



CAPITOL REPORT – WEEK 4

JANUARY 31, 2025

Weekly Overview: This week Governor Mike Kehoe addressed a joint session of the Missouri General Assembly and delivered his first State of the State address. “Securing Missouri’s Future” was the theme as he rolled out his state budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2026. The details of the nearly \$53 billion budget may be found later in this report. Both the House and Senate had numerous public hearings this week as members continue to push their legislative priorities forward. Despite all this activity, neither body has placed any legislation on its bill calendar, an event that must take place before the full body can debate and amend the legislation. We expect this to happen in the next week or two. And then session will be in full swing.

In the News...

- On Monday, the Office of Management and Budget ordered a total freeze on “all federal financial assistance” programs that have possibly been affected by President Donald Trump’s Executive Orders. These programs include domestic infrastructure and energy projects to diversity-related programs and a 90-day freeze on foreign aid with exceptions being made for Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, student loans and direct benefits. After widespread confusion and dozens of legal challenges the memo freezing spending on federal grants was rescinded.
- The Western District Court of Appeals ruled on Tuesday the Attorney General’s Office did not violate the Missouri Sunshine Law when it refused to turn over records showing how it fulfilled a request. In a split-decision, a three-judge panel ruled the office reasonably concluded the records being sought by St. Louis attorney Elad Gross were exempt from disclosure because of his threatened litigation. Gross was seeking records about then-Attorney General Eric Schmitt’s participation in a U.S. Supreme Court case seeking to overturn the 2020 presidential election.
- Demolition has begun on the Lakewood Resort Timeshares which is the next step for Osage Beach’s \$500 million Oasis at Lakeport project. This will open access to the area’s power grid and allow for construction of a parking garage. The plans include amusement park rides, an indoor water park and a Marriot Hotel. The demolition is expected to take about six weeks and the park will have a soft opening at the end of the year with a full opening at the beginning of 2026.

Budget Update

Governor Mike Kehoe released his Fiscal Year 2026 Executive Operating Budget on Tuesday afternoon after presenting the State of the State to the General Assembly. The \$52.8 billion FY26 budget includes a total of \$3.99 billion in discretionary funds. Under Governor Kehoe’s plan the state will still retain a \$1.5 billion surplus left from the FY’25 budget. Individual income taxes

continues as the highest source of revenue for the state at 58.5% of the state's total \$13.6 billion in general revenue and FY'26 is expected to see a 1.6% increase in collections.

Governor Kehoe's budget is focused on seven key areas: public safety, economic development, agriculture, education, healthcare and mental health, veterans and military services and government. The budget contains increased funding for law enforcement recruitment and retention efforts and asks the General Assembly to increase oversight and accountability of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department. Additionally, the budget prioritizes improvements and expansions in early childhood programs and an historic investment in expanding school choice. Finally, the budget contains support for improving healthcare access and outcomes and support for agriculture producers. It also includes a 1% pay increase for every two years of continual employment for public employees.

Both the House Budget and the Senate Appropriations Committees have begun hearings to review the FY25 Supplemental Budget, which has been requested by Budget Director Dan Haug to be passed by March 14th, and the Governor's recommendations. The next few weeks will see the House Budget Committee begin to craft their recommendations as the various departments walk veteran and new committee members through their requests and New Decision Items (NDIs).

Executive Activity

Along with delivering the State of the State, Governor Mike Kehoe issued a series of Executive Orders this week focusing on education. Please find a brief description and links to the full orders below.

[Executive Order 25-14](#): Establishes the Missouri School Funding Modernization Task Force to develop recommendations for potential state funding models for K-12 education.

[Executive Order 25-15](#): Orders the Office of Childhood within the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to improve the state regulatory environment for childcare facilities and homes.

[Executive Order 25-16](#): Establishes the Governor's Workforce of the Future Challenge for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, with the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development, to improve existing career and technical education delivery systems.

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Ballot Language

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 22](#), sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Lee’s Summit). The bill prohibits the court from re-writing summary statements on joint resolutions, constitutional amendments or statutory language which requires a vote of the people if an official summary statement is submitted by the General Assembly. Additionally, in the event a summary statement is challenged in court, only the Secretary of State may re-write the summary statement, if the General Assembly does not pass a resolution six weeks before the election. Supporting testimony was provided by Campaign Life Missouri who stated a single county’s judges are re-writing ballot language for statewide issues and language should be re-written by an elected statewide official. Additional supporting testimony was provided by

Missouri Right to Life, ArmorVine and FGA Action. Jobs with Justice Voter Action provided opposing testimony stating ballot summaries are meant to be fair and impartial and past Secretaries of States have written summaries that have deep political slants. Additional opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, Missouri ACLU, League of Women Voters of Missouri, Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities and a private citizen.

Building Codes

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 939](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Jones (R-Kansas City). The bill prohibits counties and municipalities from enacting any ordinance, regulation or other policies that requires owners, builders or developers to implement green energy efficiency building design and construction practices for family dwellings if it threatens the affordability of the construction, maintenance repair or renovation. The sponsor stated these ordinances remove consumer choice and increases the cost of construction projects. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who expressed concern with the state becoming involved in a matter that is best dealt with at the local level and repealing an ordinance is easier at the local level than changing a statute at the state level. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Sierra Club and the American Institute of Architects- Missouri. Supporting testimony was presented by Ashlar Homes who stated the increase in the cost of homes over the last ten years has been due to building code changes and this legislation could lead to more citizens finding more affordable homes. Additional supporting testimony was provided by homebuilders, the Homebuilders Association of Greater Kansas City, the St. Louis Home Builders Association, the Homebuilders Association of Central Missouri, Mortgage Bankers Association of Missouri, Missouri Realtors Association and Missouri Bankers Association.

Child Protection

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 486](#), sponsored by Representative Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters). This bill requires the Children's Division to place into trust any benefits administered by the Railroad Retirement Board, the Social Security Administration, or the Veterans Administration and to assist children in state custody with applying for and receiving such benefits within 60 days after placement into custody. Additionally, the bill requires the Children's Division to attempt to place foster children within a home of the same faith and modifies the abuse and neglect statutes to clearly define independent activities do not constitute abuse. Supporting testimony was provided by Family Forward, Kids Win Missouri, Jewish Federation of St. Louis, National Association of Social Workers Missouri Chapter, Foster Adopt Connect and Missouri Coalition for Children. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Additionally, the committee moved to discuss passage of [HB 737](#), sponsored by Representative Melissa Schmidt (R-Eldridge). The bill requires the Children's Division to place into trust any benefits administered by the Railroad Retirement Board, the Social Security Administration, or the Veterans Administration and to assist children in state custody with applying for and receiving such benefits within 60 days after placement into custody. Additionally, the bill requires the Children's Division to attempt to place foster children within a home of the same faith and modifies the abuse and neglect statutes to clearly define independent activities do not constitute abuse. During discussion, substitute language was adopted which added HB 486, highlighted above. Additionally, the word "child" was changed to "youth" in order to broaden the opportunities that may be available and gives the Department

the ability to contract outside of state government for staffing purposes. The substitute bill passed out of Committee.

Child Protection Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 83](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill modifies several provisions relating to child protection. Specifically, the bill modifies the "Champion for Children" tax credit by increasing the amount that can be claimed to 70%; allows homeless children to obtain copies of vital documents free of charge; adds APRNs and Physician Assistants to the list SAFE CARE providers; and raises the age of admissibility of certain evidence from 14 to 18. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Network Against Child Abuse who stated Child Advocacy Centers are non-profit organizations and to conduct forensic exams on victims of child abuse is difficult as collaborative practice arrangements often do not allow physicians to contract with APRNs who a part of their hospital system and rural areas are already experiencing a shortage of physicians who may perform these exams. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Kids Win Missouri, Southeast Missouri Network Against Sexual Violence, Child Advocacy Center of Northeast Missouri, Missouri Prosecutors Association, Missouri Juvenile Justice Association, Missouri Court Appointed Special Advocates Association, Capital City Court Appointed Special Advocates and Foster Adopt Connect. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri State Medical Association and stated their opposition is strictly regarding the expansion of scope of practice for APRNs and Physician Assistants contained within the bill.

