

## CAPITOL REPORT – WEEK 6

FEBRUARY 14, 2025

**Weekly Overview:** This week the threat of a snowstorm caused the Missouri House to move all but a few hearings from Wednesday to Tuesday; making an already day busy, jam-packed with hearings. For reference, a normal Tuesday in the Missouri House would see around nine hearings spread throughout the day; this Tuesday saw twenty-one different committees hold hearings on numerous pieces of legislation. Along with moving the hearings, the house also held a technical session on Wednesday and conducted no business. The House met in regular session on Thursday and sent their first bills of the legislative session to the Senate.

The Senate, however, did not break for the weather and held hearings and regular sessions all week. On Tuesday, the Senate took up a bill that would return control of the City of St. Louis Police Department to the Board of Police Commissioners; a board appointed by the governor. This legislation is a priority of Governor Mike Kehoe but was met with resistance by senate democrats who filibustered the measure. It is expected that this bill will be debated again next week.

We expect to see floor debate in both chambers begin to increase next week and the flood of hearings to continue unabated. This is due to the March 1<sup>st</sup> bill filing deadline swiftly approaching. To date, the House has filed 2,117 bills and joint resolutions while the Senate has filed 754 bills and joint resolutions. The legislative spring break which marks the halfway point in session is only four weeks away.

### *In the News...*

- On Tuesday, it was announced a major soybean project, which collaborates with the University of Missouri, will shut down April 15, 2026 due to the dismantling of funding to the U.S. Agency for International Development. The Soybean Innovation Lab, based at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, formed in 2011 to provide researchers and organizations with the resources needed to advance soybean development. The land grant system will be losing 19 innovation labs across 17 states, including Missouri.
- Attorney General Andrew Bailey has filed suit against Starbucks, accusing the company of race- and sex-based discrimination by favoring people of color and women. The lawsuit claims that Starbucks setting goals for the representation of people of color and women in its workforce and leadership amounts to illegal discrimination. The lawsuit also alleges that programs designed to connect female employees, LGBTQ employees and employees of color with mentors are discriminatory due to not being open to white men.

- The state’s Budget Director, Dan Haug, recently announced that state revenues are down nearly 12% compared to this time last year. Individual income tax, as well as sales and use tax collections, are down 27% and 11%, respectively. View the [Director’s press release](#) here.
- Responses have flooded a newly created survey where Missourians can submit grievances about government inefficiency. The four-day-old portal, created by the Missouri Senate Government Efficiency Committee, has received about 2,000 responses so far, according to the committee chair, Sen. Mary Elizabeth Coleman, R-Arnold. So far, only about 70 of the responses have been “constructive,” she said. The vast majority of responses are either unrelated to the committee’s mandate of rooting out “government duplication, waste, or inefficiencies” or are spam. For example, several submissions have been included the script of the 2007 film, “Bee Movie.”
- The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education presented its school funding proposal for the 2026 fiscal year to the Missouri House of Representatives Budget Committee on Monday. The presentation underscored Gov. Mike Kehoe’s call to rewrite the foundation formula, the equation that determines basic public school funding. Last month, Kehoe proposed a \$200 million increase in funding for the foundation formula, bringing the total to more than \$4 billion.

### **Budget Update**

The House Budget and Senate Appropriations Committee continue to hear the FY2026 budget requests from the various state departments. When departments have been appearing before the Senate Appropriations Committee there are few questions and the hearings moves swiftly. In stark contrast, when departments have been appearing before the House Budget Committee the questions are rapid fire and the hearings last for hours. It has become apparent the House Budget Committee is taking a new approach to budgeting with the focus on “lapsed” or unspent funding becoming targets for future reductions in funding. There is speculation this laser focus on reductions are due to the decline of state revenues, additional tax cuts and possible federal funding freezes and legislators are looking to bank general revenue to prepare for leaner fiscal years.

### Committee/Floor Activity

Adult High Schools .....	4	Landowner Wildlife Rights.....	21
Advanced Manufacturing .....	4	Law Libraries.....	22
Ballot Language .....	4	Law Officer Resources .....	22
Banking Codes.....	5	License Fee Offices .....	22
Banks and Trusts .....	5	Local Election Authority Prohibitions.....	22
Career-Tech Certificates.....	6	Massage Therapists .....	22
Cell Phones in Schools .....	6	Mechanical Contractor Licensing.....	23
Chaplains as Volunteers .....	6	Media Literacy/Critical Thinking.....	23
Childcare Allergy Prevention .....	6	Mental Health Courts.....	23
Children/Vulnerable Person Protections.....	7	Motor Fuel Tax Modifications.....	23
Class Action Lawsuits.....	8	Noninvasive Plants.....	24
CROWN Act.....	9	Nonresident Pupil Admission .....	24
CTF Medical Alert System.....	9	Ovarian Cancer Awareness .....	25
Design-Build Contracts .....	9	Peer Review Committees.....	25
Disabled Plates/Placards .....	9	Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing.....	26
Discriminatory Practices .....	10	Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) .....	26
Division of Geology and Land Survey.....	10	Pregnancy Resource Centers.....	26
DNR Funds .....	10	Principal and Income Act .....	26
Earnings Tax .....	10	Professional Licensing .....	27
Education Omnibus .....	11	Property Tax Mapping.....	27
Election Official Tampering.....	11	Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund .....	27
Election Omnibus.....	11	Regional Planning Commissions .....	28
Electrical Choice/Competition.....	12	Religious Freedom Protection .....	28
Electrical Corp Construction.....	12	Residency Requirements.....	28
Eminent Domain for Utilities .....	13	Revitalizing Downtowns/Main Streets.....	28
Employment Security .....	13	Safe Place for Newborns Fund .....	29
Energy Production Purposes .....	13	School Bus Endorsements .....	29
Firearm Preemption .....	14	School/Student Safety .....	29
Firearms Omnibus .....	14	Second Amendment Preservation Act .....	29
First Responder Recruitment/Retention.....	15	Section 8 Housing.....	30
Foreign Ownership of Ag Land .....	15	Settlement Demands .....	30
Foreign Unmanned Aircraft Law .....	15	St. Louis Police .....	30
Foster Youth BOR .....	16	State Contracts - Veterans .....	31
Funeral Related Services.....	16	Student Achievement/Teacher Salaries/Anti- Bullying .....	31
Gaming Revenue Allocation.....	17	Student Associations.....	32
Gas, Water & Sewage Pipeline Depreciation.....	17	Superintendent Salaries .....	32
Gender Transition.....	17	Survivor Benefit Deductions.....	32
General Assembly Term Limits.....	18	Tax Credit – Agricultural .....	33
Guardians Ad Litem .....	18	Tax Credit – Benevolent.....	33
Health Loan Repayment.....	18	Tax Credit – Domestic Violence .....	33
Hemp Regulation .....	19	Tax Credit Review .....	34
Individualized Education Plans .....	19	Tax Credits.....	34
Initiative/Referendum Petitions.....	19	Tax Deduction – Capital Gains .....	34
Injunctions .....	20	Tax Deduction – Educators/EMS.....	35
Internet – Harmful Material.....	20	Tax Deduction – National Guard .....	35
Juror Compensation/Venue .....	20	Tax Deduction – Savings Accounts .....	35
Juvenile Court Proceedings .....	20	Tax Elimination - Income .....	35
Land Conveyance.....	21	Tax Exemption – Auctioned Property .....	36
Land Reclamation.....	21		

<b>Tax Exemption – Broadband .....</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>Tobacco Product Regulations .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Tax Exemption – Early Childhood Edu.....</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>Utility Relocation .....</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Taxes – Emergency Services .....</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Veteran's Day Holiday .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Taxes - Personal Property .....</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Waterways and Ports Trust Fund.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Teacher Baseline Salary Grants .....</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Workers' Comp Claims .....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Telehealth Services.....</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>Youth Services.....</b>	<b>40</b>

## **Adult High Schools**

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Committee convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 32](#), sponsored by Representative Bishop Davidson (R-Republic). The bill lowers the age of enrollment for adult high schools in Missouri from 21 to 18 to increase access to the program and help adults complete a high school diploma program outside of a traditional secondary school setting. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which requires providers to report data on the completion rate of the program and excludes individuals who pause participation in the program but later return to complete their course of study. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

## **Advanced Manufacturing**

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 755](#) sponsored by Representative Philip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill establishes a tax credit of up to 20% of a capital investment in property made by a qualified manufacturing company for up to five years. The capital investment must equal at least \$1 billion and create 500 or more jobs in Missouri. The total amount of tax credits issued annually may not exceed \$200 million. The sponsor said this would bring jobs and economic growth to Missouri to help us compete and remain a leader in the global market. Supporting testimony was presented by Greater St. Louis, Inc., Missouri Economic Development Council, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, and the Civic Council of Greater Kansas City who stated these large projects allow the state to leverage its strength and also drives the growth of other Missouri businesses. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

## **Ballot Language**

The House Committee on Elections convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 414](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis) and [HB 684](#), sponsored by Representative John Simmons (R-Washington). The bills are similar and remove the authority of the courts to edit the summary statement or ballot language of any ballot measure proposed by the General Assembly. However, [HB 684](#) adds a provision to increase the word limit for summary statements from 50 words to 150 words. Committee members expressed concerns this would open the door for additional litigation and cost the state additional funding. Supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri who stated statute already clarifies the general assembly has the right to determine ballot summary language and this legislation would simplify the process. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Right to Life. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition who stated this would upend the checks and balances the judicial branch has over the legislative branch and there is also statutory language which gives the courts authority to rewrite ballot language that is unfair or misleading. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the League of Women Voters-Missouri, a state public advocate, a private citizen and Jobs with Justice Voter Action.

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday for [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. During debate the sponsor offered a floor substitute which clarifies that a court can offer up suggested ballot language to the legislature or the Secretary of State, but it's with the caveat that they are not the ones that actually determine what that ballot language will be. Senator Maggie Nurrenbern (D-Kansas City) offered an amendment which would require any ballot challenges to be immediately referred to the Missouri Supreme Court. After considerable debate, the bill was ultimately laid over for further debate another day.

### **Banking Codes**

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 97](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill updates and modernizes the state's current banking codes to provide efficiency and clarity. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to include [SB 99](#), which allows any bank to report suspected fraudulent activity or financial exploitation targeting any of its customers to a federal, state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency and be immune from civil liability for reporting. Additionally, the substitute includes [SB 657](#), which creates an alternative for banking institutions serving as depositaries for public funds to secure their deposits in lieu of the method provided by current law, known as the "single bank pooled method." Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to discuss passage of [SB 98](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill creates a new provision in the criminal code that can be used by prosecuting attorneys to charge criminals with the offense of financial institution account fraud. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which clearly defined the terms of offenses that are not currently in statute. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

Lastly, the committee discussed passage of [SB 99](#), also sponsored by Senator Crawford, which allows any bank to report suspected fraudulent activity or financial exploitation targeting any of its customers to a federal, state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency and be immune from civil liability for reporting. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to include credit unions. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

### **Banks and Trusts**

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 754](#), sponsored by Representative Philip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill allows articles of agreement for banks and trust companies to provide for the issuance of additional shares of capital stock, if such terms are acceptable to the Director of Finance. Additionally, the bill allows directors to attend board meetings by phone or video. The bill also repeals a requirement for banks or trust companies to disclose the list of liabilities and indebtedness of their board and employees. Finally, the bill repeals provisions requiring financial reports of banks and trust companies be published in newspapers and repeals

provisions regarding notification of dormant accounts. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to discuss passage of [HB 707](#), also sponsored by Representative Philip Oehlerking. The bill creates the offense of financial institution accounts fraud and establishes non stackable criminal provisions. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 13-0 vote.

