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Capitol Report

April 18, 2024

Dear Neighbor,

Today, the House passed SB 727 by the narrowest of margins 82-69, the exact number of votes needed for passage. I voted NO. The package provides a massive expansion of taxpayer-funded vouchers for private schools and nothing but empty promises for public education. While the voucher expansion is essentially guaranteed, the promises to public schools depend on additional funding the state isn't expected to have and future lawmakers aren't required to provide. The bill as written, only provides funding for two years. It also allows for the creation of charter schools in Columbia against the objections of the Columbia Public Schools and four of the five area state representatives. There were good provisions in the bill that would raise starting teacher pay to \$40,000 annually in Missouri, however, when offered as a stand alone bill or amendment, the measure was voted down each time by House

GOP members. The bill also provides career ladder opportunities for public educators statewide. This is only the second bill that was truly agreed to and passed by both chambers of the legislature and now moves on to the governor's desk where he is expected to sign the bill.

As we only have only four weeks left in the legislative year, the senate has yet to take up the Federal Reimbursement Allowance (FRA), which issues payments to Medicaid and hospitals, the senate has not worked on the budget and neither chamber has done anything about sports betting in Missouri.

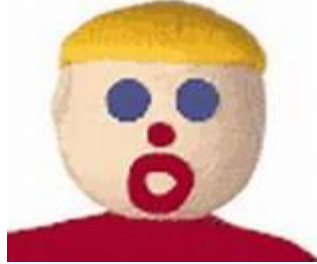
As time begins to wind down, I expect late night sessions to be an occurrence during these final weeks and i will continue to work in your best interest.

*Yours in Service,
Rich*

House Legislative Dashboard



OH
NOOOOOOO!



House advances private school voucher bill to governor

With no votes to spare, the Missouri House of Representative on April 18 granted final passage to legislation originally aimed at expanding the state's private school voucher program that was transformed into an omnibus education bill in order to secure enough votes. It passed on a vote of 82-69, with the bare minimum number of "yes" votes constitutionally required for passage. It now goes to the governor to be signed into law or vetoed.

Senate Bill 727 started as a 12-page measure limited to expanding Missouri's voucher program, which the Republican-controlled legislature first created in 2021. The bill would increase the annual cap on the tax credits used to fund the program from \$50 million to \$75 million and open participation to all Missouri students, instead of just those living in more populous cities or counties as is currently allowed. It also would expand eligibility to kids from wealthier families earning up to 300 percent of what it takes to qualify for the free and reduced lunch program.

The bill ultimately ballooned to dozens of provisions spanning 167 pages in order to get it through the Senate, which approved it March 14 on a vote of 19-10. Key additions call for significantly increasing basic state funding for local public school districts and boosting minimum starting teacher pay from \$25,000 to \$40,000 a year.

It also would financially reward districts that continue to hold classes five days a week and require local voter approval for districts in more populous cities and counties to switch to a four-day schedule. Another provision would authorize charter schools in Boone County, a provision opposed by Democratic lawmakers who represent the county. Charter schools currently can operate only in Kansas City, St. Louis or in unaccredited districts.

Although many of the new provisions enjoyed widespread support, opponents of the bill noted there is no guarantee future lawmakers will provide the necessary funding, which the state likely won't even have given expected downturns in revenue collections in the coming years. By contrast, the tax revenue to be redirected for private school vouchers is essentially secured.



House approves hiking driver, vehicle licensing fees

The House of Representatives voted 115-32 in favor of imposing a 50 percent increase in the service fees the private contractors running the state's license offices charge Missourians for obtaining or renewing driver's licenses or vehicle plates. The legislation now advances to the Senate.

Under House Bill 1775, the service fee for two-year license plates or a six-year driver's license would go from \$12 to \$18. The service fee is in addition to the actual cost of the plates or license, the revenue from which goes to the state and would not increase under the bill.

Lawmakers last doubled the fee to its current rate just five years ago. Supporters of another increase say it's necessary to offset the increased costs of running the license offices. Opponents say imposing another large fee hike on Missouri motorists isn't justified.

The bill also includes 14 other provisions loosely relating to the Missouri Department of Revenue, which oversees the license offices. One would shield from disclosure personal information contained in the vehicle or driver registration records of current or former judges, law enforcement officers or their families. Another would waive fees for homeless children to obtain a non-driver state identification card.



House endorses mandatory life for child sex traffickers

The House of Representatives on an April 16 voice-vote approved legislation that would lock into the Missouri Constitution a mandatory life sentence without eligibility for probation and parole for those found guilty of child sex trafficking. A second, recorded vote is necessary to advance the measure, House

Joint Resolution 132, to the Senate.

Setting mandatory sentencing requirements in the constitution is highly unusual, as the only way to subsequently make changes is with another voter-approved constitutional amendment. If endorsed by both legislative chambers, HJR 132 automatically would go on the Nov. 5 statewide ballot for voter approval.



Senate sends emergency appropriations bill to governor

The Senate voted 30-2 to grant final passage to a \$2.2 million emergency supplementary appropriations bill providing funding for the 200 Missouri National Guard

soldiers and 22 State Highway Patrol troopers Gov. Mike Parson recently ordered to the U.S./Mexico border.

