possession of a firearm, law enforcement animals, drug trafficking, critical incident stress management program, civilian oversight divisions and the office of the public defender. Supporting testimony was provided by LJ Hart and Company, the Missouri Ambulance Association, the Missouri State Troopers Association, the Ambulance District Association of Missouri, the Missouri Prosecutors Association, the Missouri Fraternal Order of Police, Haleon, Centurion Dentistry and the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse. Opposing testimony was provided

by Arnie Dienhoff, Immigrant Home English Learning Program, the Missouri Immigration Policy Coalition, the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri and Voice Long Term Care.

Qualified Tuition Contributions

The House Committee on Higher Education convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by Treasurer Vivek Malek who stated the legislation ensures that Missouri's tax incentives for college savings stays in Missouri, supporting families, strengthening the economy, and growing the 529 Education Savings Program. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Railroad Cars

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen. Additional supporting testimony was provided by several family members of a victim who died from a train collision and a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by BNSF Railway who stated increasing the distance will not prevent future accidents and could block other crossings further along the tracks.

Railroad Crossings

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 254](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Peach Orchard). The bill specifies that drivers are required to stop at railroad crossings for "any on-track equipment" in addition to trains. After no discussion, the bill failed to pass by a 2-4 vote.

Railroad Right-of-ways

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1318](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Nolte (R-Higginsville). Currently, the U.S. Surface Transportation Board (STB) regulates railroad abandonments, requiring railroads to seek authorization before abandoning lines, and ensuring public convenience and necessity are considered. The bill seeks to move the duties of overseeing the centerline geometry of abandoned railroad rights-of-way to the Department of Agriculture. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Real Estate

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 478](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). The bill seeks to provide clarity for service agreements between realtors and tenants or buyers. Specifically, the bill requires a designated real estate broker acting as a single agent for a buyer or tenant shall enter into a written agency agreement before, rather than either before or while, engaging in brokerage acts. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

Regional Jail Districts

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 492](#), sponsored by Representative Dean Van Schoiack (R-Savannah). Currently, any two contiguous counties may form a regional jail district. This bill specifies if a regional jail district levies a sales tax and a new county wishes to join the district, the county seeking to join must vote to enact the sales tax. If the sales tax is not approved, the county will not be allowed to join the jail district. Additionally, the bill allows the districts to equip and maintain the facility, as well as lease any properties. Finally, the bill also repeals a provision, which allows the sales tax to be used for court facilities within the jail district. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 11-1 vote.

Road Fund Modifications

The Senate Committee on Appropriations convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [SB 586](#), sponsored by Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield). The bill creates the “Federal Road Fund” which will be utilized for any federal funds drawn down by the state for highway purposes. The sponsor’s intent with the legislation is to provide limited oversight over the federal funding utilized by the state while not interfering with the funds constitutionally mandated to be placed within the State Road Fund. Committee members expressed concerns regarding future legislature’s failure to appropriate funding to cover ongoing projects and the impact this legislation would have on bond payments. Informational testimony was presented by MoDOT who provided background on the STIP and how projects are allocated within the state. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Rx During Emergency

The Senate Families, Seniors and Health Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 519](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby), which specifies that in the event a pharmacist is unable to obtain a refill authorization from a prescriber due to death or incapacity, the pharmacist may use their professional judgment to fill a prescription as needed for an emergency period, provided the amount dispensed does not exceed 90 days. The bill excludes controlled substances. A substitute was offered and after a brief discussion, they passed the bill with a 6-0 vote.

School – Ten Commandments

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 594](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill requires each school district’s school board and charter school’s governing board to display the Ten Commandments in every building and classroom under their jurisdiction. Supporting testimony was presented by the First Liberty Institute who provided background information regarding court cases where religious liberties were upheld or defended. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Patriot Academy and Liberty Link Missouri. Opposing testimony was presented by Warden Way who stated this legislation violates the religious liberty rights of students, parents, and houses of worship. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Missouri Faith Voices and private citizens. Due to time constraints additional testimony was prohibited.