### **Career-Tech Certificates**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 150](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). The bill allows any student who has met the qualifications for the A+ Scholars Program to qualify for reimbursement for the costs associated with tuition, books, or fees associated with completion of an eligible certificate program from a public or private postsecondary institution, vocational school, community college, or certified training provider approved annually by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education which does not require more than 60 credit hours for completion. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

### **Cell Phones in Schools**

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education Committee convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 306](#), sponsored by Representative Kathy Steinhoff (D-Columbia). The bills prohibit the use of personal student cell phones, smart watches, and electronic communication devices during instructional activities and require school districts to develop and publish disciplinary procedures and exceptions for students using electronic devices. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 408](#), sponsored by Representative Jamie Gragg (R-Ozark), and [HB 854](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly) to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Additionally, the substitute allows district school boards to develop policies defining instructional time for the district and provide certain exceptions to the prohibition. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 20-0 vote.

### **Chaplains as Volunteers**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 49](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill allows public school districts and public charter schools to employ a chaplain or allow a chaplain to volunteer. Additionally, background checks shall be required and the chaplain is not required to be a certified teacher in order to work or volunteer for the district or charter school. Finally, the bill requires the school district or charter school to vote to adopt a policy authorizing employment or volunteering of chaplains. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added [SB 118](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove) to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-2 vote.

### **Childcare Allergy Prevention**

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 580](#), sponsored by Representative Emily Weber (D-Kansas City) and [HB 222](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Schulte (R-New Bloomfield). The bills are similar and adds child care facilities to the list which doctors may prescribe epinephrine auto-injector. Additionally, the bill requires child care facilities and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop allergy prevention policies. Supporting testimony was presented by a parent who gave anecdotal stories of children nearly



dying from lack of epi pens. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Children/Vulnerable Person Protections**

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 219](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly). The bill modifies several provisions to protect children and vulnerable persons. Specifically, the bill replaces the term “child pornography” with “child sexual abuse materials” throughout current statute and redefines the term. Additionally, the bill also establishes the “Statewide Council Against Adult Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” and creates the “Anti-Trafficking Fund.” The bill also increases the age from 14 to 18 for the purposes of statement admissibility and defines “vulnerable person.” Finally, the bill modifies the penalty provisions for trafficking a child and the offense of patronizing prostitution. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added clarifying language requested by the Attorney General’s Office and updated some statutory references. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 16-0 vote.

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 916](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). The bill modifies several provisions pertaining to vulnerable persons. Specifically, the bill addresses incarcerated offenders accessing SNAP benefits, releasing of inmates from the Department of Corrections’ procedures, raising the age from 14 to 18 on statement admissibility, procedures for pregnant inmates and admissibility of certain evidence in criminal cases. Supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri who stated this legislation presents second chances for citizens and preserves the health of babies and their mothers. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Christian Coalition, Nolan Center for Justice, American Conservative Union, CPAC, Feeding Missouri, Missouri Prosecutors Association, Missouri Catholic Conference and Missouri Appleseed. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 224](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Myers (R-Warrenton). The bill modifies several provisions to protect children and vulnerable persons. Specifically, the bill replaces the term “child pornography” with “child sexual abuse materials” throughout current statute and redefines the term. Additionally, the bill also establishes the “Statewide Council Against Adult Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” and creates the “Anti-Trafficking Fund.” The bill also increases the age from 14 to 18 for the purposes of statement admissibility and defines “vulnerable person.” Finally, the bill modifies the penalty provisions for trafficking a child and the offense of patronizing prostitution. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which removed the statute of limitations language and clarifies who appoints members to the Council. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1049](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Owen (R-Springfield). This bill authorizes banks to offer a “trusted contact” program to customers who can designate one or more trusted contacts for the bank to contact in the event of an emergency, loss of contact with the customer or suspected third-party fraud activity or financial exploitation targeting the customer. Additionally, the bill states the bank is not liable for the actions of a trusted contact and neither is the bank liable for declining to interact with a trusted

contact if the bank determines such trusted contact is not acting in the best interests of the customer. Finally, the bill allows a credit union to offer a trusted contact program to members similar to that offered by a bank. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Bankers Association who stated this simply allows for the protection of both customers and the financial institutions. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Credit Union Association and the Missouri Independent Bankers Association.

Informational testimony was presented by the State Securities Commissioner Michael O'Donnell. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday for [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 the bill's progression, 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 sponsor successfully amended the bill during debate to make technical corrections and add clarifying language to change the word "child" to "youth" as some remain in care until they are 21 years of age. Once modified, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after no further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 149-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

### **Class Action Lawsuits**

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 534](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). This is the House companion bill to [SB 47](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield) and seeks to align Missouri Rule 52, with Federal Rule 23 regarding class action lawsuits, which was adopted in 2018 by federal courts. The intent of the legislation is to create uniformity in the procedures surrounding class action lawsuits, particularly when it comes to the timing of when a class is certified and what the definition of a class is for that certification. Additionally, the bill makes changes to current notice requirements in order to update the ways notices are provided and updates best practices for an individual that does not want to participate with a class. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Civil Justice Reform Coalition. Additional supporting testimony was presented by Diamond Pet Foods, American Property Casualty Insurance Association, NFIB, Missouri Organization of Defense Lawyers, Hospital Association, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, American Tort Reform Association, Missouri Insurance Coalition and Ford Motor Company. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday for [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 the bill's progression, 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. During debate, the sponsor successfully offered a floor substitute which made a technical correction. Once modified, the Senate provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after no further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 27-5 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

### **CROWN Act**

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 38](#), sponsored by Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas City). The bill creates the Missouri CROWN Act governing discriminatory practices relating to protective hairstyles. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-0 vote.

The House Special Committee on Urban Issues convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 284](#), sponsored by Representative Raychel Proudie (R-Ferguson). The bill is the House companion to [SB 38](#), highlighted above. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

### **CTF Medical Alert System**

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 41](#), sponsored by Senator Angela Mosley (D-Florissant). The bill creates the "Christian Taylor Ferguson Medical Alert System" to aid in identifying and locating a missing endangered person, including children, who are missing under unexplained, involuntary, or suspicious circumstances and who are believed to be in danger due to a medical condition that requires immediate care, medication, or treatment. Supporting testimony was presented by the mother of Christian Ferguson. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Design-Build Contracts**

The House Committee on Economic Development convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on three bills, [HB 413](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge), [HB 513](#), sponsored by Representative John Voss (R-Cape Girardeau), and [HB 536](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler), relating to design-build contracts. The bills repeal the sunset date of September 1, 2026, for political subdivisions' authority to utilize the design-build method for construction. However, [HB 536](#) differs slightly as it contains the construction management at risk provision and the sponsor asked that the committee retain that language as they advance the bills from committee. Supporting testimony was presented by the American Institute of Architects of Missouri who said the sunset was originally needed to see if it would work for political subdivisions. Additional supporting testimony was provided by JE Dunn, the Missouri Municipal League, Burns McDonnell Engineering, Nabholz Construction, Builders AGC-Kansas City, City of Springfield, Missouri School Boards Association, AGC of Missouri, Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities, American Council of Engineering Companies of Missouri, ABC Heart of America, Associated General Contractors of Missouri, Municipal League of Metro St. Louis, Missouri Economic Development Financing Association and Associated Builders Contractors-Heart of Missouri Chapter. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Disabled Plates/Placards**

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1048](#), sponsored by Representative Terri Violet (R-St. Peters). The bill adds occupational therapists to the list

of licensed professionals who can issue a statement so that disabled plates or a disabled windshield placard can be obtained by a patient. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Occupational Therapy Association who stated the responsibility directly aligns with their scope of practice. Additional testimony was provided private citizens and occupational therapists. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Discriminatory Practices**

The Senate Families, Seniors, and Health Committee met Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 76](#), sponsored by Senator Adam Schnelting (R-St. Charles). Current law prohibits discrimination based on sex in various sectors, including housing, employment, and public accommodations. This act creates a definition for the term "sex" to mean the two categories of humans, male and female, into which individuals are divided based on an individual's reproductive biology at birth and the individual's genome. The term "sex" shall not be construed to include sexual orientation or gender identity. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

### **Division of Geology and Land Survey**

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [SB 157](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). The bill requires any individually identifiable information obtained by the Division of Geology and Land Survey to remain confidential and not released to the public or disclosed in response to any request. The bill also provides a penalty clause for failure to comply. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Soybean Association who stated information would still be retained at the Department of Natural Resources and could be used for litigation purposes and this would only pertain to agriculture water users. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Corn Growers Association and Missouri Farm Bureau. Opposing testimony was presented by a private citizen who stated this removes transparency.

### **DNR Funds**

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 120](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Peach Orchard). The bill modifies provisions relating to the expenditure of moneys in certain Department of Natural Resource funds. Specifically, before June 30, 2026, any unexpended balance in the subaccounts of the Natural Resources Protection Fund exceeding the preceding biennium's collections shall revert to the general revenue fund. Beginning July 1, 2026, any unexpended balance shall not be swept. Additionally, the bill repeals provisions which transfer funds from the Missouri Air Emission Reduction Fund. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

### **Earnings Tax**

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 119](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill seeks to exempt from the city earnings tax all taxpayers whose income is at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Level. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which clarifies if a taxing district spans two counties, the same number or lettering system be utilized to avoid voter confusion. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 14-1 vote.

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 499](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis). Currently, St. Louis and Kansas City imposes a flat 1% local income tax, also known as the earnings tax, on individuals and businesses. The bill establishes “earnings tax opportunity zones,” which are zones that are federally designated and are St. Louis’ most distressed communities. These zones will be mapped and maintained by the city and will be exempt from the earnings tax. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 6-3 vote.

### **Education Omnibus**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 115](#), sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Lee’s Summit). The bill modifies several provisions relating to elementary and secondary education. Specifically, the bill prohibits school districts from teaching about the 1619 Project initiative of The New York Times, critical race theory or any divisive concepts. Additionally, the bill establishes the "Sunlight in Learning Act", which requires training, instructional, and curricular materials to be posted on a public school's or charter school's website. The bill also creates the “Parent’s Bill of Rights” which prohibits school districts from denying parents or guardians of a minor child certain rights. Finally, upon adoption by a school district and approval of the residents of the school district, no public school shall knowingly allow a student of the male sex who is enrolled in such public school to participate in a school-sponsored athletic team that is exclusively for students of the female sex. Supporting testimony was presented by FGA Action who stated they are supportive of the parent’s bill of rights provision. Additional supporting testimony was provided by a private citizen. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri NAACP who stated this removes educator freedom when it comes to lesson plans and limits history that students may choose to learn. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri NEA, PROMO, Missouri Equity Education Partnership, National Council of Jewish Women, ACLU of Missouri, Missouri State Teachers Association and American Atheists.

### **Election Official Tampering**

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Monday for [SB 84](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). The bill creates the offense of tampering with an election official. The bill specifies that 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. After considerable debate, the bill was ultimately laid over for further debate another day.

### **Election Omnibus**

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 182](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill modifies numerous provisions regarding elections and the election process. Specifically, the bill includes the following provisions:

- Currently, the filing period for candidates, unless otherwise specified, is from the 17th Tuesday prior to the election through the 14<sup>th</sup> Tuesday prior to the election. The bill moves the filing period by one week, from the 16<sup>th</sup> Tuesday to the 13<sup>th</sup> Tuesday prior to the election. The bill also provides that if the 13<sup>th</sup> Tuesday is a holiday, the next day will be the last day of filing;
- The bill allows election notifications be sent by email;
- Specifies that lists of absentee voters with permanent disabilities shall be kept confidential and shall not be posted or displayed in an area open to the public nor shown to any unauthorized person;

- Current law provides that votes for write-in candidates are only counted for candidates who have filed a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate. Language was added that provides an exemption to this requirement in instances where no candidate has filed for the office in question. This repeals the exemption so that write-in candidates are only counted when a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate has been filed with the proper election authority;
- Adds threatening to harm or engaging in conduct reasonably calculated to harass or alarm an election official or a member of one's family as a class one election offenses; and,
- [SB 84](#) which expands a provision of law governing the casting and counting of provisional ballots to all public elections, rather than just primary or general elections.

Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of County Clerks and Election Authorities who stated who stated the modifications within the legislation would provide more consistency for voters and election authorities and help alleviate confusion for the voting process. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Municipal League, Missouri Association of Counties, League of Women Voters of Missouri, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, Secure Democracy, Missouri School Boards Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Electrical Choice/Competition**

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 417](#), sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The bill requires the PSC to allow commercial, industrial and residential customers of electric utilities to choose an electric generation supplier. Additionally, the bill requires electric utilities to provide open access over their transmission and distribution systems to all electric generation suppliers to sell electricity directly to consumers. Finally, the bill requires the Public Service Commission (PSC) to establish guidelines and procedures to move from the current electric structure to a competitive market for the generation of electricity. The sponsor stated the intent of the legislation is to provide a fair market for consumers to have a choice in who supplies their electricity. Supporting testimony was presented by the Retail Energy Supply Association who stated this would deregulate and completely change the current electricity market which would ultimately benefit consumers by decreasing costs. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Solar Energy Industries Association, Retail Energy Advancement League, Missouri Industrial Energy Consumers. Opposing testimony was presented by Evergy who stated that Missouri is in the bottom ten of price increases over the last five years and other states who have passed similar legislation are now in the process of re-regulating their utilities. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Ameren Missouri. Informational testimony was presented by Oakstone Consulting who gave historical background on the legislation.

### **Electrical Corp Construction**

The Senate Committee on Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 186](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill includes CWIP provisions which allows utilities to recover the cost to do construction projects, while the project is still under construction. Additionally, the bill includes a state reliability mechanism that requires documentation annually that outlines the utility's plan for the upcoming planning year, along with three subsequent years. Lastly, the bill includes Integrated Resources Planning (IRP), which is a long-term plan provided by a utility to show how they plan to meet future energy plans. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to include [SB 618](#), which provides that, subject

to certain limitations, an electrical corporation may include construction work in progress for any new natural gas-generating unit in rate base. The inclusion of construction work in progress shall be in lieu of any applicable allowance for funds used during construction that would have accrued after the effective date of new base rates reflecting inclusion of the construction work in progress in rate base.

Additionally, the committee substitute allows the Public Service Commission to require an electrical corporation to provide documentation annually reflecting the corporation's plan to own or have rights to sufficient capacity to meet its capacity obligations for the upcoming planning year and each of the three subsequent planning years. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-2 vote.

### **Eminent Domain for Utilities**

The House Committee on Rural Community Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 475](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bill prohibits the use of eminent domain by electrical corporations for the construction or erection of any plant, tower, panel, or facility used for wind and solar farms that are owned by public utilities. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Farm Bureau who expressed concern about property rights and the use of eminent domain and informed committee members that the state is seeing a huge influx of commercial wind and solar projects. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Soybean Association and the Missouri Corn Growers Association. Informational testimony was presented by Ameren Missouri who stated they do not have any plans to use eminent domain for any of their wind or solar projects, but may need eminent domain for their grid connector lines. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Employment Security**

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 202](#), sponsored by Representative David Casteel (R-High Ridge). The bill establishes the “Employment Security Program Integrity Act of 2024” to establish methods to ensure identity verification and outlines the responsibility of companies regarding new hires and their wages. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added clarifying language and rearranged two sections to ensure consistency throughout the bill. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 11-6 vote.

### **Energy Production Purposes**

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1160](#), sponsored by Representative Danny Busick (R-Newtown). Currently, there is agriculture land that is being repurposed for commercial energy production. The bill specifies if you repurpose your land, it should be assessed as commercial energy production instead of agriculture. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Cattlemen’s Association who stated that rural communities and counties lose jobs and businesses plus their tax revenue as a result of substantial loss of agricultural dollars and utility-scale solar power plants should be treated like every other industrial, commercial, or energy business. Additional supporting testimony was provided by two private citizens from Callaway County. Opposing testimony was presented by the Clean Grid Alliance who stated there are currently ways to alleviate the concerns this legislation seeks to address by passing taxes at the county level or removing current county commissioners from office. Additional opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Solar Energy Industries Association.



## **Firearm Preemption**

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 74](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair). Currently no political subdivision can regulate the possession of firearms, except to prohibit the use of the open carrying of firearms. The bill repeals such exceptions. Additionally, a \$50,000 penalty may be adjudged to the political subdivision per occurrence. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Firearms Coalition Additional who stated there are no remedies available when counties pass ordinances that clearly violate state law. Additional testimony in support was provided by ArmorVine. Opposing testimony was presented by the City of Kansas City who stated citizens have a right to feel safe in their communities. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense.

## **Firearms Omnibus**

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 147](#), sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). The bill includes several provisions relating to firearms. Specifically, the bill includes provisions which:

- prohibits an employer from terminating an employee on the basis of having a firearm in the employee's vehicle;
- expands current law that allows a person to use deadly force in the event a person unlawfully enters or attempts to enter a dwelling; provides that a person who uses or threatens to use force in self-defense is immune from criminal prosecution and civil action;
- repeals provisions relating to the definition of "rifle" and repeals provisions relating to references to federal law;
- provides that a person commits the offense of unlawful use of a weapon if a person knowingly carries a concealed weapon into educational facilities, police, sheriff, or highway patrol stations without consent, certain correctional institutions, and other public and private facilities;
- provides that any business whose annual gross volume sales made is more than \$500,000 that elects to prohibit the possession of firearms on its premises shall assume custodial responsibility for the safety of any person authorized to carry firearms while on the premises of the business;
- repeals a provision that requires an applicant for a concealed carry permit shall submit his or her application to the sheriff of the county or city in which the applicant resides and allows an applicant to submit to any sheriff in Missouri;
- prohibits the state or any county, municipality or other political subdivision from imposing any ordinance, rule, policy, contractual agreement, or employment agreement restricting an employee with a valid concealed carry permit from carrying a concealed weapon;
- no public higher education institution shall impose any contractual requirement upon any employee or student that generally prohibits or has the effect of generally prohibiting the lawful possession of firearms by such persons or impose any tax or fee on the lawful possession of firearms; and,
- allows lawful licensed concealed carry permit holders to carry a firearm on public bus transit.

Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen. Opposing testimony was presented by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense, NAACP, and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Association of Prosecuting Attorneys who stated jails



throughout the State currently contract with the federal government and if the provisions of the bill pass, and guns are allowed on the premises, they risk losing that federal funding.

The committee then turned its attention to discuss passage of [SB 77](#), sponsored by Senator Adam Schnelting (R-St Charles). The bill allows lawful licensed concealed carry permit holders to carry a firearm on public bus transit. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

### **First Responder Recruitment/Retention**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 71](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-Ballwin). The bill creates the "First Responder Recruitment and Retention Act" to provide free college tuition at public colleges and universities in the state for police officers, firefighters, paramedics, other emergency response professionals, and their dependents. Under the bill, any eligible first responder, emergency response professional, or their dependent may qualify for a waiver of the full cost of tuition at any in-state community college, 4 year college, or university for up to 5 years or 120 credit hours so long as they have not previously completed a bachelor's degree and maintain residency in the state for 5 years following the completion of their program of study. Supporting testimony was presented by the St. Louis County Police Officers Association who stated the bill would help recruit and retain emergency response personnel in the state and improve public safety. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Professional Firefighters Association of Easter Missouri, St. Charles City Fire Department, Missouri Ambulance Association, 911 Service Board, 911 Directors Association, Police Chiefs Association, Fraternal Order of Police, Missouri Community College Association, Association of Career Fire Protection Districts, Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Council on Public Higher Education, and the University of Missouri System. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Foreign Ownership of Ag Land**

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 217](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). Currently, foreign ownership of agricultural land in the state of Missouri may not exceed 1% of the total agricultural land in the state. This bill reduces the percentage to 0% and requires any sale or transfer of land by an alien or foreign business to be reported to the Department of Agriculture and the Attorney General 30 days prior to when the sale or transfer is finalized. Additionally, the bill creates a definition of "nonfarming" with respect to foreign-owned agricultural land being used for nonfarming purposes. Supporting testimony was presented by Missouri Farm Bureau who stated they have a longstanding policy on reducing foreign ownership for agricultural land and have recently adopted a policy which includes exemptions for research. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Rural Crisis Center, State Armor Action and State Shield. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Realtors Association who stated government has no business dictating what landowners may do with their property.

### **Foreign Unmanned Aircraft Law**

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 751](#), sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville) and [HB 930](#), sponsored by Representative Mike Meirath (R-Excelsior Springs). The bills are identical and create "The Foreign Unmanned Aircraft Law", prohibiting public entities from purchasing or acquiring small, unmanned aircraft systems manufactured or assembled by certain foreign entities. Additionally, the bill prohibits the use of such

unmanned aircraft systems after May 1, 2027. The sponsors' intent is to build on the prohibition already enacted by the federal government. Committee members expressed concern this would limit search and rescue operations and inhibit law enforcement efforts as there are no exceptions included in the language. Supporting testimony was presented by the Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems who stated multiple federal agencies are concerned foreign made unmanned drones pose a true security threat and eleven other states are considering similar legislation. Additional supporting testimony was provided by State Armor Action, State Shield, . Opposing testimony was presented by the National Law Enforcement Drone Association who stated this legislation is driven by domestic drone manufacturers who do not want to ensure manufactured drones meet law enforcement needs but instead focus on restrictive legislation at the cost of public safety. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Branson Chief of Police, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, Hillsboro Fire Protection District, the Law Enforcement Legislative Coalition, Missouri Police Chiefs Association, Gladstone Police Department, Metro Chiefs and Sheriffs Association, Cape Girardeau Fire Department, Boone County Fire Protection District, Missouri Task Force One, High Ridge Fire Protection District, Pettis County Sheriff's Office, Missouri Society of Land Surveyors, Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities, Remote Tactical Solutions Group, Kansas City Fire Department, Wright City Fire Protection District and Missouri Fraternal Order of Police. Informational testimony was presented by the City of Kansas City who expressed concerns on behalf of first responder agencies and the stadiums as they use drones as well.

### **Foster Youth BOR**

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 945](#), sponsored by Representative Jamie Gragg (R-Ozark). The bill changes the current statutory reference of "Foster Care Bill of Rights" to "Foster Youth Bill of Rights" and seeks to provide a clearer guide of departmental procedures regarding placement of children. Additionally, the bill provides a clear definition of kinship foster parent adoption. The sponsor stated current laws are too general and his intent to provide clearer universal procedural details. Supporting testimony was presented by a foster parent who stated the legislation helps mitigate the adverse childhood experience (ACEs) many foster children experience. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated removal of the language "best interest of the child" is problematic and removal of the reunification provision is losing sight of the goal of foster care. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Juvenile Justice Association who stated while they generally support the rights outlined in the bill, there needs to be clarification on the client directed council and the standards they must follow.

### **Funeral Related Services**

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 834](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Farnan (R-Stanberry). The bill modifies the process for obtaining a license to practice embalming and to practice funeral directing. Specifically, the bill repeals the current requirements to become a licensed embalmer and to practice funeral directing and replaces them with new requirements. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association who stated this would help shorten the educational timeframe by allowing hands-on apprenticeships to achieve real world training. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Gaming Revenue Allocation**

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HJR 7](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City). This Resolution seeks to alter the way that state revenues derived from gaming would be allocated. Currently, all gaming proceeds must go to public elementary and secondary or higher education institutions. If approved by the voters, this Resolution says that 90% of the gaming funds would still go to public education, but 10% would go toward the administration of the Missouri Veterans Commission. This would amount to around \$36 million annually for the Veterans Commission. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri School Boards Association who opposes the diversion of any of the funds to anything other than education. No supporting testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Gas, Water & Sewage Pipeline Depreciation**

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 531](#) sponsored by Representative Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters). Under this proposal, current law on depreciable tangible personal property will apply, beginning January 1, 2026, to all real property that is in service at any time, is stationary, and used for the purpose of transporting or storage of liquid and gaseous products like water, sewage and natural gas that is not propane or LP gas and does not include petroleum products. Supporting testimony was presented by Associated Industries of Missouri who stated the bill is needed to ensure taxes are assessed consistently throughout the state and assessors currently have the authority to move to a 50-year assessment which is much more expensive. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Spire, Missouri American Water, Central States Water Resources, Missouri Natural Gas Association, Liberty Utilities, Ameren Missouri and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Opposing testimony was presented by the Boone County Assessor and they have been a party to litigation over this issue off and on for several years and their county stands to lose over \$2 million if this bill passes. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri State Assessors Association. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Propane Gas Association and noted they have worked on this issue in the past and do not want to be involved in the current discussion, therefore, propane and LP gas are exempt from the provisions of this legislation.