The committee then turned its attention to a public hearing for [SB 43](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) to establish a comprehensive system of service delivery, education, and residential care for youth with severe behavioral challenges or severe developmental disabilities. The bill allows DSS to contract with qualified providers and enter into memorandums of understanding with any state-run facilities that meet the needed care requirements. Additionally, the bill requires a judge to appoint a child's counsel rather than a Guardian Ad Litem for certain proceedings for children aged 14 but under age 18. Finally, the bill creates the "Child and Family Legal Representation Coordinating Board" within the Missouri Supreme Court, with nine members appointed by the Supreme Court to ensure uniform, high-quality legal representation for children or families and make any training recommendations deemed necessary. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Coalition for Children who stated this was a step forward to address the high acuity needs of children within the foster care system. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Children's Permanency Partnership, Center for Rights of Abused Children, Brightly, Burrell Behavioral Health, Family Forward, BJC Healthcare, Missouri Appleseed, Missouri Juvenile Justice Association and Foster Adopt Connect. Opposing testimony was presented by an attorney who represents a group of family attorneys, former judges and mental health professionals who stated they have concerns regarding the source of the funding for the program and the mandate that judges appoint counsel for children aged 14.

Childcare Complaint Records

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 339](#), sponsored by Representative Ann Kelley (R-Lamar). Currently, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is required to keep a record of substantiated complaints against licensed childcare facilities. The bill prohibits DESE from releasing information to the public about

those who make complaints. Supporting testimony was provided by private citizens. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Childcare Facility Licensure

The House Committee on Professional Registration convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 482](#), sponsored by Representative Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters), [HB 53](#), sponsored by Representative Willard Haley (R-Eldon) and [HB 850](#), sponsored by Representative Melissa Schmidt (R-Eldridge). The bills are similar and allow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to grant a temporary childcare license, that will be valid for up to 12 months, to a provider upon submission of a completed application. Additionally, the bills would allow the provider to expand an existing site or add a new location, provided a fire-safety and sanitation inspection has been submitted. The sponsors' intent with the legislation is to streamline the process and expand access to childcare providers. Supporting testimony was presented by Jordan Valley Community Health Center who stated they are currently attempting to expand their program offerings but have been unable to do so due to regulatory issues and this would allow childcare centers to continue to expand their programming. Additional supporting testimony was provided by WonderSchool, Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs, YMCA of St. Joseph, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Ozarks Regional YMCA, Kids Win Missouri and Gateway Regional YMCA. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate who stated this could potentially harm children.

Class Action Lawsuit Modifications

The Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 47](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). The bill modifies current Supreme Court Rule 52.08 to mirror the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Specifically, the bill seeks to address the definition of "class," the timing of certification of lawsuits and updating the notification process to include electronic means. During discussion, substitute language was adopted which made formatting changes throughout the bill, modified language to conform Missouri court rules to Federal court rules and removed the provision regarding findings by the court in cases tried without a jury or without an advisory jury. Once modified, the bill was passed by a 5-2 vote.

County Planning Board Notices

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

Earnable Compensation

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 147](#), sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater). The bill modifies the current definition of "earnable compensation" for the St. Louis Police Retirement System. The bill requires that such compensation shall not include funds received by a member through a judgment or settlement of a legal action if such funds are intended to retroactively compensate for a salary differential between the member's actual rank and the rank such member claims he or she should have received. Supporting

testimony was presented by the St. Louis Police Retirement System who stated the retirement system is not a part of the City of St. Louis and when lawsuits arise and are settled by the City, the retirement system is not made whole. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Election Official Tampering

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 84](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill creates the offense of tampering with an election official. The bill specifies if a person threatens to harm or engages in conduct reasonably calculated to harass, alarm or stalk an election official or a member of one's family, it is a class one election offense. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities who stated this has become necessary as the amount of threats directed at election officials have skyrocketed and the amount of election authorities leaving their posts have increased as well. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the St. Charles County Election Authority, Office of Secretary of State – Division of Election Integrity, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, League of Women Voters of Missouri, Missouri Association of Counties, Secure Democracy USA, Secure Elections Project and a private citizen. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated this is a Democratic concept and should not have been brought by a Republican Senator. Additional opposing testimony was presented by a private citizen.

Electrical Utilities Construction

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 853](#) sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville) and [HB 963](#) sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bills are similar and authorize electrical corporations to include in the corporations' rate bases any amounts recorded to construction work in progress for any new natural gas generating unit, as determined by the Public Service Commission ("PSC"), with a sunset of December 31, 2025 on these provisions with the potential for the PSC to extend through December 31, 2045. Additionally, the bills permit the PSC to require electrical corporations to provide documentation annually its plan to meet its capacity obligations for the upcoming planning year and the three subsequent planning years, with provisions in case an electrical corporation fails to have the required future capacity. Finally, the bills also contain provisions regarding integrated resource planning proceedings for electrical corporations. Committee discussion centered on the construction work in progress provisions. Supporting testimony was provided by the Public Service Commission Chair Kayla Hahn who provided information on specific terms, potential applications of the terms, and history of the construction work in progress concept in Missouri. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Evergy, Ameren Missouri, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Civic Council of Kansas City, Missouri Economic Development Council and Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Opposing testimony was provided by the Consumers Council of Missouri who stated the bills create a potential for higher costs for consumers and wasteful spending by utilities. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers, Midwest Energy Consumers Group, AARP, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Missouri Sierra Club and Renew Missouri. potential higher costs for consumers and wasteful spending by utilities. Informational testimony was provided by the Director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development who noted that a large amount of Missouri's job growth currently is in manufacturing and that companies looking to potentially locate here are looking most at energy availability. Additionally, the director informed the committee that the amount of energy demand per project has risen dramatically in recent years and that we are in a "race for resources."

Emergency Medical Services

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 7](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). The bill requires ambulance district boards of directors to complete three hours of continuing education for each term of office and a 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. The sponsor said the intent of the bill is to ensure quality ambulance services throughout the state. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Ambulance Association who stated that there are some pockets of the state that struggle to provide these services and they do not want them to depend on mutual aid unless it is a major crisis. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Ambulance Association board members and the Ambulance District Association of Missouri. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate who stated the amount of training for the ambulance board members was not sufficient.

Entrepreneur's Rights Act

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 546](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Verneti (R-Camdenton). The bill creates the "Entrepreneur's Rights Act" and exempts employees and employers that are a "small business" or a "seasonal business" from the minimum wage increase and paid time leave, with the exception of Federal laws. Additionally, the bill defines "small business" and "seasonal business." Finally, the bill requires these businesses to comply with all remaining provisions of the Minimum Wage Law. The sponsor stated Missouri has seen an 80% increase in the minimum wage standard since 2015 and the cost of living has only increased 33% since 2015. Opposing testimony was presented by Jobs with Justice Voter Action who stated the greater employees are treated the better the growth opportunities for businesses develop. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Restaurant Association who stated this legislation would be necessary to ensure the sustainability of small businesses in Missouri and believe the definition of small business should be defined as a business with less than \$10 million in annual sales and be exempt from the sick pay requirements of Proposition A. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Top Dog USA, Missouri Canoe and Floaters Association, Missouri Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds, Missouri Grocers Association, Missouri Retailers Association and NFIB.