School Bus Endorsements

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [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. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

School Safety Omnibus

The House took up and dedicated floor time Monday to debate [HB 416](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). The bill modifies several provisions regarding safety within schools. Specifically, the bill requires school districts and charter schools to adopt a comprehensive emergency operations plan to address school safety, crises, and emergency operations. The bill establishes the "Stop the Bleed Act", defines a "bleeding control kit," requires DESE to develop a traumatic blood loss protocol for schools and requires that cardiopulmonary resuscitation training be required for school district and charter school employees. Additionally, the bill requires that school districts and charter schools equip each interior door with anti-intruder door locks and each exterior door with bullet-resistant window film. The bill also authorized districts and charter schools to enter into written agreements with law enforcement on procedures for reporting criminal offenses outlined in the bill and allows for certain offenses for students under 11 years of age to be reported to the Children's Division. Finally, the bill requires that beginning in the 2026-27 school year the Active Shooter and Intruder Response Training for Schools Program be required for teachers and school employees on an annual basis. During debate, several amendments were adopted which corrected drafting errors, adds [HB 408](#) which modifies the use of personal electronic communication devices during instructional hours and adds [HB 232](#) regarding cardiac emergency response plans. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 112-20 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

School State Aid

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 364](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill changes the requirement of 169 school days to 169 calendar days regarding eligibility to receive funding without penalty in the case of inclement weather. The sponsor informed the committee this would allow schools that adhere to the 5-day school week requirement to still call off school in the event of extreme weather events without being penalized financially. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri School Boards Association who stated this legislation fixes the unintended consequences from the language in [SB 727](#) for those districts who are attempting to follow the language, but inclement weather is an uncontrollable factor and has led to some districts facing financial penalties. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of School Administrators, Missouri NEA and the Missouri State Teachers Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

School/Student Safety

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education [SB 68](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). During bill presentation the sponsor said he intends to offer a substitute bill which 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 and requires DESE to produce a publicly searchable database of all safety threats. 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 debate, the sponsor successfully offered floor

substitute which removed the requirement for DESE to maintain a regularly updated database of school safety incidents. Senator Doug Beck (R-St. Louis) further amended the bill by setting an August 28, 2032 sunset. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri NEA who stated while they have concerns with the lack of local control, student safety must take priority. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri School Board Association who stated they are still collaborating with the sponsor to find a balance between local control and student safety. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Second Amendment Preservation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 1175](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). SAPA was originally passed by the Missouri General Assembly as [HB 85](#) in 2021 but was struck down by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2024 over the supremacy clause and is now pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. The bill seeks to reenact certain portions of the original legislation that were not struck down by the court. During bill progression, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which removed some of the old language distinct to federal firearms laws that was struck down to more closely mirror the Senate companion bill [SB 23](#) and narrowed the civil standnings under which lawsuits may be filed. During the heated debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to ensure those who hire federal employees, namely veterans, were not penalized. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by a 101-49 vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 100-51 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Self-Defense

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 363](#), sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill seeks to modify the “Stand Your Ground Law” enacted in 2016. The bill would presume those involved with a self-defense shooting are presumed innocent rather than presumed guilty. The sponsor stated Missouri has the most restrictive Stand Your Ground law out of twenty other states which have passed similar legislation. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Firearms Coalition who stated current law regarding threatened use of force is confusing and needs clarity for law enforcement personnel and the pretrial immunity process is vital for those involved in a self-defense shooting. Additional supporting testimony was provided by private citizens. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys who stated changing the current law would impede ongoing investigations and could result in more mistrials. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Chapter of Moms Demand Gun Action for Gun Sense in America.

Self-Service Storage

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Self Storage Association. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Press Association who stated this limits transparency. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate.

Servicemember Civil Relief Act

The House Committee on Veterans and Armed Forces convened Monday evening to discuss passage of [HB 954](#), sponsored by Representative Stephanie Boykin (D-Florissant). The bill extends Federal protections of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA) currently in Federal law for Federal servicemembers to members of the Missouri National Guard who are called to active state duty by the Governor and any Missouri employees who are members of the National Guard of another state and are called to active state duty by the Governor of that state, upon being relieved of such duty. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added HB 1447 to create one legislative vehicle. Additionally, the substitute ensures the adjutant general is added to the language. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 18-0 vote.