### **Gender Transition**

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Monday evening to discuss passage of seven bills that, in some form, seek to modify provisions relating to transgender minors. Specifically, [HB 36](#), [HB 113](#), and [HB 624](#), sponsored by Representatives Hardy Billington (R-Poplar Bluff), Brian Seitz (R-Branson), and Bennie Cook (R-Houston) seeks to prohibit transgender students from competing in sports according to their gender identity. During committee discussion, a committee substitute was adopted to combine all three bills into one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-4 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to discuss passage of [HB 35](#), [HB 1016](#), [HB 1038](#), and [HB 1081](#), sponsored by Representatives Jamie Gragg (R-Ozark), and Ben Baker (R-Neosho), Hardy Billington (R-Poplar Bluff), and Brian Seitz (R-Branson). The bills are identical and seek to remove an expiration date on the gender-affirming-care ban and further restrict people under 18 from continuing the prescriptions issued prior to the 2023 law. During committee discussion, a committee substitute was adopted to combine all four bills into one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 10-4 vote.

The Senate Families, Seniors, and Health Committee met Thursday morning to consider passage of [SB 75](#), sponsored by Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 35](#), [HB 1016](#), [HB 1038](#), and [HB 1081](#), highlighted above. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-2 vote.

The committee then turned its attention to consider passage of [SB 26](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Moon (R-Ash Grove). The bill is the Senate companion to [SB 75](#), highlighted above however differs slightly by including a provision relating to “reproductive Health care” shall not be construed to include gender transition surgeries or the use of cross-sex hormones or puberty-blocking drugs. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-2 vote.

### **General Assembly Term Limits**

The House Committee on Elections convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [HJR 67](#), sponsored by Representative Peggy McGaugh (R-Carrollton). Currently, members of the General Assembly can serve no more than eight years total in any one chamber. Upon voter approval, this resolution would remove the single chamber prohibition, allowing members to serve no more than sixteen years total in either chamber. Additionally, the resolution limits the terms a person may serve as Speaker of the House and President Pro Tem of the Senate. Supporting testimony was presented by the League of Women Voters-Missouri who stated this would allow time for legislators to gain institutional knowledge on issues. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Municipal League and private citizens. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate who stated the legislature should respect the voters who instituted term limits.

### **Guardians Ad Litem**

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 338](#), sponsored by Representative Ann Kelley (R-Lamar). The bill clarifies that guardian’s ad litem have an ethical obligation to the children whose best interests the guardians are appointed to represent. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Health Loan Repayment**

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 720](#), sponsored by Representative Dane Diehl (R-Butler). The bill modifies provisions relating to the existing "Health Professional Student Loan Repayment Program" by renaming it to the "Missouri State Loan Repayment Program (MOSLRP) and expanding the program to include those who have graduated from an accredited graduate training program in a discipline required in order to practice as an allopathic medical doctor; an osteopathic medical doctor; a general dentist; a dental hygienist; a registered nurse; a physician assistant; a psychologist; a licensed clinical social worker; a licensed professional counselor; a marital and family therapist; or a pharmacist. Supporting testimony was presented by the Department of Health and Senior Services who stated by adding the additional programs to the state loan program it would allow for additional federal dollars to be pulled down and additional students to be served. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Hospital Association, Cox Health, Associated Students for the University of Missouri, Missouri Psychological Association, Missouri Nurses Association and Association of Missouri Nurse Practitioners. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri State Medical Association who cautioned that the current funding is being utilized and expanding the pool to bring down more funding could limit the access current participants have to funding.

## **Hemp Regulation**

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 696](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bill creates the “Missouri Hemp Consumer Protection Act” and seeks to regulate delta-8 and hemp products. Specifically, the bill prohibits a person who is under the age of 21 from knowingly selling, distributing, or purchasing a hemp-derived consumable product. Additionally, The Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Control (DATC) must issue licenses for the manufacture and sale of hemp-derived consumables, allows for monetary penalties for those operating without a license and allows DATC to promulgate the rules for licensure. Finally, the bill requires all hemp-derived products to be full-panel tested and be supervised by the Department of Health and Senior Services. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Hemp Trade Association who stated hemp-derived products are already legal at the federal level and, as the hemp industry is already self-regulating, the legislation is overreaching with the large fiscal note. Additional supporting testimony was provided by American Shaman, CBD Kratom, Colorful Vibes, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Vape and Alternative Products Association, Regal Dairy, Southpoint Hemp, Missouri Petroleum and Convenience Association, several hemp dispensaries and private citizens. Opposing testimony was presented by MoCannTrade who stated this legislation seeks to double down on the Congressional drafting error that led to the loophole many are seeking to close in Missouri and this particular bill requires almost \$100 million to set up duplicative regulatory framework.

## **Individualized Education Plans**

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 477](#), sponsored by Representative Philip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). Beginning in the 2026-27 school year, the bill requires written parental consent for any modification of a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) that differs more than 25% from the originally agreed-upon IEP as approved by a student's IEP team and parent or guardian. The bill also includes a limit of 10 days for resolving disputes between schools and parents and what recourse is available to families in the event a dispute cannot be resolved. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which provides clarifying language on the definition of a school day, specifies the process for school districts or parents to request an extension, and includes a structure for parents to request recourse when compromise can't be reached. After considerable discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 18-2 vote.

## **Initiative/Referendum Petitions**

The House Committee on Elections convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 575](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Banderman (R-St. Claire). The bill requires petition circulators to be citizens of the United States, residents of Missouri for at least 30 consecutive days prior to the collection of signatures, and prohibits them from being compensated based on the number of signatures collected. Additionally, the bill specifies only Missouri residents may challenge the official ballot title or fiscal note and such challenges be adjudicated at least eight weeks before the election. Finally, the bill requires initiative and referendum petition sample sheets to be submitted to the Secretary of State six months prior to the next general election and if a change occurs that substantively changes the title, all signatures collected are rendered invalid. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 551](#), sponsored by Representative John Martin (R-Columbia) to the title to create one legislative vehicle as the bills are similar. Additionally, the substitute removed the provision prohibiting the removal of federal regulations or rules and the provision which closes the records on initiative



petitions. Finally, the substitute removes the provision under which signatures would be invalidated if the title is substantively changed. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-4 vote.

### **Injunctions**

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 839](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Schulte (R-New Bloomfield). The bill allows the Missouri Attorney General to appeal a preliminary injunction when the state is preliminarily prohibited from implementing, enforcing, or otherwise effectuating any provision of the Missouri Constitution or of any Missouri statute or regulation. Supporting testimony was provided by the Attorney General's Office who stated this is to allow appeal of rulings before a judgement is final which aligns with federal court rules. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Judge Jon Beetem. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Internet – Harmful Material**

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 236](#), sponsored by Representative Sherri Gallick (R-Belton). The bill requires commercial websites with more than 33 1/3% of material that is deemed harmful to children, to verify that those accessing the site are 18 years of age or older. Additionally, the bill imposes a civil penalty for damages if a minor is harmed. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which adds a clause applying the provisions of the bill to sites which contain over 33% of pornography content and adds an information privacy clause. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 16-0 vote.

### **Juror Compensation/Venue**

The House Judiciary Committee convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss [HB 131](#), sponsored by Representative Rudy Veit (R-Wardsville). The bill grants county commissions the authority to set juror pay at the local level rather than adhering to a state-mandated rate. During bill presentation, the sponsor stated the bill is a priority for the Missouri Supreme Court and the intent is to address low juror compensation and improve participation in the judicial system. The Judicial Conference of Missouri, Retired Cole County Judge Jon Beetem, and The Missouri Bar supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

The committee then turned its attention towards [HB 129](#), also sponsored by Representative Veit. The bill creates the "Change of Venue for Capital Cases Fund" to reimburse a county that receives a capital case from another county for costs associated with the sequestering of jurors. Retired Judge Jon Beetem, and a citizen testified in support. No opposing testimony was presented.

### **Juvenile Court Proceedings**

The House Committee on Judiciary convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 736](#), sponsored by Representative David Dolan (R-Sikeston). Currently, the Division of Youth Services is prohibited from keeping a youth beyond the youth's 18th birthday. This bill allows the Division to keep a youth until the youth's 19th birthday. Additionally, the bill raises the age a youth can be considered for dual jurisdiction from 18 to 19 years old. Finally, the bill modifies the definition of "child" and "adult." Supporting testimony was presented by the Judicial Conference of Missouri who stated this legislation is necessary to update statutes which have not been addressed since Missouri passed "Raise the Age" in 2018. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Empower Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.



### **Land Conveyance**

The House Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 431](#) sponsored by Representative Carolyn Caton (R–Blue Springs). The bill would permit the State to convey certain property in Lee’s Summit to the State Highways & Transportation Commission. This land, currently the site of the Missouri State Highway Patrol’s Troop A Headquarters, is necessary for a planned road interchange reconstruction project. Supporting testimony was presented by the City of Lee’s Summit who stated this particular area is heavily congested it is also one of the highest crash areas in the city and it is hoped and expected that the project at this interchange will provide significant safety enhancements and relieve that congestion. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Department of Transportation. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Land Reclamation**

The House Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 106](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Verneti (R-Camdenton). Currently, excavations for the purposes of land improvement where excess minerals that cannot be used on-site are removed from the site and are not crushed, screened or subjected to other means of beneficiation are not required to obtain a surface mining permit. This bill would allow the minerals to be subjected to beneficiation. The bill would also repeal the requirement that the site not be designated as a surface mine by the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration. During bill presentation, the sponsor stated that Lake of the Ozark has a little bit of topsoil and then a lot of rock so they have an issue quite frequently due to current statute, which says you cannot take the rock that you are taking out of a site and resize that on site. Otherwise, you would require additional permits. The bill simply would allow additional work to be done on site to resize rock so that it doesn't have to be taken to another location and have that work done, which would also allow for less traffic and less damage to roads because things would be done all in one place and it also minimizes some federal overreach which would require additional permits should you do some of that work on site. Supporting testimony was presented by the Camden County Presiding Commissioner who stated they would simply like the opportunity to allow developers to remove rock on site rather than having to rezone property. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Horizon Development and Osage Beach City Council. Opposing testimony was presented by INFRA who stated this would give competitors an unfair advantage and would impeded the ability of the state to repair abandoned mines. Additional opposing testimony was provided by League of Women Voters, Missouri Coalition for the Environment and engineers.

### **Landowner Wildlife Rights**

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 563](#), sponsored by Representative Mitch Boggs (R-LaRussell). The bill prohibits the Department of Conservation from requiring landowners to register their property before receiving any landowner hunting permit or to possess a permit to take wildlife on their property. Additionally, the bill requires the Department of Conservation to issue hunting permits to resident and nonresident landowners who own at least five acres of land. Finally, those who qualify for landowner hunting permits may request a two-day permit for nonresident family members and they must be provided free of charge. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 11-5 vote.

### **Law Libraries**

The Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss [SB 18](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St. Louis). The bill modifies provisions relating legal libraries. Specifically, the bill grants the circuit court in the City of St. Louis the ability to increase its surcharge from \$15 to \$20, aligning it with the authority already given to Jackson County and circuits that reimburse the state for family court commissioner salaries. The surcharge funds law library maintenance, family services, courtroom renovations, and technology upgrades. Judge Bob Darker, and the President of the Law Library Association of St. Louis supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

### **Law Officer Resources**

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 92](#), sponsored by Senator Maggie Nurrenbern (D-Kansas City). The bill allows the chief law enforcement executive jurisdiction to request assistance from another jurisdiction, including a jurisdiction outside of the State of Missouri. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 5-0 vote.

### **License Fee Offices**

The House Committee on General Laws convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 207](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Hinman (R-O'Fallon). The bill increases the fees on certain transactions and applies one dollar from every increased fee to the newly created "License Office Distribution Fund." Additionally, the bill specifies the Director of the Department of Revenue is prohibited from awarding fee office contracts to entities affiliated in any manner with a current employee of the Department or with a former employee of the Department for the one-year period following the employee's termination of employment. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-1 vote.