Expungement of Records

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 19](#), sponsored by Senator Brian Williams (D-St. Louis). The bill further modifies existing provision relating to expungement by offering those eligible for expungement to have a "clean slate" without having to file a petition. Additionally, the bill provides that the Office of State Court Administrators provide a report to the General Assembly of the number of expungements, give notification of records to be expunged to the presiding judges of every circuit court and the courts shall order the expungement of all records eligible for expungement. Finally, the bill directs the Highway Patrol to keep nonpublic records of expungement available to certain entities. Supporting testimony was presented by Empower Missouri who stated the criminal justice system was not designed to punish citizens in perpetuity and this legislation would allow those who are eligible for expungement would have their records cleaned more quickly than the current cumbersome process allows. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Missouri NAACP, Missouri Appleseed, Gethsemane Lutheran Church, Missouri Catholic Conference, Missouri

Workers Center, Women's Voices Raised for Social Justice, Metropolitan Congregations United, Dream.org, Criminal Justice Ministry and All of US or None. Opposing testimony was presented by the Supreme Court Judicial Conference of Missouri who stated they are concerned their resources are not adequate or that the timeframe is adequate to implement the legislation as written. Informational testimony was presented by the Greene County Circuit Clerk who gave committee members information regarding the difficulties in processing expungements for marijuana charges.

Farm Bureau Health Plans

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 79](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill provides the 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. The sponsor informed committee members that this language has already been passed in six other states and the Tennessee Farm Bureau health plan premiums can be as much as 70% lower than other insurance plans. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Farm Bureau who stated that they support additional insurance coverage options for members. Additionally, the bill provides solutions for rural Missourians and the plan is projected that it will be 30% less cost than Affordable Care Act plans. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Farm Bureau Health Plans of Tennessee, the Caldwell County Farm Bureau President, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Corn Growers Association, FGA Action, Missouri Dairy, Missouri Association of Nurse Anesthetists, Association of Missouri Electric Co-Ops and several Missouri farmers. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Insurance Coalition who stated that there is nothing in the bill that provides regulatory authority over the plans that are being offered, the bill as currently written authorizes the sale of unregulated health products, expressed concern that the bill could potentially expose people to medical and financial harm and discriminates against those. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the American Cancer Society Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Kansas City, and a private citizen. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Hospital Association who stated this is a very challenging issue and the Association has received positive feedback from the Tennessee Hospital, but they, to date, remain neutral on the issue.

Financial Statements

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning 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 Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities, Missouri Association of County Auditors, Missouri Municipal League, Missouri Association of Counties, Missouri Press Association and Municipal League of Metro St. Louis. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Hazing

The Senate Committee on Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 167](#), sponsored by Senator Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). The bill provides a person who takes the initiative to call 911 when someone is need of immediate medical

assistance shall not be found guilty of the offense of hazing. Additionally, the bill provides immunity for the person who remains at the scene until medical assistance arrives, and to the person who rendered aid to the hazing victim before assistance arrived. Supporting testimony was presented by David Bianchi, attorney for Danny Santulli and Bob Selsor, an attorney in Missouri who stated the legislation is necessary to ease the fear of students who are afraid to call for assistance in these hazing acts because they believe they will be arrested or worse. There have been more than 90 reports of freshmen subjected to hazing even though there are hazing laws in place, as well as hazing policies for fraternities on college campuses. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

HB 1606 Fix – County Officials

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 1](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill includes several provisions relating to county officials. Specifically, the bill allows county corners that fill the slot of sheriffs to receive that salary, allows salary commissions to amend the base salary schedule, allows county collectors to conduct tax sales via electronic media, allows county auditors to audit and examine claims, excludes the Boone County sheriff from the current salary schedule, and changes statutes concerning public administrators. There was little discussion before the committee passed the bill by a 7-1 vote, with Senator Joe Nicola (R-Grain Valley) being the “no” vote.

HB 1606 Fix - Financial Statements

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 2](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill allows certain counties to file abbreviated financial statements and requires publishers to charge market rates for this publication. Additionally, the bill allows for a one-time fine forgiveness program for cities and counties that fail to timely file financial statements. During the committee discussion, Senator Joe Nicola (R-Grain Valley) offered an amendment, which failed by voice vote, and would have struck the “gender identifying” language from the entirety of the bill. The committee then passed the bill by an 8-0 vote.

Health Care Omnibus

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 943](#), sponsored by Representative Tara Peters (R-Rolla). The bill modifies numerous provisions regarding health care, including: ambulance district boards of directors training; ambulance district audits; community paramedic certification; modifying the membership of the State Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services; ambulance licenses; treatment of sexually transmitted infections; limits on the sale of over-the-counter drugs; the administration of medication for long-term care facilities; coverage by MO HealthNet for hearing aids; prenatal tests for certain diseases; modification of the practice of dentistry in correctional centers; and the administration of certain vaccines. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Ambulance Association, the Missouri Speech, Language and Hearing Association, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence, Haleon, Missouri Healthcare Association, Lion Health System, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, NTA Ambulance, Missouri Pharmacy Association, Ambulance District Association of Missouri, VOICE advocacy group, Linn County Ambulance District and the Missouri Nurses Association. Supporters were varied in the provisions of which they were in favor and urged the committee to not add additional provisions to the bill as all the provisions contained have been vetted and agreed upon. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Hearing Aid/Cochlear Device Coverage

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 469](#), sponsored by Representative Jo Doll and [HB 177](#), sponsored by Representative Cameron Parker. The bills are identical and require MO HealthNet to cover the cost of hearing aids and cochlear implants. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Speech Language Hearing Association who stated the ability to hear and communication is not only critical to treating a person's hearing loss, but through the use of hearing aids and cochlear implants, can reduce a risk for falls, cognitive decline and improves mental health. Additional supporting testimony was presented by several audiologists, SSM Healthcare and Empower Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy

The House Committee on Veterans and Armed Forces convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 262](#), sponsored by Representative Chris Brown (R-Kansas City). The bill establishes the Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act, which creates a fund to reimburse facilities that provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy to veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury, and it is to be used to conduct studies on the use of alternative therapies for these conditions. During the sponsor's bill presentation he stated pre-clinical and clinical trials have shown that hyperbaric oxygen therapy can induce neuroplasticity and improve clinical outcomes of veterans with treatment-resistant PTSD. The biological effects of hyperbaric oxygen therapy include improved mitochondrial function, stem cell proliferation, angiogenesis, and neurogenesis. Supporting testimony was presented by a retired Master Sergeant United States Air Force who stated modern warfare has led to an increase in blunt force trauma injuries for service members and current treatments only treat the symptoms and not the underlying cause. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a chiropractor and other retired service members. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Illegal Aliens

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a lengthy public hearing on [SB 58](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). The bill creates the "Interstate Compact for Border Security Act" which allows Missouri to negotiate and assist other states in an interstate compact for border security among interested states. Additionally, the bill creates the offense of property entry by an alien and creates the offense of aggravated illegal presence. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, Missouri Sheriffs United, the Newton County Sheriff, who stated this would be another tool to assist federal law enforcement agencies. Opposing testimony was presented by the Hispanic Leaders Group who stated legislation like this only breeds fear in communities and states should not be using tax dollars redundantly as this issue is already being addressed at the federal level. Additional opposing testimony was presented by immigration attorneys, Missouri Catholic Conference, Immigrant Home English Learning, Missouri Catholic Conference, City of St. Louis, Hispanic and Latina Law Students Association, the ACLU of Missouri, Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation, private citizens, business owners and Start At Zero.