Solar/Roofing Contractors

The House Committee on Professional Registration convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1348](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge). The bill requires solar and roofing companies operating in Missouri to provide the full name of the applicant, phone number and email address. Additionally, the bill requires solar companies to train installers of the product.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Solar Energy Industries Association who stated the industry would like to see better workmanship, better coordination and this contains essential consumer protections. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Speech Pathologists/Audiologists

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [HB 765](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). The bill 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. During debate, Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph) successfully amended the bill to change the title and add a provision allowing for a Masters of Social Work program at Missouri Western University. Representative Jeff Farnan (R-Stanberry) further amended the bill by adding provisions regarding education and apprenticeship requirements for embalmers and funeral directors. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by a voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 149-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Sports Authorities

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1229](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Costlow (R-St. Charles). Current law allows 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. The bill seeks to allow 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. Additionally, project areas designated by the authority will be eligible to receive up to 50% of the incremental increase in state general revenue sales taxes generated by activity located within the project area, subject to appropriation. Committee members questioned if existing sporting arenas could be retrofitted for this purpose rather than building a new site and questioned the Supporting testimony was presented by the

St. Charles County Convention and Sports Authority who stated the convention centers return on investment has allowed for additional economic development and they are actively seeking a location for construction of a sports facility venue. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Destination Services and a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Statute of Limitations

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by a private attorney who stated this would allow for speedier compensation for victims and help unclog the courts. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, American Tort Reform Association, Missouri Farm Bureau, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Associated Industries of Missouri, NFIB, Missouri Retailers Association, Missouri Canoe and Floater Association, Missouri Association of RV Parks & Campgrounds, Ford Motor Company, Missouri Association of Insurance Agents, Missouri Insurance Coalition and State Farm Insurance. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys who stated this would limit victim's access to the courts and does not consider long-term rehabilitation costs or future medical bills arising from the originating injury.

STL Police Retirement

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 357](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-O'Fallon). The bill strengthens the definition of "earnable compensation" to exclude any funds received through a judgment or settlement of a legal action. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

STL Sheriff

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1456](#), sponsored by Representative Phillip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill is the House companion to [SB 192](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St. Louis) and modifies provisions relating to the St. Louis City sheriff. Specifically, the bill requires any candidate for the office of sheriff of St. Louis City to hold a valid peace officer license within two years of being elected sheriff and sets the minimum compensation for the deputy sheriffs of the City of St. Louis to fifty thousand dollars. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Sunshine Law

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Tax Credit - Agricultural

The House Conservation and Natural Resources Committee convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1317](#), sponsored by Representative Willard Haley (R-Eldon), which modifies the definition of "Biodiesel blend" by changing the word "and" to "or." This change clarifies that biodiesel blends must contain at least five percent and not more than twenty percent biodiesel for use in either on-road or off-road diesel-fueled vehicles. Additionally, the Senate Committee Substitute (SCS) incorporated provisions for various tax credits, including those for wood energy, meat processing facilities, ethanol retailers, urban farm investments, and crop incentives. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill with a 19-1 vote.

Tax Credit - Amateur Sports

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss [SB 184](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpolt (R-Lee's Summit). The bill reauthorizes a tax credit that is used to attract amateur sports events that is due to sunset August 28, 2025. There is a \$6 million cap. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which allows the Department to issue the refund up to the close of the tax year. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

Tax Credit - Benevolent

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 682](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge). Currently, qualified taxpayers may take a credit equal to 50% of contributions made towards the physical revitalization, economic development, job training, or education for individuals, community services and crime prevention under the Neighborhood Assistance Act. The bill increases the credit to 75%. Additionally, currently qualified taxpayers may take a 50% tax credit for contributions made under the Youth Opportunities and Violence Prevention Tax Credit Act. The bill increases the credit to 70%. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added the Angel Investment Tax Credit. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-0 vote.