### **Local Election Authority Prohibitions**

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 794](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bill prohibits any government entity from soliciting, accepting, or using any funds or in-kind goods or services for election administration unless they are in kind services or low value. Additionally, the bill prohibits any election authority from joining a membership or purchasing a subscription to any partisan entities. The sponsors' intent with the legislation is to ensure no private entities unduly influence elections. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Massage Therapists**

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [HB 58](#), sponsored by Representative Bruce Sassmann (R-Bland). provides that the Board of Therapeutic Massage ("Board") may apply to the Administrative Hearing Commission ("AHC") for an emergency suspension or restriction of a massage business or massage therapist license. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Chiropractic Physicians Associations who stated this is truly a patient protection bill and they want to be added to existing statutes. Informational testimony was presented by the Division of Professional Registration who answered technical questions from committee members. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

The committee then turned its attention to the public hearing on [HB 766](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). Currently, if someone who is professionally licensed by the Division of Professional Registration and is delinquent on their taxes, may have their license suspended. The bill repeals this provision.

### **Mechanical Contractor Licensing**

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 31](#), sponsored by Senator Doug Beck (D-St. Louis). The bill establishes the Missouri Statewide Mechanical Contractor Licensing Act, which establishes rules and guidelines to allow mechanical contractors to apply for an optional statewide license rather than having multiple licenses per political subdivision, to be regulated by the Division of Professional Registration within the Department of Commerce and Insurance. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

### **Media Literacy/Critical Thinking**

The House Committee on Elementary & Secondary Education convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 116](#), sponsored by Rep. Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis Co), which requires DESE to develop a two-year "media literacy and critical thinking" pilot program in five to seven school districts across the state beginning in the 2026-25 school year with the purpose of promoting student's ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and participate in all forms of media with an emphasis on appropriate online behavior. The bill sponsor stated the pilot program would help schools develop strategies to teach students critical thinking skills and techniques for consuming and understanding media, including artificial intelligence. Supporting testimony was presented by ArmorVine. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of School Librarians, Missouri Press Association, and the Missouri State Teachers Association provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Mental Health Courts**

The Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 218](#), sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill includes within treatment courts, a specific authorization for mental health courts. Supporting testimony was presented by Recovery Lighthouse who stated there is a substantial need for mental health treatment courts and where the courts currently exist have provided second chances for citizens but more funding is needed. It was also noted the Johnson County mental health court has become a national model. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Empower Missouri and the Judicial Conference of Missouri. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Motor Fuel Tax Modifications**

The House Committee on Corrections and Public Institutions convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 572](#), sponsored by Representative Josh Hurlbert (R-Smithville). The bill requires internal and external expenditures be included in the MoDOT annual report. Additionally, for every year internal expenditures exceed 18% of its total expenditures, the Motor Fuel Tax will be reduced by \$.01 per gallon the following fiscal year, but the tax may not be reduced more than \$.05 per gallon. Finally, in any fiscal year following a rate reduction, if the Department's internal expenditures are less than 18% of its total expenditures, the Motor Fuel Tax will be increased by \$.01 per gallon or up to the rate as of August 28, 2025, whichever is less, in the following fiscal year. The sponsor's intent with the legislation

is to begin to rebuild trust with MoDOT and implement guardrails on how taxpayer dollars are spent. The committee was also informed a House Committee Substitute will be forthcoming to increase the cap to 20%. Committee members expressed concerns that a political argument with MoDOT will impact local distributions of funds for transportation projects. Supporting testimony was provided by a state public advocate. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who stated municipalities receive 15% of the gas tax and any penalization of MoDOT will penalize the cities who depend on that funding for local transportation projects. Additional opposing testimony was provided by Callaway County, Missouri Association of Counties, County Commissioners Association of Missouri and the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Informational testimony was presented by MoDOT who informed the committee the federal gas tax and future transportation bills are unknown and would impact the percentage of external spending while internal spending would remain flat. Additionally, the committee was informed for every dollar the legislature would withhold is potential federal dollars that cannot be drawn to Missouri.

### **Noninvasive Plants**

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 105](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). The bill will prohibit the Department of Agriculture from issuing and require suspension of any registration-inspection certificate of a nursery or nursery dealer if they knowingly or intentionally imports exports, buys, sells, transports, distributes, or propagates a plant portion or seeds of a burning bush, callery pear, climbing euonymus, Japanese honeysuckle, or sericea lespedeza. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which added a descriptive list of included plants to clarify the invasive species. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

### **Nonresident Pupil Admission**

The House Committee on Legislative Review convened Tuesday evening to discuss [HB 711](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). The bill allows nonresident pupils to enroll in public schools in the state with certain conditions and outlines the procedures and policies necessary to allow students to transfer between nonresident school districts. Specifically, the legislation would allow students to leave their resident school district to enroll in adjoining districts that opt into the open enrollment program, for a total of up to 3% of the district's student population in the previous year. Transportation would be parents' responsibility, unless the child qualifies for free or reduced lunch or has transportation under an individualized education plan. The bill also establishes the "Parent Public School Choice Fund" to compensate districts for the costs associated with transporting students with specialized needs or who qualify for free and reduced lunch, subject to appropriation. Additionally, the bill prohibits a transferring nonresident student from participating in varsity athletics for at least 365 days and allows any student to participate in open enrollment as long as the transfer does not cause the district to conflict with a provision of an enforceable desegregation court ordered or a court approved desegregation plan. Finally, the bill requires students in a K-8 district wishing to transfer out of the district to do so before their sixth grade year and outlines the process for transportation reimbursement in the event the General Assembly fails to appropriate sufficient funds to the public school choice fund. This bill was voted out of Elementary and Secondary Education last week but was referred to this committee for additional vetting. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which modified several provisions within the bill. Specifically, the substitute:

- Modified the definition of transfer student to include family-based education and non-public school kids and they will count for the 3% cap for the districts;

- Alters the timelines to one month earlier;
- Prohibits school districts from including in their model policy they will not take special education students but does allow for school districts to modify IEPs based on the resources available and allows the parent to decide to return to their original district or not;
- Modifies the timelines for acceptance or rejection of applications for school districts;
- Adds exemptions to the one year attendance requirement;
- Allows for districts to remove a child from open enrollment if their attendance rate falls below 80%; and,
- Limits transportation to 30 miles.

Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-2 vote.

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 215](#), sponsored by Senator Curtis Trent (R-Springfield). The bill is similar to [HB 711](#), highlighted above. However, the bill differs slightly from [HB 711](#) in that it includes charter schools, does not cap the maximum number of students a nonresident district can receive as long as space is available in the nonresident district, requires the resident district to provide transportation to transferring students, and requires the resident district to pay the cost of tuition as set by the nonresident district. Additionally, the bill seeks to create provisions to allow the enrollment of nonresident students in public and public charter school districts in the state. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to add [SB 70](#), sponsored by Senator David Gregory (R-St. Louis), to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 5-2 vote.

### **Ovarian Cancer Awareness**

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 111](#), sponsored by Senator Karla May (D-St. Louis). The bill seeks to designate September as Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill Consent by a 4-0 vote.

### **Peer Review Committees**

The Senate Committee on Emerging Issues and Professional Registration convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [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. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-2 vote.

The House Professional Registration and Licensing Committee convened on Wednesday for a public hearing on [HB 830](#), sponsored by Representative Benny Cook (R-Houston). The bill designates ambulance operators and emergency service personnel as healthcare professionals for peer review committees and classifies their quality improvement activities as peer review committee functions. Supporting testimony was provided by the Mehlville Fire Protection District, Missouri Ambulance Association, Ambulance District Association of Missouri, Missouri State Medical Association, Fire Service Alliance, and Missouri College of Emergency Physicians. Opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys.



### **Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing**

The House Insurance Committee met Monday afternoon to discuss four bills that seek to establish provisions relating to peer-to-peer car-sharing programs. In 2016, MO codified legislation to facilitate ride-share-programs such as Uber and Lyft, it also created a framework to clarify insurance coverage in the event a person takes their vehicle. However, new business models have developed in the field that fall outside of our existing statutes, instead of ride sharing programs people can now also share their vehicles or engage in delivery services. MO statutes now require an update to include these new fields. Specifically, [HB 57](#) sponsored by Representative Jeff Coleman (R-Grain Valley) includes two components, one that addresses the car leasing components by articulating the liability of a shared vehicle. Additionally, the bill concerns delivery drivers such as Uber and seeks to distinguish between personal and commercial liability. [HB 974](#), [HB 1032](#), and [HB 1141](#), sponsored by Representatives Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis) Wendy Hausman (R-St. Peters), and Brad Christ (R-St. Louis), are similar to [HB 57](#), however they do not include the delivery driver, referred to as Uber provisions. During bill presentation, the sponsors stated they are currently working on a potential House committee substitute to combine all four bills into one legislative vehicle. The MO Insurance Coalition (MIC), and Enterprise Mobility testified in support of [HB 57](#) and highlighted the bill provides flexibility by allowing platforms to provide insurance or allow individuals to provide insurance. However, opposed the other three bills because all three omit a term that requires coverage for under insured drivers. Door Dash supported [HB 57](#). Toro, and Walmart supported [HB 974](#), [HB 1032](#), and [HB 1141](#). However opposed [HB 57](#) due to inclusion of scope language and highlighted that 28 other states have enacted peer-to-peer car sharing and have not included scope language. American Property Casualty Insurance Association, Shelter Insurance, and National Association of Mutual Insurance Agencies supported the insurance provisions of all four. A personal injury attorney opposed all bills.

The Senate Committee on Insurance and Banking met Tuesday afternoon to discuss [SB 181](#), sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R-Buffalo). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 57](#), highlighted above. Committee discussion and testimony mirrored the House hearing.

### **Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs)**

The Committee on Senate Families, Seniors and Health convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 45](#), sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill makes numerous changes concerning pharmacy benefit managers (“PBM”), patient benefit plans and pharmacy choice, fees, PBM charges to health benefits plans and reimbursements to pharmacists and pharmacies, and industry transparency. After a brief discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 3-2 vote.

### **Pregnancy Resource Centers**

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 1176](#), sponsored by Representative Christopher Warwick (R-Bolivar). Currently, a taxpayer may be allowed a tax credit in an amount equal to 70% towards a contribution to a pregnancy resource center. Beginning January 1, 2026, the bill increases the credit to 100%. Supporting testimony was presented by Campaign Life Missouri, Pregnancy Help Center of Central Missouri, and Missouri Right to Life. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

### **Principal and Income Act**

The House Committee on Financial Institutions convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 608](#), sponsored by Representative Terry Thompson (R-Lexington). The bill makes a wide range of



technical changes to the Principal & Income Act, to resemble the latest version of the Uniform Income & Principal Act, and establishes the Missouri Uniform Fiduciary Income and Principal Act (MUFIPA). The bill provides that the MUFIPA applies to a trust or estate and a life estate or other term interest in which the interest of one or more persons will be succeeded by the interest of one or more other persons, except as otherwise provided in the terms of a trust or in MUFIPA. The MUFIPA also applies when Missouri is the principal place of administration of a trust or estate or the situs of property that is not held in a trust or estate and is subject to a life estate or other term interest. The bill also addresses fiduciaries' duties and actions. Supporting testimony was presented by an estate and trust attorney and the Missouri Bar Association. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Professional Licensing**

The House Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 478](#), sponsored by Representative Phillip Oehlerking (R-Ballwin). The bill provides that any person with at least 3 years of work experience in an occupation or profession in another state that does not use a license to regulate that occupation or profession may submit an application for licensure in Missouri. Additionally, the relevant oversight body shall require applicants to take a profession-specific exam. If a license is issued, it shall be a one-time, non-renewable temporary license for two years. Finally, upon the temporary license expiring, the person shall be required to apply for a permanent license. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 8-5 vote.