The committee then turned its attention to a public hearing on [SB 72](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-St. Louis). The bill creates the "Missouri Illegal Alien Certified Bounty Hunter Program Fund" which will be utilized to reward any person who reports illegal immigrants to a state reporting

portal. Additionally, the bill creates the offense of trespass by an illegal alien and, if found guilty, will be prohibited from voting in elections, receiving a permit or license to drive, receiving public benefits and becoming a legal resident of Missouri. Supporting testimony was presented by the Coalition of Jewish Values who stated the principals of justice, law and order are necessary for a society to thrive. Opposing testimony was presented by an immigration attorney who stated federal ICE agents are not currently giving rewards for tips on illegal aliens. Additional opposing testimony was presented by the International Institute of St. Louis, Missouri Catholic Conference, Immigrant English Learning Program, International Institute of St. Louis, City of St. Louis, the ACLU of Missouri, Advocates for Immigrant Rights and Reconciliation, Kansas Missouri Dream Alliance, Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation and dozens of private citizens.

Income Tax Elimination

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 425](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Verneti (R-Camden). The bill seeks to eliminate corporate income tax, which generates around \$909 million per year in general revenue. During committee discussion, substitute language was adopted to ensure that banks are provided a proportional rate reduction since they currently pay a corporate tax rate and a financial institutions tax. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-3 vote.

Intoxicating Cannabinoids Control Act

The House Committee on Crime and Public Safety convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 593](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). The bill establishes the “Intoxicating Cannabinoid Control Act”, which provides specific definitions critical to the regulation of “intoxicating cannabinoids”. Additionally, the bill requires that all products containing intoxicating cannabinoids be classified and regulated as marijuana under Article XIV of the Missouri Constitution. Finally, the bill adds penalty provisions for state agencies, state employees and dispensaries who disclose any personally identifying information or who create or retain any record containing a consumer’s identifying information. The sponsor stated the intent of the legislation is to regulate the stream of products derived from hemp which are readily available to minors without regulation or lab testing. Supporting testimony was provided by MOCannTrade who stated non-regulated products pose a danger to minors and this legislation would align state statutes with federal regulations on hemp. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Elevate Cannabis. Opposing testimony was provided by hemp farmers who stated they have been self-regulating due to the lack of legislative action on hemp regulations. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the MoHemp Trade Association and CBD Kratom.

Law Enforcement Practices

The House Committee on Crime and Public Safety convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 225](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Myers (R-Warrenton). The bill allows the chief law enforcement executive jurisdiction to request assistance from another jurisdiction, including a jurisdiction outside of the State of Missouri. The sponsor’s intention with the legislation is to provide law enforcement simply another tool in their toolbox to respond to incidents and provide additional resources at a time when many departments are struggling with severe shortages. Supporting testimony was presented by the Metro Chiefs and Sheriffs Association who stated this would simply allow law enforcement agencies statewide to request additional assistance as needed, particularly with the FIFA

World Cup coming to Kansas City. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Park Rangers of St. Louis County. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then went into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. Committee members expressed concerns with a provision contained in the bill allowing law enforcement to drive with excessive speed under special circumstances. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-4 vote.

License Fee Offices

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 3](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffer). 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. The sponsor stated the intent of the legislation is to increase access in rural areas. Supporting testimony was presented by York Management Group who stated small license fee offices represent a vital role in how citizens may access critical government services in a convenient and reliable manner. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Licensing Offices. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate who stated the increased fee is unneeded and unwarranted.

Military Personnel In-State Tuition

The House Committee on Veterans and Armed Forces convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 419](#), sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The bill clarifies that certain military service personnel, their spouses, and their unemancipated children under 24, Missouri National Guard members, and any individuals serving in the reserves, be considered Missouri residents for the purposes of any undergraduate or graduate degree program in Missouri institutions of higher education. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Missouri CROWN Act

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday for a public hearing on [SB 38](#), sponsored by Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas City). The bill creates the Missouri CROWN Act governing discriminatory practices relating to protective hairstyles. The sponsor stated that people should not be treated differently when they wear their hair in its natural form, especially children in school wanting to play sports and participate in other school-related activities. Supporting testimony was presented by military veterans, the City of St. Louis, and the National Association of Social Workers – MO Chapter. Supporters stated this is about basic respect for children in an educational setting and that no child should be judged or bullied over their hair. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

MOSERS Overpayments

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 735](#), sponsored by Representative Dirk Deaton (R-Seneca) and [HB 686](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Steinmeyer (R-Sugar Creek). The bills are identical and authorizes a methodology for the Board of Trustees of the Missouri State Employees’ Retirement System (MOSERS) to recover overpayments

made in error to beneficiaries. Additionally, the bill reinstates the deadline for a member to determine if they would like to receive their retirement benefits in a lump sum in lieu of annuity. Finally, the bill prohibits MOSERS to expend any funds to support or oppose ballot measures or candidates for public office. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri State Employees' Retirement System and MOSERS who stated Missouri state law is more restrictive than other states.

Motor Vehicle Assessments

The House Committee on Ways and Means Committee convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 349](#), sponsored by Renee Reuter (R-Imperial). Currently, vehicles that are less than two years old, a county assessor may use a value other than the average trade-in value without performing a physical inspection. The bill clarifies that the true value of motor vehicles is equal to but not higher than, the trade-in value. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri State Assessors Association and the Boone County Assessor who stated that removing the value on vehicles that are two years or newer could pose a problem for county assessors. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then turned its attention to a public hearing on [HB 816](#), sponsored by Representative Rodger Reedy (R-Windsor). Currently, county assessors must use the October issue of the National Automobile dealers' Association Official Used Car Guide to determine the true value of a motor vehicle. The bill requires that the county assessor determine the true value for motor vehicles by using the trade-in value published in the October issue of a nationally recognized automotive trade publication selected by the State Tax Commission. Supporting testimony was presented by the Boone County Assessor, Greene County Assessor, Missouri State Assessors Association, the Missouri Association of Counties, Missouri Farm Bureau, the State Tax Commission, Missouri Municipal League and the Missouri County Collectors Association supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Motor Vehicle Registrations

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 246](#), sponsored by Representative Bob Bromley (R-Carl Junction). The bill would allow individuals to obtain a two-year registration on their vehicle. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then turned its attention to a public hearing for [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. Committee members expressed concerns regarding the types of vehicles this may apply to and could result in unpaid property taxes. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Motor Vehicle Safety Inspections

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 424](#), sponsored by Representative Christopher Warwick (R-Bolivar) and [HB 799](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bills are identical. Currently, safety inspections are not required for registration of vehicles which have less than 150,000 miles for the 10 year period following the year of the model of manufacture. The bill changes that exemption to vehicles with less than 150,000 miles and are model year 2012 or newer. Committee members expressed concerns over the lack of

inspections and its impacts on safety. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Motor Vehicle Unlawful Entry

The House Committee on Crime Prevention convened Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 117](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill creates the offense of unlawfully gaining entry into a motor vehicle, which a person commits if he or she lifts the door handles or otherwise tries the doors and locks of successive vehicles in an attempt to gain entry. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then went into executive session to discuss passage of the bill. During discussion, language was adopted which modifies provisions regarding the ignition interlock device usage for alcohol related offenses. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 15-2 vote.