Tax Credit - Education

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 77](#), sponsored by Representative Cathy Jo Loy (R-Carthage). The bill proposes to establish the "Missouri Parental Choice Tax Credit" and authorize a tax credit equal to the minimum of the state adequacy target for education funding in the state for costs incurred by parents or guardians for expenses relating to a child's education. Additionally, the bill proposes to allow parents or guardians to claim the expenses associated with tuition, books, fees, or academic testing at public, private, homeschool programs, virtual education programs, or summer education programs, including computer software, tutoring services, and educational therapies offered in a traditional school setting. Supporting testimony was presented by a parent who stated this legislation ensures every child has access to an education which helps them thrive and provides parents with financial breathing room to prioritize their child's education. Additional supporting testimony was provided by American Federation for Children and Americans for Prosperity. Opposing testimony was presented by Families for Home Education who stated they would like homeschooling removed from the bill in its entirety as they seek to educate their children without further

state regulation and control. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri School Boards' Association, Missouri Equity Education Partnership, Family Covenant Ministries, Missouri State Teachers Association, Missouri NEA and dozens of private citizens. Informational testimony was presented by Missouri Homeschool Alliance who stated the voluntary tax credit may lead to stricter regulation of homeschool families.

Tax Credit - Jury Duty

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 223](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Schulte (R-New Bloomfield). The bill allows employers to claim up to 100% of wages paid to an employee, while that employee serves jury duty, minus any amount of compensation remitted to the employer. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Credit - Railroad

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss [SB 462](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 669](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler) and seeks to incentives shortline railroad development by creating a tax credit for eligible taxpayers to claim up to 50% for any qualified railroad track expenditures, or for new qualified rail infrastructure expenditures. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which changes the amount of tax credits for qualified new rail infrastructure expenditures authorized in a calendar year to \$5 million rather than the originally proposed \$10 million. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-1 vote.

Tax Deduction – Dependents

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 371](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove). The bill allows for a \$1,200 tax exemption for each dependent for whom a taxpayer is due, provided the federal exemption is not \$0. Supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri who stated this legislation has already passed in other states and allows for family financial planning. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Deduction – National Guard

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Deduction - Research

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by Associated Industries of Missouri who stated there are protections in place within the language to ensure companies and citizens are not able to receive double credit for tax purposes. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Elimination - Corporate

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss [SB 370](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove). The bill seeks to eliminate the corporate income tax incrementally over a period of five years, to be fully eliminated by calendar year 2030. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

Tax Elimination – Veterans

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HJR 6](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City). The resolution is the House companion to [SJR 14](#), sponsored by Senator Angela Walton Mosley (D-Florissant) and upon voter approval, the resolution exempts 100% disabled service-connected veterans and veterans that were prisoners of war, from property taxes on primary residents. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Veterans Organization and Missouri Veterans of Foreign Wars. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Supporting testimony was presented by the University of Missouri who stated they are seeking to simplify the process for the unique endowment. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Exemption - Auctioned Property

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 245](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill is Senate companion to [HB 493](#) and 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. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0-2 vote.

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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. During debate, Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho) successfully amended the bill to add provisions exempting broadband equipment from tax. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Tax Exemption - Medical Device

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by Associated Industries of Missouri who stated the Department of Revenue was supportive of the change to clarify the definition and ensure no further legislative fixes are needed for this issue. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Department of Revenue. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxation - Conservation

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HJR 94](#), sponsored by Representative Tony Harbison (R-Arcadia). Upon voter approval, this constitutional amendment reduces the conservation sales and use tax from .125% to .0625% and requires the tax to be approved by voters in 2026, 2032, and then every six years thereafter. The amendment also

repeals the Commission and Department of Conservation's ability to use the funds generated through the tax for the purchase or acquisition of property. Supporting testimony was presented by a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by a private citizen who stated Missouri's Department of Conservation is used as a national model and the general assembly needs to stop trying to interfere with their daily operations. Additional opposing testimony was provided by private citizens, the Conservation Federation of Missouri, Nature Conservancy in Missouri, Missouri Coalition for the Environment and the Missouri Parks Association. Informational testimony was presented by the Department of Conservation who stated the sales tax was enacted to allow the department to provide places for citizens to enjoy nature, fish hatcheries, shooting ranges, nature centers, education programs, research and restoration projects, wetland areas, private land assistance, lakes and stream accesses.