### **Property Tax Mapping**

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on Monday to discuss [HB 411](#) sponsored by Representative Cecelie Williams (R-Dittmer). This legislation seeks to establish a mapping system on the Department of Revenue's website for property taxes that is similar to the sales tax information already provided on their website. The sponsor believes this would be a convenience for taxpayers to utilize when making property purchases. Committee members raised concerns about the fiscal note and asked if there might be somewhere else that this information could be obtained by the taxpayer. Committee members said that it was a big undertaking for the Department of Revenue to put all of the sales tax rates of the over 2,600 taxing jurisdictions, but this would mean they have to create a map that takes the property tax rate down to each household within the state and is likely not feasible. Informational testimony was presented by the Department of Revenue who stated that if the counties do not have this type of GIS information readily available then it would be a cost to the county and they can ask them for it, but if they do not have it available the Department has no authority to make them provide it. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund**

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 778](#), sponsored by Representative Darin Chappell (R-Rogersville) and [HB 290](#), sponsored by Representative Raychel Proudie (D-Ferguson). The bills are similar and repeals the \$150,000 cap on the transfer from the Hazardous Waste Fund to the Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund. Additionally, the bill removes the cap on investigative costs. The only difference between the bills is [HB 778](#) requires the Department of Natural Resources to seek reimbursement of expenses incurred during radioactive waste cleanup from any Federal agency responsible for the site. Informational testimony was presented by the St. Louis Army Corps of Engineers who stated they have been cleaning up Coldwater Creek since 1997 and has involved 756 commercial, private and public properties and

specifically involves remediating heavy metals and the radiological materials. Additional informational testimony was provided by the Missouri Coalition for the Environment and the Department of Natural Resources who cautioned the committee about transferring funds out of the Hazardous Waste Fund as it is a fee-based fund and they have been working since 2019 to reinstate a budgetary agreement with the federal government for further testing and remediation. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee. Supporting testimony was provided by the Sierra Club Missouri Chapter and dozens of private citizens.

The committee then immediately moved to discuss passage of [HB 516](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Matthiesen (R-O'Fallon) and is similar to the two bills highlighted above. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added [HB 778](#) and [HB 290](#) to the bill and included the mandate for the federal government to reimburse the state. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

### **Regional Planning Commissions**

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 240](#), sponsored by Senator Jamie Burger (R-Benton). Under current law, state funds for the East-West Gateway Coordinating Council and for the Mid-America Regional Council are not to exceed \$65,000 and state funds for other regional planning commissions shall not exceed \$25,000. This act changes the sums to \$130,000 and \$50,000, respectively. Additionally, the bill requires the maximum grant amount regional planning commissions may receive be tied to the consumer price index. Supporting testimony was presented by Southeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission and the Missouri Association of Council Governments who stated regional planning commissions are essential to economic development and additional funding would allow for more support to the small communities. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Counties and the Missouri Municipal League. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Religious Freedom Protection**

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday for [HB 75](#), sponsored by Representative Cathy Jo Loy (R- Carthage). The bill prevents public officials from issuing an order that would prohibit a place of worship or religious group from holding religious services or meetings. After a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 106-38 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

### **Residency Requirements**

The House Committee on Rural Community Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss [HB 73](#), sponsored by Representative Tim Taylor (R-Bunceton). The bill will change the requirement of being a resident of the city to be appointed to a local board or commission. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which added language to clarify the provisions of the bill apply to a member of a non-elected board. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

### **Revitalizing Downtowns/Main Streets**

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 35](#), sponsored by Senator Steven Roberts (D-St Louis). The bill establishes a tax credit to provide an opportunity for developers to convert abandoned buildings in downtown areas to

living spaces, stores, etc. The intent is to revitalize downtown areas and incentive investments. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to eliminate some exceptions for large products in order to reduce the fiscal note and restructured some sections throughout the bill to provide clarity. Additionally, the substitute modified the definition of “qualified converting buildings” in order to clarify that any project can be considered, not just residential. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 4-1 vote.

### **Safe Place for Newborns Fund**

The House Committee on Children and Families convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [HB 121](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill modifies the age limit of a newborn infant that may be brought to a newborn safety incubator from 45 days old to 90 days old. Additionally, the bill creates the "Safe Place for Newborns Fund" and provides that the state of Missouri will match moneys from the General Revenue Fund, in the amount of up to \$10,000 per installation of newborn safety incubators. After no discussion the committee passed the bill by a 16-0 vote.

### **School Bus Endorsements**

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 296](#), sponsored by Representative Jim Kalberloh (R-Lowry City). The bill changes the age to 77 from 70 for the number of years the license may be renewed. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was offered which added HB 438, sponsored by Representative Danny Busick (R-Newtown) to the title to create one legislative vehicle. Additionally, the substitute sets the age as 75 for school bus endorsements on a driver's license.

### **School/Student Safety**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 68](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). During bill presentation the sponsor said he intends to offer a substitute bill which requires local education agencies (LEA's) to report all safety incidents or threats to student safety to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) annually and requires DESE to produce a publicly searchable database of all safety threats. Additionally, the substitute will ban the use of electronic devices by students during instructional time, require local school boards to develop processes and policies governing allowable electronic device use in schools and appropriate punishment for students found in violation of the policy. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri NEA who stated it would help teachers focus class time on instruction and remove distractions for students. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Equity in Education Partnership who stated they supported the bill but had concerns over flexibility for English as a Second Language (ESL) students being allowed to use electronic devices for the purpose of translation.

### **Second Amendment Preservation Act**

The House Committee on General Laws convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [HB 1175](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). SAPA was originally passed by the Missouri General Assembly as [HB 85](#) in 2021 but was struck down by the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2024 over the supremacy clause and is now pending before the U.S. Supreme Court. [House Bill 1175](#) seeks to reenact certain portions of the original legislation that were not struck down by the court. The bill, as filed, currently contains some of the old language distinct to federal firearms laws that was struck down, but it will be removed before being voted out of the committee in order to make it look more like

the companion bill ([SCS SB 23](#) sponsored by Senator Rick Brattin (R-Harrisonville)). The sponsor said that even though portions of [HB 85](#) (2021) are pending before the U.S. Supreme Court, he believes it is important to continue defending our Constitution and imperative that we get those portions of SAPA that are not in question reinstated in Missouri law. Supporting testimony was presented by Ron Calzone with Missouri First who stated that he has spearheaded this legislation for many years with the goal of also protecting the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment and specifically ensuring that individual officers, not departments, are protected. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Firearms Coalition and a private citizen from the 131<sup>st</sup> district. While no opposition was voiced to the committee, it was discussed that law enforcement has historically opposed this legislation and continues to oppose it and the lack of their presence in the room should not be perceived as being supportive of the legislation.

### **Section 8 Housing**

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday for [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 the bill's progression, 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. After a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after no further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 104-38 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

### **Settlement Demands**

The House Committee on Commerce met Tuesday afternoon to discuss [HB 437](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Hardwick (R-Dixon). The bill replaces the term "time-limited demand" with "settlement demand". Additionally, the bill specifies that, in any lawsuit alleging damages outside of the norm of the contracted insurer, any prior settlement demand to settle a claim will not be considered to have been a reasonable opportunity to settle the claim unless the demand was made in writing, was sent certified mail, or remained open for acceptance by the liability insurer for at least 90 days from the date the demand was received by the insurer. Shelter Insurance Companies, MO Insurance Coalition, MO Organization of Defense Lawyers, American Property Casualty Insurance Association, MO Insurance <sup>[1]</sup><sub>SEP</sub>Coalition, MO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Associated Industries of MO supported the bill and highlighted the provisions afford insurers a fair and reasonable opportunity to settle third-party liability claims within their policy limits, without putting them at risk for bad faith claims that can run into the millions of dollars in excess of their contractual limits of liability Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys provided opposing testimony stating this legislation would make it harder for those paying insurance premiums to receive a fair judgement.

### **St. Louis Police**

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday for [SB 52](#), sponsored by Senator Nick Schroer (R-St. Charles). The bill, as filed, seeks to return the control of the City of St. Louis Police Department to the Board of Police Commissioners and prohibits the mayor or any city officer from impeding or hindering the board. The bill also specify the number of commissioned officers that must be employed in St. Louis City and sets forth a formula for liability claims. During the bills progression through the

committee process, the bill was modified to set 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. Additionally, the bill also includes the following provisions:

- 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
- Modifies 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
- Provides law enforcement officers the power to stop any person when there are reasonable grounds a crime is about to be committed.

During debate, the sponsor offered a floor substitute to further modify the bill to require juvenile officers in the risk and needs assessment of a child to use a cumulative total of points assessed for all alleged offenses committed for determinations of detention by the court; repeal the August 28, 2024 sunset on electronic monitoring of persons in violation of protection orders; provides that a public official who is removed by a quo warrant judgment may not be elected or appointed to the office they were removed; modifies dangerous felony provisions to include planting a bomb or explosive near a bus or terminal; creates the offense of sexual trafficking of a child; creates the offense of trespass in the third degree; modifies the offense of retail stealing by expanding those provisions to create the offense of stealing; includes training requirements for peace officers; removes the provision that provides law enforcement officers the power to stop any person when there are reasonable grounds a crime is about to be committed; and includes a severability clause in the event any provision is declared invalid under the Constitution. Senator Angela Mosley (D-Florissant) further amended the substitute to create the Missing and Murdered African American Women and Girls Task Force. After considerable debate, the bill was ultimately laid over for further debate another day.

### **State Contracts - Veterans**

The House Committee on Veterans and Armed Forces convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 714](#), sponsored by Representative Dave Griffith (R-Jefferson City). The bill requires all agencies, departments, institutions and other entities of this state and of each political subdivision to give a three-point bonus preference to honorably discharged veteran-owned enterprises that conduct business in Missouri, or that maintain offices or places of business in Missouri, for contracts for the performance of any job or service. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 19-0 vote.

### **Student Achievement/Teacher Salaries/Anti-Bullying**

The House Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education convened Tuesday evening to discuss passage of [HB 712](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Pollitt (R-Sedalia). In its original form the bill required the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop certain standards for measuring student achievement and modified various provisions relating to the compensation of teachers. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute was adopted which requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop metrics to measure "advanced, proficient, grade level, basic, and below basic" standards to measure the success of each school building, district, and statewide achievement in public and public charter schools. The substitute also eliminates a provision in the original bill removing the annual inflationary adjustment to the minimum state teacher salary tied to



the Consumer Price Index which is scheduled to begin in the 2028-29 school year and extends the sunset from 2025 to 2030 on a provision allowing retired teachers to continue teaching in a substitute or part time capacity without impacting their retirement benefit calculation. Additionally, the substitute adds adult high school age of enrollment language from [HB 32](#), adds clarifying language for the required number of days for students in 4 day school weeks to allow for snow day or virtual instruction exceptions, and removes a requirement for the teacher salary schedule to have a specialization in their Master's Degree and instead allows any completed Master's Degree program of study to qualify for the salary schedule. Finally, the substitute eliminates "zero tolerance policies" governing punishment for student bullying, requires DESE to develop a model policy to address bullying and school discipline, requires school districts to implement bullying-response and discipline protocols in a way which restricts punishment to the instigators of bullying and implement programs which educate students on strategies to overcome the negative effects of bullying. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 21-0 vote.

### **Student Associations**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning for a public hearing on [SB 160](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair). The bill prohibits public institutions of higher learning from discriminating against a religious student association or denying a religious student association any benefit available to any other student association. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen who stated government has no right to interfere in the free expression of religion due to ideological differences. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Americans for Prosperity, Missouri Catholic Conference, Chi Alpha Campus Ministry, 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment Partnership and Alliance Defending Freedom. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri NAACP who stated this is a special carve out for religious organizations and is hypocritical when carve outs for diversity are being prohibited. Additional opposing testimony was provided by PROMO, Missouri Equity Education Partnership, ACLU of Missouri and a student.

### **Superintendent Salaries**

The House Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 341](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill defines "administrative staff" and "total compensation" and requires that for the 2026-27 school year, at least 88% of the total compensation expended on teachers and administrative staff by a district, be expended on teachers. Additionally, for the 2027-28 school year and thereafter, the percentage of teacher compensation comprising the total compensation must increase by 1% until it is at least 95%. The sponsor's intent of the legislation is to address teacher compensation. Supporting testimony was presented by a state public advocate who stated administrative costs should never impact teacher salaries. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Council of School Administrators who stated this removes local control and with the creation of the numerous charter schools comes the creation of numerous administrators. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Cooperative School Districts of Kansas City and Missouri State Teachers Association.