No Call List/Caller ID Anti-Spoofing Act

The House Committee on Utilities convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 509](#) sponsored by Representative Travis Wilson (R-St. Charles) and [HB 564](#) sponsored by Representative Mitch Boggs (R-LaRussell). The bills are almost identical, with the only difference being the proposed penalties for violations of the terms of the bills. The bills add business subscribers to the No-Call List and specify that a person does not have to renew his or her objection to receiving solicitations. The bills also establish the "Caller ID Anti-Spoofing Act" which creates the offense of caller identification spoofing. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Bankers Association who stated banks are often the target of spoofing to gain access to account holder information. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Open Enrollment and Nonresident Transfers

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee convened Wednesday morning to consider public testimony on HB 711, sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bill allows nonresident pupils to enroll in public schools in the state with certain conditions and outlines the procedures and policies necessary to allow students to transfer between nonresident school districts. Specifically, the legislation would allow students to leave their resident school district to enroll in adjoining districts that opt into the open enrollment program, for a total of up to 3% of the district's student population in the previous year. Transportation would be parents' responsibility, unless the child qualifies for free or reduced lunch or has transportation under an individualized education plan. The bill also establishes the "Parent Public School Choice Fund" to compensate districts for the costs associated with transporting students with specialized needs and requires at least \$80 million to be appropriated into the fund. Finally, the bill prohibits a transferring nonresident student from participating in varsity athletics for at least 365 days and allows any student to participate in open enrollment as long as the transfer does not cause the district to conflict with a provision of an enforceable desegregation court ordered or a court approved desegregation plan. Aligned, Yes Every Kid, Excel in Ed, and the Century Foundation testified in support of the bill saying it would improve access to better educational opportunities for more Missouri families. The Missouri NEA, Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City, ArmorVine, Missouri State Teachers Association, Kansas City Public School District, North Kansas City School District, and American Federation of Teachers testified against the bill saying it would harm school districts and would not improve outcomes for students. St. Louis Language Immersion Academy and the Missouri Charter Public School Association testified for informational

purposes encouraging the committee to include charter schools in the eligibility for nonresident student transfer.

Opioid Alternative Coverage

The House Committee on Insurance convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 804](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). The bill bars health benefit plans from denying coverage for non-opioid drugs in favor of opioids for patients with a higher risk for opioid abuse. Additionally, health benefit plans cannot require patients to try an opioid drug before covering the non-opioid prescription drug or require a higher level of cost-sharing for a non-opioid prescription drug than for an opioid drug. Supporting testimony was presented by BJC Healthcare, Cox Healthcare, Burrell Behavioral Health, Jewish Federation of St. Louis who stated this would allow for the treatment of pain without the unwanted side effects opioids can produce for some patients. Opposing testimony was presented by Americas Health Insurance Plans who stated there are no physicians out there who will not place in electronic medical records a patient's request that opioids not be prescribed and the bill would limit a health benefit plan's prior authorization process. Additional opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Insurance Coalition and a private citizen.

Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday for a public hearing on [SB 111](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St. Louis). The bill seeks to designate September as Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. Supporting testimony was presented by an ovarian cancer survivor, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, private citizens and the Missouri State Medical Association. Supporters told the committee that the symptoms of ovarian cancer are common, everyday discomforts that would not lead the average person to believe that they have a serious condition and awareness and education are very important to early detection. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Peer to Peer Review

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 107](#), sponsored by Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla). The bill includes emergency medical service providers and physician assistants as a health care provider for the purpose of liability and disclosure of materials for review by a peer review committee. Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Ambulance Association who stated this legislation does not prevent lawsuits moving forward, it simply allows for medical professionals to learn from mistakes and successes without additional external pressures. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the MU Trauma Medical Director, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, Missouri Academy of Physician Assistants, Fire Service Alliance, Air Evac, Ambulance District Association of Missouri, Missouri State Advisory Council of Missouri Medical Services, Adair County Ambulance, Mellville Fire Protection District, the Missouri College of Emergency Physicians, Ambulance Dispatch Association and a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys who stated patients deserve to know what went right and/or wrong with their care and this legislation lacks transparency and accountability.

Pension Fiduciary Responsibility

The House Committee on Pensions convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 657](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Owen (R-Springfield). The bill seeks to ensure that investment fiduciaries do not consider ESG characteristics in a manner that overrides their fiduciary duties. Supporting testimony was presented by FGA Action. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Public School Retirement System of Missouri, Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System, Missouri State Employee Retirement System and MoDOT Employees' Retirement System. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Sierra Club who stated the legislation is not necessary as no public pensions are currently utilizing ESG metrics. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a public citizen.

Pesticide Labeling

The House Committee on Agriculture convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 544](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill 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 stated that glyphosate-based herbicides are the most widely used weed control products in the world. This widespread adoption is due not only to the effectiveness and extensive economic and environmental benefits, but also the strong safety profile of these products. Additional Supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Biotechnology Association, Missouri Cattlemen's Association, Associated Industries of Missouri, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Agri Business Association, Missouri Pork Association, Modern Ag Alliance, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and a private attorney. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Trial Attorney Association who stated this legislation would make it difficult for those adversely impacted by pesticides to file suit. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, League of Women Voters of Missouri and private citizens.

The Senate Agriculture, Food Production, and Outdoor Resources Committee met Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 14](#), sponsored by Senator Justin Brown (R-Rolla). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 544](#), highlighted above. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-1 vote.

Property Assessments

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening 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. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Tax Relief Now who informed the committee that he is an expert on property taxes and was very involved in crafting [SB 190](#) (2023) and [SB 756](#) (2024) relating to the senior property tax freeze. He said the problem is actually with the State Tax Commission because they encourage counties to raise their valuation. Informational testimony was presented by the Boone County Assessor who pointed out that the legislation only applies to primary residences and not rental or other properties which creates inconsistencies and would be problematic for assessors. He also said that he does not think counties could comply with a 4% cap. Additional informational testimony was presented by a private citizen and the Missouri Association of Counties cautioned the committee about taking a shotgun approach to taxation. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Property Assessments

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 87](#), sponsored by Senator Joe Nicola (R-Kansas City). Currently, real property is assessed at a percentage of its true value in money as follows: 19% for residential property, 12% for agricultural property, and 32% for utility, industrial, commercial, railroad, and all other property. The bill would reduce such percentages to 17%, 10%, and 30%, respectively. Supporting testimony was provided by ArmorVine. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri NEA who stated reductions in property assessments will directly impact local school districts' revenues. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri County Assessors Association who stated this legislation will cause other taxing districts to increase their local levies.

Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 516](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Matthiesen (R-O'Fallon). Currently, the General Assembly can transfer up to \$150,000 to the Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund to be used by the Department of Natural Resources to investigate concerns of exposure to radioactive waste. This bill specifies that the investigation may include collection of soil, dust, and water samples from the area. Additionally, the bill increases the amount of money the General Assembly can transfer to the fund from the Hazardous Waste Fund to \$300,000. Finally, the bill requires the Department of Natural Resources to identify and prioritize the sites that need investigation. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment who stated those impacted in the areas are suffering from cancers and autoimmune diseases and this could help prevent this occurring elsewhere. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

School Transportation

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee convened on Wednesday afternoon to consider public testimony on HB 538, sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill expands existing required background checks for school district transportation employees, including drivers of school district vehicles and those contracted to transport students, to include charter schools in the state and specifies that any contracted transportation company is responsible for conducting the background check. Hop Skip Drive testified in support of the bill saying it will help ensure safety of passengers and expedite the hiring process for private transportation contractors.