Taxation – Emergency Services

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 1268](#), sponsored by Representative Terri Violet (R-St Peters). This bill authorizes municipalities located within St. Louis County, as well as St. Charles, Clay, Platte, and Greene counties impose a property tax to provide fire protection services, with such tax not to exceed \$0.25 per \$100 assessed valuation. Additionally, the bill aligns ambulance districts and fire protection districts with municipalities and counties by providing them authority to impose a sales tax of up to 1.0%, or up to 0.5% for ambulance districts, to provide ambulance and fire protection services. During committee discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted to remove the inclusion of real property tax to align the provisions with current statute instead of creating new statute. Additionally, the substitute updates intersectional references. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Taxation – Private Pension

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 little debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Taxation – Recreation Sales

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxation – Short-Term Rentals

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1086](#), sponsored by Representative Chris Brown (R-Kansas City). The bill seeks to simplify taxing on short-term rentals. The bill requires that when a single family home is leased, in whole or in part, for thirty consecutive days or less, such a home will not be considered "transient

housing". The sponsor's intent with the legislation is to ensure consistency across the state with short-term rentals by ensuring assessors may not modify residential properties to commercial properties. Supporting testimony was presented by a retired veteran who stated Airbnb and VRBO allow him to make ends meet and increases in insurance and fees leave little in the way of profit. Additional supporting testimony was provided by private citizens. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Hotel and Lodging Association who stated this legislation is aimed at those who rent out properties of which they never reside and this levels the playing field. Informational testimony was presented by several private citizens.

Taxation – Solar/Wind Energy

The House Committee on Legislative Review convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [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. The bill was then referred for additional vetting. Opposing testimony was presented by the Clean Grid Alliance who stated ongoing conversations with the sponsor have been productive but there is still duplicative language within the legislation and capping the amount of land which is usable infringes on private property rights. Additional opposing testimony was presented by Azimuth Renewables and Ameren Missouri. Chairman Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia) announced his intention to vote on the bill next Tuesday and will be adding four additional utility bills to create an omnibus utility package. The bills to be included are:

- [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,
- [HB1263](#), requires wind energy systems to apply to the FAA for light-mitigating technology.

Teacher Externships

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 267](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). The bill reauthorizes an expired program allowing teachers to gain practical experience in business and fields outside of teaching as part of a graduate-level salary schedule, with the supervision and approval of their local school district. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 142-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Telehealth Services

The House took up and dedicated floor time to Tuesday to debate [HB 825](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). The bills are identical and modify the definition of "telehealth services" to include audiovisual and audio only services and expands which third-party platforms "telehealth services" may be provided. There was little debate before the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, after little debate, Third Read and Passed by a 150-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Time-Limited Demands

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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 a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. On Thursday, the bill was revisited and, with little further debate, Third Read and Passed by a 96-52 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Trespass Liability - Livestock

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [HB 1116](#), sponsored by Representative Kent Haden (R-Mexico). This bill allows property owners or their contractors to enter up to 10 feet onto adjoining property to construct, maintain, or repair a division fence enclosing animals. They are not liable for clearing trees or vegetation within this boundary but are responsible for any damages caused, such as harm to crops. The bill does not apply to properties owned by utilities, railroads, or certain wildlife facilities, nor does it permit entry into buildings on adjoining property. After little debate, the House Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 91-31 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

Tutoring Programs

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [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. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Underground Facilities

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [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. The sponsor informed committee members that he plans to offer a Senate Committee Substitute to carve out sewer lines. Supporting testimony was presented by Tweehouse Excavating, MO 8-1-1, and the American Council of Engineering Companies. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Utility Customer Charges

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1178](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Banderman (R-St. Clair). The bill prohibits a utility company from charging more than one customer charge per postal address, however a utility can charge more than one charge for up to 12 months following the installation of a new meter. The sponsor stated the bill is still a

work in progress and the intent is to limit the ability of a utility to charge additional meter fees for the same physical address. Opposing testimony was provided by MPUA, Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities, Howard Electric Cooperative, Evergy, Missouri Natural Gas Association, Liberty Utilities, and Ameren Missouri who noted the definition of municipal utilities and customer charges need to be defined. Additionally, it was noted that rates are fixed and determined through rate cases. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Utility Relocation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday to debate [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 debate, the sponsor successfully amended the bill to correct a spelling error. After a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [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 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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Cable Association who stated nonrate regulated utilities should not be subject to unanticipated, unplanned costs due to government decisions relating to right-of-way projects and highlighted businesses do not have a say in the projects therefore private businesses should not be responsible for covering costs for government decisions. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Broadband Providers Association, AT&T, Associated Industries of Missouri, Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives, Gateway Fiber and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who highlighted that the bill would require taxpayers to cover the costs. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis, Public Works Director of Cole County, City of Lee's Summit, and the City of Columbia. Informational testimony was presented by MoDOT who stated that along the state's highways there is a utility corridor in which all utilities are allowed free access with the requirement being that if roadway adjustments are necessary that cost is borne by them.