### **Survivor Benefit Deductions**

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Thursday to revisit [SB 59](#), sponsored by Senator Jill Carter (R-Granby). The bill authorizes an income tax deduction for all survivor benefits derived as a result of service in the Armed Forces. During debate, the sponsor offered a floor substitute to correct a drafting error. Senator Doug Beck (D-St. Louis) successfully placed an amendment to expand the provisions to



include first responders. Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield) also successfully placed an amendment which changed the title to “Income Tax Deductions” and allow for a \$500 deduction for individual income tax for non-reimbursable expenses for first responders and teachers. Finally, Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee’s Summit) successfully placed an amendment which extends the sunset on the long-term dignity savings account program. Once modified, the Senate provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. After no further debate, the bill was Third Read and Passed by a 31-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

### **Tax Credit – Agricultural**

The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Food Production and Outdoor Resources convened Thursday morning for a public hearing on [SB 30](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb). The bill extends the sunsets on various agricultural tax credits. Specifically, the bill extends the agricultural tax credits from 2028 to 2031 and impacts the Wood Energy Tax Credit, Meat Processing Facilities Tax Credit, Higher Ethanol Fuel Tax Credit, Biodiesel Retail Tax Credit, Urban Farms Tax Credit, Rolling Stock Tax Credit, Agricultural Production Tax Credits and Specialty Agricultural Crops. The sponsor informed the committee a Senate Committee Substitute will be forthcoming which removes the sunsets from these tax credits completely. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Corn Growers Association who stated these tax credits help grow the agriculture industry and extending the sunset provides the industry long-term certainty as many projects are spread across multiple years. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Renewable Fuels Association, Missouri Soybean Association, Poet Pilot Processing, Missouri Forest Products, Railway Supply Institute, Missouri Farm Bureau, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri AgriBusiness Association. Informational testimony was presented by the Department of Agriculture who informed the committee the tax credits have leveraged over \$468 million in direct investment. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Tax Credit – Benevolent**

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Wednesday for [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. During debate, the sponsor successfully offered a floor substitute which adds clarifying language regarding the federal filing of taxes. The bill was further successfully amended by Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair) who modified definitions within the Farmer Owner Tax Credit. Once modified, the Senate provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after no further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 31-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

### **Tax Credit – Domestic Violence**

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 205](#), sponsored by Senator Barbara Washington (D-Kansas City). Current law authorizes a tax credit for contributions made to shelters for victims of domestic violence. This bill would expand the credit for \$1,000 for those who convert abandoned buildings into shelters for victims of domestic violence and a \$500 tax credit for property landowners who rent to victims of domestic violence. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence who stated the bill seeks to expand safe and affordable housing for those fleeing abusive

situations. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Amethyst Place and the National Council of Jewish Women. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Tax Credit Review**

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 1007](#), sponsored by Representative Bill Owen (R-Springfield). The bill seeks to provide a consistent structure and accountability for all tax credits by implementing caps, sunsets, proper oversight, and removal of expired sunsets from statute. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted to exclude provisions relating to the Film Tax Credit as it is a new tax credit and sunsets in 2029. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 6-3 vote.

### **Tax Credits**

The House Ways and Means Committee met Monday afternoon to discuss [HB 326](#), sponsored by Representative Brenda Shields (R-St. Joseph). Currently, when all claims against benevolent tax credits and the Champion for Children Tax Credit are finalized and all tax credits are claimed, if the credits needed to be apportioned, the tax credits are apportioned among all individuals that claim them and those that owe taxes receive a notice from the state of Missouri that you owe your taxes plus interest and penalties. The bill seeks to clarify when all tax credits are claimed and they're apportioned among everyone, the taxpayer has 60 days to pay the taxes that they owe when they get the notice in July, without any penalties or interest. Empower MO, MO Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Capital City Court Appointed Special Advocates, MO Network Against Child Abuse, Food Outreach, Feeding MO, Child Protection Center, and Kids Win MO supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

The Senate dedicated floor time Wednesday afternoon to debate [SB 67](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Henderson (R-Bonne Terre). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 326](#), highlighted above. During debate, the sponsor offered a Senate substitute to change the title to Filing of Income Tax Returns and included a provision to clarify if the federal government moves the filing date again like they did during COVID, the state filing date would move to, and no penalties or interest would be charged to the taxpayer. Senator Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair) further amended the bill to include [SB 682](#), which seeks to clarify current law that was passed in 2023 that authorizes an income tax deduction for certain income received for the sale or lease of farmland to beginning farmers. The bill adds a definition of "taxpayer" to such deduction. Once modified, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes. The Senate dedicated floor time Thursday morning to revisit [SB 67](#). After brief debate, the Senate passed the bill by a 31-1 vote. The bill now will be sent to the House for further consideration.

### **Tax Deduction – Capital Gains**

The House took up and dedicated floor time Tuesday for [HB 594](#), sponsored by Representative Chad Perkins (R-Bowling Green). The bill repeals the tax on capital gains. During the bill's progression, substitute language was adopted which adds [HB 508](#), sponsored by Representative George Hruza (R-St. Louis) to the title as the bills are identical. After a lengthy debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill by voice vote. The bill was revisited on Thursday and, after further debate, was Third Read and Passed by a 100-48 vote. The bill now will be sent to the Senate for further consideration.

### **Tax Deduction – Educators/EMS**

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 12](#), sponsored by Senator Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield). For all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2025, the bill authorizes a tax deduction for income received as salary or compensation for service as a first responder, not to exceed \$500. The act authorizes a tax deduction in the amount of 100% of unreimbursed educator expenses incurred by an eligible educator, also capped at \$500. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by 7-0.

### **Tax Deduction – National Guard**

The Senate took up and dedicated floor time Monday for [SB 163](#), sponsored by Senator Adam Schnelting (R-St. Charles). Current law authorizes an income tax deduction for salary earned as compensation for certain duties performed for the national guard. For all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2026, this act adds performance of state-funded military orders of the national guard, commonly known as state active duty (SAD) or state emergency duty (SED), to such eligible duties. After a brief debate, the senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes and Perfected the bill.

### **Tax Deduction – Savings Accounts**

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 102](#), sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee’s Summit). Current law offers an income tax deduction for 100% of a participating taxpayer’s contributions to a long-term dignity savings account and it is set to sunset on December 31, 2024. The bill extends the sunset on the deduction until December 31, 2029. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

### **Tax Elimination - Income**

The Senate Committee on Economic and Workforce Development convened Wednesday morning for a public hearing on [SJR 31](#), [SJR 20](#), [SJR 24](#), [SJR 42](#), [SJR 32](#), and [SJR 48](#) sponsored by Senators Ben Brown (R-Washington), Curtis Trent (R-Springfield), Nick Schroer (R-O’Fallon), Jill Carter (R-Granby), Brad Hudson (R-Cape Fair), and Adam Schnelting (R-St. Charles) respectively. The resolutions are identical and the Senate companions to HJR 1, sponsored by Representative Bishop Davidson (R-Republic). Upon voter approval, the resolution places a spending cap on the General Assembly’s appropriation authority, creates the Tax Reform Fund for any surplus revenue collections, repeals the prohibition on sales and use tax expansions, eliminates the Missouri income tax and personal capital gains taxes immediately, and imposes a state sales tax on lobbying services of 6%. Supporting testimony was presented by a private citizen who stated this would help curb wasteful government spending while allowing citizens to retain more of their money. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Americans for Tax Reform, Missouri Tax Relief Now and Americans for Prosperity. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Association of Realtors who stated that currently most services are exempt from sales and use taxes and a tax on services is problematic and in essence reducing or eliminating a tax and increasing a different tax to make it revenue neutral still places the same amount of taxes on people. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Budget Project, Missouri Society of CPA’s.

The committee then turned its attention to the public hearing for [SB 151](#), [SB 138](#), [SB 220](#), [SB 228](#), [SB 161](#), also sponsored by Senators Ben Brown, Curtis Trent, Nick Schroer, Jill Carter, and Brad Hudson. Beginning January 1, 2026, a flat rate of 4% personal income tax is imposed on the income of every Missouri resident. The intent of the measures is to statutorily implement provisions proposed in [SJR 31](#),

[SJR 20](#), [SJR 24](#), [SJR 42](#), [SJR 32](#), and [SJR 48](#), detailed above. Supporting testimony was presented by the Associated Industries of Missouri who stated the bills reduce taxes in a responsible way and the bills differ from the resolution as they do not include the tax on services provisions. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Americans for Prosperity. Opposing testimony was presented by Missouri Budget Project and stated that there is no revenue replacement mechanisms to replace the lost revenue.

### **Tax Exemption – Auctioned Property**

The House Committee on Ways and Means convened Monday evening for a public hearing on [HB 493](#), sponsored by Representative Dean Van Schoiack (R-Savannah), and [HB 635](#), sponsored by Representative Jeff Knight (R-Lebanon). The bills are similar and would create a sales tax exemption on tangible personal property that is sold a second or any number of subsequent times after the original point of sale, at an auction. Certain titled items like motor vehicles, boats, trailers, and outboard motors are excluded from this exemption. The sponsors reiterated that these used goods have already been taxed and should not be taxed again. In addition, this legislation creates tax parity between selling used goods from your home, which is not taxable, and selling used goods at an auction house which is taxable. No supporting or opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Tax Exemption – Broadband**

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 743](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). The bill exempts machinery and equipment used to provide broadband from state and local sales and use taxes. Supporting testimony was presented by Associated Industries of Missouri who stated that telecommunication services is currently defined in statute, however cable and satellite type of services are excluded from the definition of telecommunication services. However, the same equipment is used for both services, so the bill is simply providing clarification. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the MCTA, the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, AT&T, Missouri Broadband Providers Association, Missouri Electric Cooperatives, and Gateway Fiber. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

### **Tax Exemption – Early Childhood Education**

The Senate Committee on Progress and Development convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 20](#), sponsored by Senator Brian Williams (D-University City). The bill exempts taxes utilized to fund early childhood educational services from the current law relating to the distribution of sales tax proceeds in St. Louis County. Additionally, the bill allows the proceeds of any tax imposed for the purposes of improving the quality, affordability, and access to early childhood development programs to be deposited into the county or city Early Childhood Education Fund. Finally, funds shall be dispersed to provide financial assistance for early education and care provided by public, private, not-for-profit, and for-profit entities licensed, license-exempt, or registered by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Supporting testimony was presented by an attorney from St. Louis who stated the legislation simply allows for a mechanism to directly fund early childhood education. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the St. Louis Mental Health Board, Franklin County Children and Family Community Resource Board, National Council of Jewish Women and Kids Win Missouri. Informational testimony was presented by the St. Louis County Children Services Fund who informed the committee on the fund's current usage. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

## **Taxes – Emergency Services**

The Senate Committee on Local Government, Elections and Pensions convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [SB 33](#), sponsored by Senator Doug Beck (D-St. Louis). In 2021, legislation referred to as “Wayfair” was passed allowing cities and counties to seek voter approval to collect a use tax for online purchases. While cities and counties already had the ability to pass a use tax, “Wayfair” was specifically passed to address online purchases. When that language was passed, it specifically related to the state, cities, and counties because they already had the ability to propose a use tax on the ballot. It did not include other specialty districts, such as 911, fire districts, or ambulance districts that do not have the authority to propose a use tax on the ballot. This bill seeks to amend the use tax laws to now include any taxing jurisdiction authorized to impose a sales tax on emergency services. During discussion, a Senate Committee Substitute was adopted which modifies who may place members on the State Advisory Council on Emergency Medical Services. Additionally, current law authorizes ambulance and fire protection districts in certain counties to propose a sales tax at a rate of up to 0.5% and this would allow such districts to propose a sales tax of up to 1.0%. Finally, clarifying language was added to ensure those who were eligible and have applied for the property tax credit freeze are not negatively impacted. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by a 7-1 vote.