Second Amendment Preservation Act

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 23](#), sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Lee's Summit). The bill creates the "Second Amendment Preservation Act" which declares that federal supremacy does not apply to federal laws that restrict or prohibit the manufacture, ownership and use of firearms within Missouri as such laws exceed the scope of the federal government's authority. The sponsor's intent with the legislation is to amend the sections of law which were declared unconstitutional in the March 2023 *United States v. Missouri* decision. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Firearms Coalition who stated this was simply a reworking of the truly agreed to and passed legislation from 2021 and more clearly states what law enforcement can and cannot do. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Sheriffs United who stated this legislation would hamper and create major obstacles for officers and sheriffs

throughout the state in the performance of their duties. Additional opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Police Chiefs Association, League of Women Voters, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, City of St. Louis, Mid-Missouri Fellowship of Reconciliation and private citizens. Informational testimony was presented by the Freedom Center of Missouri who informed the committee the Attorney General has asked the Supreme Court to review the Eighth Circuit's decision.

Section 8 Housing

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 595](#), sponsored by Representative Chris Brown (R-Kansas City). The bill prohibits local governments from requiring private property owners to accept Section 8 vouchers. Additionally, the bill includes a prohibition on municipalities from being able to limit property owners' use of credit scores and background checks, imposing security deposit caps and giving tenants' rights of first refusal. During discussion, substitute language was adopted which added [HB 343](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield) to the title. Additionally, the language within the bill was modified to mirror [SB 46](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield) and is the Senate companion bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-4 vote.

Sewer Districts

The House Committee on Local Government convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 148](#) sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater). The bill would allow water districts, as well as organized and reorganized sewer districts to pay their board members up to \$100 per meeting. The sponsor stated he learned there is inconsistency in the fees paid to board members of water districts, sewer districts and reorganized sewer districts for attending meetings. Specifically, reorganized sewer district board members were not receiving compensation which makes it hard to find people willing to serve. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Sewer Districts and the Little Blue Valley Sewer District. Supporters stated the bill has been filed for the past several years but ultimately ends up failing to pass. They also said the Little Blue Valley Sewer District is specifically excluded from the legislation because their board is made up of mayors and county executives that cannot receive compensation. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

St. Louis Police Department

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 44](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit) and [SB 52](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-St. Charles). The bills are similar and returns the control of the City of St. Louis Police Department back to the Board of Police Commissioners and prohibits the mayor or any city officer from impeding or hindering the board. Additionally, the bill specifies the number of commissioned officers that must be employed in St. Louis City and the makeup of the number of officers within that number. The bill also sets forth a formula for liability claims for the board. Finally, [SB 44](#) sets forth penalty provisions for stunt driving, endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree, rioting and resisting arrest and creates the Committee on School Safety. During committee discussion, substitute language was adopted which combined the two bills into one legislative vehicle, with Senator Nick Schroer becoming the handler of the bill. Additionally, the bill added the following provisions:

- [SB 583](#) which requires law enforcement agencies to submit to the Department of Public Safety information on the immigration status of any criminal offender;
- Enacts a prohibition on injection sites;

- Modification of the Criminal Activity Forfeiture Act;
- Establishes the offense of organized retail theft;
- Creates the offense of filing a nonconsensual common law lien;
- Creates the offense of tampering with a water supply used for domestic or municipal purposes; and,
- Provides law enforcement officers the power to stop any person when there are reasonable grounds a crime is about to be committed.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

The House Committee on Crime and Public Safety also convened on Wednesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 495](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis). The bill returns the control of the City of St. Louis Police Department back to the Board of Police Commissioners and prohibits the mayor or any city officer from impeding or hindering the board. Additionally, the bill specifies the number of commissioned officers that must be employed in St. Louis City and the makeup of the number of officers within that number. The bill also sets forth a formula for liability claims for the board. Additionally, the bill sets forth penalty provisions for stunt driving, endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree, rioting and resisting arrest and creates the Committee on School Safety. During discussion, a substitute was adopted which added [HB 225](#) regarding law enforcement practices and [HB 117](#) which creates the offense of unlawfully entering a vehicle. Representative LaKeySha Bosley (D-St. Louis) offered an amendment which would require a vote of the people to enact the provisions contained within the bill, but the amendment ultimately failed by a 6-12 vote. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 13-6 vote.

State Department Expenditures

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 742](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bill seeks to prohibit funds from any State department from being used for intradepartmental programs, staffing, or initiatives related to "diversity, equity, and inclusion" or similar initiatives that promote preferential treatment based on certain characteristics, concepts such as oppression as the sole cause of disparities, collective guilt ideologies, intersectional or divisive identity activism, and the limiting of freedom of conscience, thought, or speech. During discussion, Representative Wick Thomas (D-Kansas City) stated he will be offering an amendment on the floor to remove educational activities based on historic public record held at public libraries and museums from the bill. After limited further discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 10-4 vote.

State Tax Commission

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 999](#), sponsored by Representative Ron Fowler (R-Blue Springs). Currently, the State Tax Commission (STC) has the power to issue orders to county assessors and Boards of Equalization. The bill allows counties a minimum of 90 days to comply with orders from the STC and if a county fails to comply, the STC may direct the Department of Revenue (DOR) to withhold local sales tax moneys that the county would otherwise be entitled to. Additionally, the county is entitled to a judicial review of the STC's determination of non-compliance and if the STC is found to be in error, any revenues withheld may be returned with any interest accrued while withheld. The sponsor stated the intent of the legislation ensures counties comply with State Tax Commission orders. Committee members expressed concerns

the remedies outlined in the bill are vague and the 90 day compliance timeline is too extensive. Supporting testimony was presented by a member of the Jackson County Legislature who stated nothing in the legislation would penalize cities directly, emphasizes timely compliance for counties and ultimately protects taxpayers and citizens. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate and an attorney from Jackson County. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri State Assessors Association who stated this would give the STC authority to withhold taxes which have been voted on by citizens in that county. In odd years Assessors do reassessments of personal property and allow for citizen appeals. Any other delays will impact tax collections. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Counties. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri State Tax Commission who stated they may not have all the data to draft an accurate order and questioned how they would pay any interest accrued during possible withholds.

Statute of Limitations

The House Committee on Commerce 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. The committee engaged in a lengthy discussion expressing concerns this would harm potential plaintiffs and could directly impact those affected by radioactive products or contaminated water. Supporting testimony was presented by Healthcare Services Group who stated Illinois and Kansas already have a two-year limitation and Missouri having a five year limitation has led to an increase in the cost of insurance for the hospitals in the state. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Insurance Coalition, Missouri Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds, Missouri Canoe and Floaters Association, NFIB, Missouri Retailers Association, Missouri Grocers Association, Missouri Tire Industry Association, State Farm Insurance and Shelter Insurance. Opposing testimony was presented by a personal injury and worker's compensation attorney who stated this would only lead to an increase in personal injury cases and injuries may take longer than two years to heal, particularly TBIs, so full damages may not be known in that timeframe.

Student Associations

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 875](#), sponsored by Representative Darin Chappell (R-Rogersville). The bill provides that any ideologic groups of students have the same ability as all other student organizations in the university systems to be able to exist, have access to spaces, and allows the leadership of these organizations to be selected based on a limitation criteria that the leadership will hold the same position/belief as the group they are leading. The sponsor informed committee members that 19 states have already adopted this policy. Supporting testimony was presented by the Freedom Principal Missouri who stated there has been a trend of intolerance towards campus religious and faith-based organizations. Additional supporting testimony was presented by Alliance Defending Freedom, Chi Alpha Campus Ministries, Missouri Catholic Conference, 1st Amendment Partnership, Alliance Defending Freedom, Campus Crusade for Christ, Christian Legal Society, Americans for Prosperity, and a private attorney. Opposing testimony was presented by The NAACP who questioned the legality of using taxpayer dollars for religious organizations.

Additional opposing testimony was presented by the ACLU of Missouri, Freedom from Religion Foundation, Missouri NEA, PROMO MO, Missouri Equity Education Partnership, and several college students.