Voter Registration Forms

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 280](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). Current law requires all applicants for a driver's license to be provided a voter registration application form simultaneously during the transaction. The bill requires the Division of Motor Vehicle and Driver Licensing within the Department of Revenue to additionally determine whether an applicant for a driver's license has the requisite proof of citizenship needed to register to vote. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities who stated the language within the bill needs to be clarified is there is a current mechanism to verify status but it is complex and needs to be

adjusted. Informational testimony was presented by the Office of the Secretary of State who stated this would simply codify existing policies and allow for easier communication between departments.

Voting Rights

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Wednesday evening to discuss 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 discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted to provide clarity in the definitions and remove the references to misdemeanors. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Water Projects - Therapeutic

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [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. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Water Usage

The House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 545](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill relates to water usage and says user information provided by a user using at least 100,000 gallons of water a day to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources' Geological Survey Division is confidential and cannot be released by the Division to the public or disclosed in response to a records request. The sponsor informed the committee a House Committee Substitute would be forthcoming to align the language with [SB 157](#), the Senate companion bill. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Soybean Association who stated narrowing the information which can be released may encourage more farmers to participate in reporting water usage which can be helpful in determining future water tables. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Farm Bureau and the Missouri Corn Growers Association. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Press Association who stated this erodes the purpose of the Missouri Sunshine laws and decreases transparency. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment and Liberty Link.

Waterways and Ports Trust Fund

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [SB 125](#), sponsored by Senator Steve Roberts (D-St. Louis). In 2023, [SB 265](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb) was passed and signed into law. The bill established the "Waterways and Ports Trust Fund," and provided that land eligible for projects under the fund be owned or held in a long-term lease by the Missouri Port Authority. Due to the way current law is worded, the St. Louis Port Authority is unable to receive funds from the trust fund because it manages property owned by the City of St. Louis, rather than leasing or owning it outright. This bill makes a simple change in the law to include property owned by the City of St. Louis and managed by a Missouri port authority. Additionally, the bill includes language to require

that in order for funds to be spent out of the Fund, they must first be requested by a Missouri port authority for a statutorily permitted port purpose, as intended. After a brief debate, the Senate Third Read and Passed the bill with consent status by a 30-0 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

Workers' Compensation

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday to debate [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 debate, 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. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote.

Youth Home Oversight

The Senate Families, Seniors and Health Committee convened Wednesday for a public hearing on [SB 525](#), sponsored by Senator Adam Schnelting (St. Charles). The bill allows child care facilities to register with a qualified association instead of obtaining a license, provided they meet safety and screening requirements. It establishes the "Child Protection Board" to oversee compliance, review abuse cases, and ensures the Department can revoke registrations for violations. The bill also mandates written contracts between facilities and parents and requires background checks for employees.

Supporting testimony was provided by Show Me Christian Youth Home, Shiloh Christian Children's Ranch, a foster mother and foster parent instructor, and two former fosters at Show Me Christian Youth Home. The witnesses stated that the bill offers a solution to Missouri's foster care crisis by providing additional protections for children through a public-private partnership. They emphasized that the bill allows religious children's homes to participate while maintaining religious exemptions, with oversight from a governor-appointed citizen board and the Child Protection Board. They believe the bill will help provide stable, loving homes for children in the overburdened system and elevate standards for homes with religious exemptions, ensuring extra oversight. Opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Children's Trust Fund. The witness stated that boards often lack members who actively engage in their duties, adding unnecessary layers of risk. They argued that replacing licensure with registration is unsafe and that maintaining licensure is necessary as a safety measure for vulnerable individuals.

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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