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 641](#), sponsored by Representative Dan Diehl (R-Butler) and is the House companion bill to [SB 33](#), highlighted above. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Ambulance Association who stated this would be an appropriate cost share to support first responder services. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the State 911 Board, Missouri Directors of 911 Associations, EMS Ambulance District of Bethany Missouri, Ambulance District Association of Missouri, Fire Service Alliance, Lincoln County Ambulance District, Vernon County Ambulance District Director, Monroe City Ambulance District, Stoddard County 911 Services, Barton County Ambulance District, Callaway County Ambulance District, Oregon County Ambulance District, EMS Legal Services, Amazing Walls and Waterfalls, Vernon County Ambulance District, Polk County Central Dispatch, Andrew County Ambulance District, and the general counsel for several ambulance districts. Opposing testimony was presented by a state public advocate.

## **Taxes - Personal Property**

The House Special Committee on Tax Reform convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 988](#), sponsored by Representative Mark Matthiesen (R-O’Fallon). Currently, assessors annually assess all personal property at 33.3%. The bill seeks to phase down the 33.3% of assessed personal property taxes by 2% each year, until personal property assessed value is down to 10%. Supporting testimony was presented by a state public advocate. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

## **Teacher Baseline Salary Grants**

The House Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs convened Monday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 607](#), sponsored by Representative Ed Lewis (R-Moberly). The bill seeks to clarify language relating to additional funding school districts receive if they have 169 calendar school days. Additionally, the bill delays increasing minimum teaching salaries due to inflation from 2030 to 2035. Finally, the bill limits the grants authorized to 50% of the amount necessary for a district to increase minimum teacher’s salaries to meet the threshold. During discussion, a House Committee Substitute removed the provisions which would delay implementation and the provision tying the 50% threshold to teacher salaries. Once modified, the committee passed the bill by an 8-4 vote.



### **Telehealth Services**

The House Committee on Health and Mental Health convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss passage of [HB 825](#), sponsored by Representative Melanie Stinnett (R-Springfield). The bill modifies the definition of “telehealth services” to include audiovisual and audio only services and expands which third-party platforms “telehealth services” may be provided. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 11-0 vote.

The Senate Families, Seniors, and Health Committee convened Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 94](#), sponsored by Senator Patty Lewis (R-Kansas City). The bill is the Senate companion to [HB 825](#), highlighted above. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill consent, by a 6-0 vote.

### **Tobacco Product Regulations**

The House Committee on Commerce convened Tuesday evening for a public hearing on [HB 344](#), sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). The bill specifies that the state shall preempt any local laws, ordinances, orders, rules, or regulations enacted by a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state regulating the sale of tobacco products, alternative nicotine products, or vapor products. The sponsor stated a House Committee Substitute will be forthcoming which will enact a statewide standard raising the age for tobacco products from 18 to 21, also known as Tobacco 21, and still allow local ordinances to be enforced which match state standards. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Vape and Alternative Products Association who stated local ordinances which ban specific products could devastate small business owners and uniformity across the state is preferable. Additional supporting testimony was provided by Missouri Petroleum and Convenience Association, Missouri Grocers Association, Missouri Retailers Association, Associated Industries of Missouri, Excalibur International, Maverick Convenience Stores, Missouri Wholesale Distributors, National Association of Tobacco Outlets and Cigar Association of America. Opposing testimony was presented by the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network who stated local ordinances are proven to reduce cancer risks in citizens and one of the tobacco industry’s chief strategies is to pass legislation pre-empting local ordinances. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the City of Kansas City, Civic Council of Kansas City, Missouri State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, American Heart Association, Missouri Academy of Family Physicians and a private citizen. Informational testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who stated they were concerned with the preemption of local ordinances but after working with the sponsor to ensure local ordinances may still be enforced, they are now neutral.

### **Utility Relocation**

The House Committee on Transportation convened Tuesday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 661](#) sponsored by Representative Ben Keathley (R-Chesterfield). Under this legislation, municipalities and the Missouri Department of Transportation would be required to reimburse non-regulated utilities for the costs associated with relocating their infrastructure from the public right of way. Supporting testimony was presented by the Missouri Cable Telecommunications Association who said that companies should not have to pay the costs associated with moving their equipment when the city decides to use the right of way for a different purpose. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Associated Industries of Missouri, Missouri Association of Electric Cooperatives, Gateway Fiber and AT&T. Opposing testimony was presented by the Missouri Municipal League who testified that cities should not be required to use taxpayer dollars to move a private

company's equipment from the right of way. This legislation would likely hinder growth and expansion of cities. Additional opposing testimony was provided by the Missouri Association of Municipal Utilities, Lee's Summit, and the City of Columbia. Informational testimony was presented by the Deputy Director of the Missouri Department of Transportation who informed the committee that there are all sorts of utilities laid in the right of way along highways and interstates and the state does not charge a fee to use it.

### **Veteran's Day Holiday**

The Senate Committee on Education convened Tuesday morning to discuss passage of [SB 89](#), sponsored by Senator Stephen Webber (D-Columbia). The bill requires the University of Missouri to recognize November 11 of each year as an official holiday in observance of Veteran's Day. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 7-0 vote.

### **Waterways and Ports Trust Fund**

The Senate Committee on Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [SB 125](#), sponsored by Senator Steve Roberts (D-St. Louis). In 2023, [SB 265](#), sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb) was passed and signed into law. The bill established the "Waterways and Ports Trust Fund", and provided that land eligible for projects under the fund be owned or held in a long-term lease by the Missouri Port Authority. Due to the way current law is worded, the St. Louis Port Authority is unable to receive funds from the trust fund because they manage their port rather than own it. The port is actually owned by the City of St. Louis. This bill makes a simple change in the law from "owning" to "managing" the port which would ensure that the St. Louis Port Authority is included in the trust fund. Additionally, the bill includes language to ensure that the trust funds are used solely for the purpose of the Port Authority, as intended. Supporting testimony was provided by the St Louis City Port Authority who stated this is a clerical fix to ensure the St. Louis Port may access the trust fund as was intended in the original legislation. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Port Authority Association and the Missouri Soybean Association. Opposing testimony was presented by ArmorVine who stated this legislation would circumvent the legislative appropriations process and instead allow the ports to directly withdraw fund without oversight.

### **Workers' Comp Claims**

The House Committee on Insurance convened Monday afternoon for a public hearing on [HB 497](#), sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis). The bill seeks to modify several provisions relating to workers' compensation. Specifically, the bill seeks to clarify the prevailing factors standards, to ensure injuries, medical conditions, and disabilities, and the need for treatment are truly the result of a workplace accident and not preexisting conditions that may have been exacerbated. Additionally, the bill adjusts how insurance savings are considered in awards, to prevent situations where employees receive compensation for medical expenses that were already covered by other sources. The bill also creates an early motion to dismiss mechanism for cases that are fundamentally deficient such as those filed untimely, an employee was intoxicated, or the accident did not occur during the course of employment. Finally, the bill allows for appeals of temporary awards and eliminates the penalty that employers have to pay in the event they appeal the decision. Supporting testimony was presented by The Missouri Auto Dealers Association who stated the bill provides clarity for those included under the worker's compensation system. Additional supporting testimony was provided by the Missouri Insurance Coalition, American Property Casualty Insurance Association, MIRMA, Missouri Chamber of

Commerce and Industry, National Association of Mutual Insurance Companies, Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of Missouri and the Missouri Association of Counties. Opposing testimony was presented by workers compensation attorneys who stated the legislation favors employers and it is nearly impossible to prove an injury did not occur due to a pre-existing condition.

### **Youth Services**

The Senate Families, Seniors, and Health Committee met Thursday morning to discuss passage of [SB 43](#), Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Holts Summit). The bill requires the Department of Social Services shall establish a program to provide a comprehensive system of service delivery, education, and residential care for youth with severe behavioral challenges or severe developmental disabilities. During discussion, it was stated the sponsor is still working on a substitute to offer during floor debate. The committee then passed the bill by a 6-0 vote.

### **Hearing Schedules:**

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

### **Calendars:**

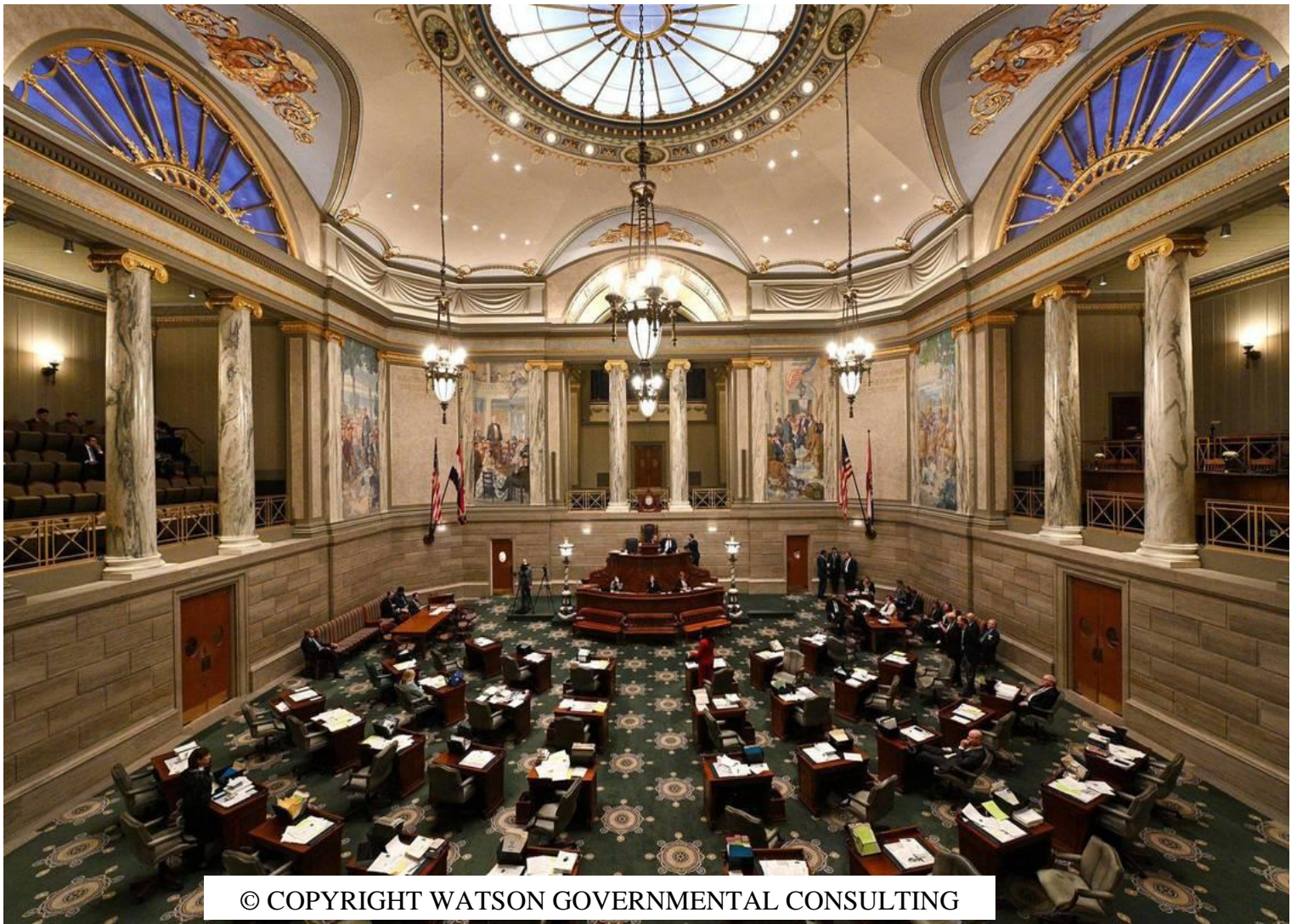
[House](#)  
[Senate](#)

### **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-*





**112 E. High Street**  
**Jefferson City, MO**



**[trent@trentwatson.com](mailto:trent@trentwatson.com)**



**(314) 606-0141**



**[www.trentwatson.com](http://www.trentwatson.com)**