Sunshine Law

The House Legislative Review Committee convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [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. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who stated this would align municipal public record policies with other current policies regarding records of minors. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Municipal League of Metro St. Louis and the Missouri Press Association. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated removing any protections from the Sunshine Laws is detrimental to transparency and could potentially harm children if municipalities act in bad faith.

The committee then turned its attention to hearing [HB 59](#) and [HB 1063](#), both sponsored by Representative Bruce Sassman (R-Bland). The bills open Chapter 610, and were heard together although they address two different provisions. [HB 59](#) adds individually identifiable customer information for visitors who make a camping, lodging, or other shelter reservation for a state park or historic site to the list of records that are exempt from disclosure under the Sunshine law, unless the records are requested by or authorized for release by the visitor. [HB 1063](#) adds to the list of records that are exempt from disclosure under the Sunshine law by allowing records showing boundaries and ownership of property where species of conservation concern and natural communities are located and administered by the Department of Conservation to be closed. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Department of Conservation who supported [HB 1063](#) and stated there are concerns regarding how the department protects private landowner rights when keeping records of plant and animal species. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Department of Natural Resources ([HB 59](#)), Nature Conservancy, Missouri Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds, Conservation Federation of Missouri and Missouri Parks Association ([HB 59](#)). Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Press Association who stated both bills erode the Sunshine Law and removes access to benign information citizens have a right to know. Additional opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine.

Tax Credits - Benevolent

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 67](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). The bill exempts taxpayers from penalties or interest on an income tax balance due if the taxpayer is denied part or all of a tax credit which they have qualified for due to the lack of available funds for the credit. The sponsor's intent with the legislation is to incentivize taxpayers to donate to benevolent charities without fear of tax penalties. Missouri Society of CPAs stated the only way to address the issue of penalties with tax credits with caps is to fix the issue legislatively. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Empower Missouri, a Southwest Missouri food bank, Food Outreach, Associated Industries of Missouri and Feeding Missouri. Informational testimony was presented by the Department of Revenue who stated this would clarify when penalties may be abated.

Tax Credits - Childcare

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 269](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). The bill establishes the "Childcare Contribution Tax Credit Act". Beginning January 1, 2025, a taxpayer may claim a tax credit for verified

contributions to a childcare provider in an amount equal to 75% of the contribution. The minimum amount of any tax credit issued shall not be less than \$100 and shall not exceed \$200,000 per tax year. The tax credit has a sunset of December 31, 2030. Additionally, the bill also establishes the “Employer Provided Childcare Assistance Tax Credit Act”. Beginning January 1, 2025, a taxpayer with two or more employees may claim a tax credit equal to 30% of the qualified childcare expenditures paid or incurred to a childcare facility and shall not exceed \$200,000 per tax year. The tax credit has a sunset of December 31, 2030. Finally, the bill also establishes the “Childcare Providers Tax Credit Act”. Beginning January 1, 2025, a childcare provider with three or more employees may claim a tax credit equal to the eligible employer withholding tax and may also claim a credit in an amount up to 30% of the capital expenditures but not if expenditures are less than \$1,000. The program has a sunset of December 31, 2030. The sponsors intent with the legislation is to address the numerous childcare deserts within Missouri. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry who stated this is a top priority for the business community, is essential to economic development and workforce growth and Missouri has lost \$1.3 billion annually in lost wages and revenue over the last three years. Additional supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri, Kids Win Missouri, United WE, City of Kansas City, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Civic Council of Kansas City, Missouri Economic Development Council, City of Raymore, Northland Regional Chamber of Commerce, Greater St. Louis Inc., Next Missouri, a private business owner, BJC Health, National Association of Social Workers, Jewish Federation of St. Louis, Missouri Hospital Association, Aligned, Cox Health, JE Dunn Construction, Missouri State Alliance of YMCAs, Columbia Chamber of Commerce, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Missouri Catholic Conference. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Tax Deduction - Capital Gains

The House Committee on Commerce convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 594](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). The bill repeals the tax on capital gains. During discussion, substitute language was adopted which adds [HB 508](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis) to the title as the bills are identical. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-3 vote.

Additionally, the Senate Committee on General Laws convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 46](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). This is the Senate companion bill to [HB 594](#), highlighted above. There was no discussion and the bill was passed by a 4-2 vote.

Taxes - Business License

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 145](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). Currently, cities may impose a business license tax on businesses. The bill restricts cities from imposing a business license tax on businesses which earns \$10,000 or less in gross receipts from sales in any calendar year. Additionally, currently a person is defined as not engaging in business in Missouri for the purpose of collecting sales tax if they do not accrue more than \$3,000 in gross receipts in any calendar year. The bill would increase the threshold to \$10,000 in any calendar year. Supporting testimony was presented by Americans for Prosperity who stated entrepreneurship is the cornerstone of the American dream and this prevents overreach at the local level. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Associated Industries of Missouri. Informational testimony was presented by the City of Kansas City who stated they are working with the sponsor to draft language which could add age exemptions, academic

entrepreneurial endeavors or even offer temporary licenses. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxes – Emergency Services

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 33](#), sponsored by Senator Doug Beck (D-St. Louis). The bill authorizes municipalities within St. Louis County to submit to the voters of the City as well as the counties of St. Charles, Clay, Platte and Greene a proposal to authorize the governing body to impose a property tax no more than \$.25 per \$100 assessed valuation, to provide fire protection services. Additionally, upon voter approval, the bill allows the governing body of any fire protection district, to ask for a sales tax up to a maximum of 1% on all sales, to reduce any property tax imposed by the district up to 50%. However, the property tax must be imposed for the purpose of providing fire protection services. Supporting testimony was presented by the St. Charles County Fire Chief who stated ninety-three Fire and EMS Districts within Missouri are already utilizing a similar tax structure and this simply allow these five counties to participate if their citizens so choose. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Pattonville Fire District, the Central County Fire District, St. Charles County Ambulance District, Missouri Ambulance Association, Ambulance District Association of Missouri and Missouri Fire Service Alliance. Opposing testimony was presented by the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis who stated the average sales tax in St. Louis County is almost 8.5% and want to avoid competing with other districts within the County.

Taxes - Personal Property

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 629](#), sponsored by Representative Mike McGirl (R-Potosi). The bill modifies several provisions regarding real and personal property. Currently, County Assessors determine the value of new construction and improvements by maintaining a yearly record of increases in valuation for each political subdivision in the county that results from new construction or improvements. The bill requires that beginning January 1, 2027, any increase in the aggregate valuation of personal property for the current year over that of the previous year cannot be counted as new construction. Additionally, currently, personal property is assessed at 33.3% of its true value in money as of January 1st of each calendar year. The bill requires that beginning January 1, 2026, personal property must be assessed at 31% of its true value in money. Finally, currently, county assessors must use the October issue of the National Automobile Dealers' Association Official Used Car Guide to determine the true value of a motor vehicle. The bill requires that the county assessor determine the true value for motor vehicles by using the trade-in value published in any three immediate years of the October issue of a nationally recognized automotive trade publication selected by the State Tax Commission. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Developmental Disability Services who stated any reduction of funds impact the services provided in communities. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then turned its attention to a public hearing for [HB 903](#), sponsored by Representative Richard West (R-Wentzville). The bill requires that beginning January 1, 2026, the percentage of the true value in money at which personal property is assessed will be reduced over a period of three years until it will be assessed at 18% of its true value in money. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate. Additional opposing testimony was provided by a state public advocate, Missouri

Municipal League and Missouri Association of County Developmental Disability Services. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

Taxing Districts

The House Committee on Ways and Means met on Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 660](#) sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). This legislation would make numerous changes to the law regarding taxing districts and, according to the sponsor, is identical to his [HB 2058](#) from 2024. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Tax Relief Now who stated he believes counties try to wear voters down by bringing the same issue before them numerous times. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League, Municipal League of Metro St. Louis, Missouri Association of Counties, Missouri School Boards Association, Missouri Economic Development Financing Association, and the cities of Springfield and Independence. Opponents stated that local governments cannot advocate for ballot measures. Additionally, it was stated the reason our state has so many taxing districts is because the general assembly made a decision many years ago that they weren't going to pay for all of the various infrastructure needs throughout the state. When they gave that power to local governments and other taxing authorities, economic development began to grow and many services, like the expansion of 911, were funded. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Clerks who stated they do not want to be caught in the middle of ballot naming issues which is an area within which the bill touches.

Unemployment Rates

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 8](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). Currently, the maximum duration for an individual to receive unemployment benefits is 20 weeks. The bill ties the maximum amount of time people are eligible to collect unemployment benefits to the state's unemployment rate. According to the language, an additional week is added for each 0.5 percentage points that the unemployment rate rises above 5.5 percent, up to a maximum of 20 weeks if the unemployment rate goes above nine percent. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry who stated this legislation would help encourage workforce growth and ensure the trust fund remains solvent. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Retailers Association, Missouri Grocers Association, Missouri Tire Industry Association, FGA Action, NFIB, Associated Industries of Missouri and ArmorVine. Opposing testimony was presented by the Operating Engineers Local 101, Local 513, Local 148 who stated although Missouri's unemployment rate is at record lows currently, it has not historically always been this low and the future rate is unpredictable. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Columbia Jefferson City Area Building Trades, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 513 and the Missouri AFL-CIO.

Utility Omnibus

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 6](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill requires that prior to the closure of an existing power plant, the electric utility must replace it with equal or greater amounts of reliable generation and ensure that the replacement generation is fully operational within 120 days of closing the existing plant. Additionally, the bill modifies provisions relating to the current renewable energy standards by preventing businesses that use renewable power and have entered into contracts with utilities from being charged twice. The bill also provides utilities a depreciation of 90% of expenses, instead of 85%, and extends the sunset date from December 31, 2028

to December 31, 2035. Finally, the bill allows the Public Service Commission to directly contract counsel, financial advisors, or other consultants as necessary for the purpose of reviewing financing orders for energy transition costs. Supporting testimony was presented by Ameren MO who stated that this legislation expands qualifying energy infrastructures to include natural gas electric generator plants. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Energy Policy Network, Plumbers and Pipefitters, Operating Engineers Local 513 and 148, Missouri AFL-CIO, META, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Associated Industries of MO, Missouri-America Carpenters Regional Council, Liberty Utilities, Burns McDonnell, Northland Chamber of Commerce, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, Missouri Economic Development Council, Hunt Midwest, WEG, St. Louis Electrical Connection, and Evergy. Opposing testimony was presented by Midwest Energy Consumers Group, Missouri Coalition for the Environment, AARP, Sierra Club, ReNew Missouri, Missouri Tax Relief Now, ArmorVine, Consumers Council of Missouri and Missouri Environment Informational Center (MIEC). Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Public Service Commission who highlighted their support to secure private counsel.

The Committee reconvened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 6](#). After a brief discussion, they passed the bill by a 5-3 vote.

Utility Provision Omnibus

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection Energy, and the Environment Committee convened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 4](#), sponsored by Senator Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill reclassifies the pipelines in Missouri which transport liquids and gases from real property to personal property for the purpose of county tax assessments. The intent of the legislation is to standardize the assessment rates for pipelines which would allow for uniformity across the counties of Missouri in how these assets are depreciated. Additionally, the bill allows water, sewer, and gas utilities to use a future test year as part of the traditional 11-month rate case process; repeals certain provisions relating to maximum penalties for violations of federally mandated natural gas safety standards and provides that the maximum penalties shall not exceed an amount as determined by the Secretary of Transportation of the United States; and allows gas companies to offer a discount for large users, which also includes consumer protections. After a brief discussion, they passed the bill by a 6-2 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to discussing passage of [SB 5](#), also sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill also includes some identical provisions as [SB 4](#), highlighted above, which reclassify pipelines, and includes the same future test year provisions. However, [SB 5](#) differs by allowing trustees of reorganized common sewer districts to receive compensation by repealing current provisions; and requires the PSC to make a decision on the purchase of small water systems within 6 months but allows for an extension of 30 days for good cause. If the PSC does not issue a decision within those 30 days, the application shall be automatically approved. Additionally, the bill modifies state statute to allow water utilities which provide service to 8,000 water, sewer, or a combination of both, to be classified as a large water utility. After a brief discussion, they passed the bill by a 6-2 vote.

Video Lottery Terminals

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 970](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). The bill establishes the "Honoring Missouri Veterans and Supporting MO Education Act", which seeks to legalize and provide the framework for video lottery terminals for placement in fraternal organizations, veteran organizations, truck stops,

convenience stores, bars, restaurants, liquor stores, and grocery stores. Each authorized location may host up to twelve terminals. Committee members questioned the sponsor about potentially including a geography halo around payday lenders, schools, and casinos. Supporting testimony was provided by Torch Electronics who stated the legislation provides a path for Missouri retailers to offer a legal, regulated and fair video game to consumers. It is predicted that legalizing VLT would generate an estimated \$250 million annually for Missouri retailers and another \$250 million annually for Missouri public education programs. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Warrenton Oil Co., Ware Brands, J&J Ventures, Accel Entertainment, Missouri Petroleum and Convenience Store Association, Missouri Fair Businesses Practice Coalition, MotoMart, Missouri Coalition for Video Lottery, and Pit Stop Missouri. Opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Home Dock Cities who questioned the constitutionality of revenue distributions to the VLT industry and veterans because the MO Constitution requires all lottery proceeds to be allocated exclusively to education and that cannot be altered by statute. Additional opposing testimony was provided by former Senator Dave Schatz, the Missouri Gaming Association and their legal counsel and a state public advocate.

Water Exportation

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [SB 29](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Peach Orchard) and [SB 82](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bills are similar and specify that it is unlawful for any person to withdraw from any water source for export outside the state of Missouri unless a water export permit issued by the Department of Natural Resources is held. Additionally, the bills require a permit application recommendation be submitted to the General Assembly and the permit is deemed denied if the General Assembly does not take action on the recommendation within sixty days. Finally, the bills also outline the process for renewing issued permits. The sponsor stated his intent is to protect Missouri's water resources and to ensure the permitting process receives oversight from the legislature. It was also noted a Senate Committee Substitute will be offered to combine the bills into one legislative vehicle and ensure the language is identical. Supporting testimony was presented by Southeast Missouri Regional Water District who stated water availability is critical for crop growth and the recent drought conditions have farmers worried about future reserves of water. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Rural Crisis Center, Missouri Farm Bureau, Missouri Soybean Association, Missouri Sierra Club, Missouri Cattlemen Association, Nature Conservancy, Missouri Corn Growers Association, Missouri American Water and Missouri AgriBusiness Association. Opposing testimony was presented by Camden County Presiding Commissioner Ike Skelton who stated this interferes with the interstate commerce clause and adds unnecessary bureaucracy. Additional opposing testimony was provided by ArmorVine.

Hearing Schedules:

[House](#)
[Senate](#)

Calendars

[House](#)
[Senate](#)

Key Upcoming Dates:

- February 26, 2025 – State of the Judiciary 10:30am – House Chamber
- March 1, 2025 – Last day to introduce legislation
- March 17-21, 2025 – Legislative Spring Break
- 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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