Parson asked for the funding after dispatching Missouri's forces to help maintain order at the border at the request of Texas Gov. Gregg Abbott, a fellow Republican. About 250 Missouri Guard troops are already at the border under federal command at the request of President Joe Biden, a Democrat.

With the Senate vote, House Bill 2016 became the first bill to win final passage during the 2024 legislative session, which began Jan. 3 and ends May 17. Once he formally gets the bill, Parson will have 15 days to sign it into law.



Dr. Roger Best, president of the University of Central Missouri pulled me off the House Floor this week to discuss higher education issues. I am a proud alumnus of UCM.



Sitting senator among dozens of late-session appointments

Gov. Mike Parson on April 12 announced nearly two dozen nominations for state boards and commissions, including several involving some of the most sought after state government posts. However, as of April 18 the Senate had yet to move toward confirming any of his picks.

The timing of the appointments is unusual given that only a few weeks remain before the legislative session ends on May 17. With limited time left for the Senate confirmation process, nominees are even more susceptible than normal to senators using them as

bargaining chips in legislative negotiations. As a result, governors at this point typically wait until the Senate adjourns for the year and then make recess appointments that allow their picks to begin serving immediately, though temporarily, without confirmation. However, since Parson's term ends in January, any recess appointments he were to make likely would be withdrawn by the new governor before the Senate could confirm them.

One of the picks that could have an impact on both the session's final weeks and subsequent legislative campaigns is Parson's selection of state Sen. Greg Razer, D-Kansas City, for the State Tax Commission. If Razer is confirmed and immediately resigns from the Senate, it would mean one fewer Democratic senator available to hold the chamber floor and block legislation the party opposes. Razer had filed to run for a second Senate term this year, so his departure could prompt some incumbent House members to seek his seat and, in turn, require Democrats to find new candidates for affected House races.

The other recent nominations include Ann Marie Baker, a Springfield bank executive, to the State Highways and Transportation Commission, which oversees the Missouri Department of Transportation; John Mitchell, a civil engineer from Kansas City, to the Public Service Commission, the regulatory body for state's investor-owned utilities; and attorney Amy

Westermann of Walnut Grove for the Administrative Hearing Commission, a quasi-judicial board that hears disputes involving state regulations.

In addition, Parson nominated Lyda Krewson, a Democrat who served as St. Louis mayor from 2017-2021, for the University of Missouri System Board of Curators. He also announced two picks for the State Board of Education – Dr. Tawani Ferarini of St. Charles, an economics professor at Lindenwood University, and Dr. Thomas Prater, a Springfield physician. The board governs the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education



Students from Penn Valley travelled to the Capitol to talk with their representatives about the needs of higher education. As a retired teacher, I am dedicated to providing opportunities and funding for Missouri students.

REAL ID

Are you ready?



Beginning **May 7, 2025**, residents of every U.S. state and territory will be required to present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card, or another form of ID accepted by the Transportation Security Administration, to board federally regulated domestic flights.

Individuals must also present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card to access federal facilities, including military bases and federal courthouses, and to enter nuclear power plants.



Missouri's REAL ID-compliant driver licenses and nondriver ID cards will have a **star** in the upper right-hand corner. A license or ID card that is not compliant with REAL ID will have **"Not for REAL ID Purposes"** in the upper right-hand corner.

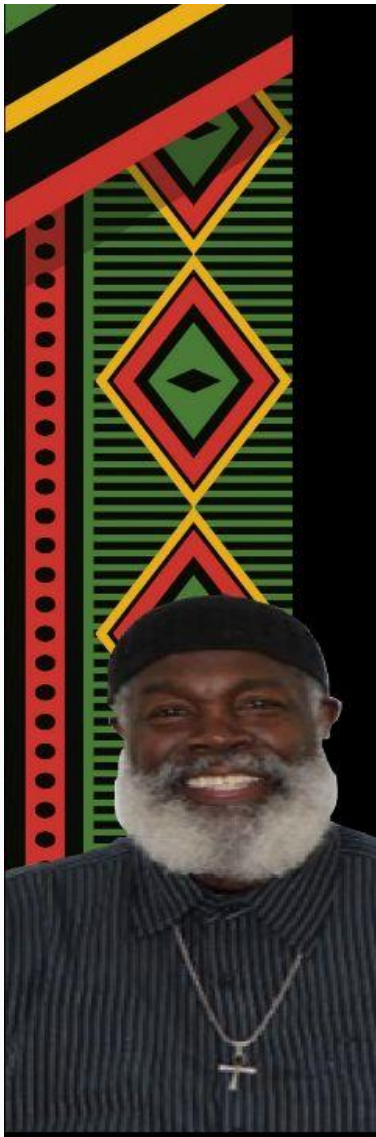
For more information, including where to obtain your REAL ID, visit dor.mo.gov

Save a life. Register to be a donor. 
Visit missouriorgandonor.com for more information.

COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



A green background featuring a large white circular logo on the left that reads "THE GREAT KANSAS CITY CLEANUP" around a central emblem of a bridge and the words "KANSAS CITY". To the right, an illustration shows several people in various colored clothing (yellow, red, green, blue) engaged in cleaning activities like raking, sweeping, and carrying blue bags. At the bottom, the text "APRIL 19-22" is on the left and "SIGN UP KCMO.GOV/CLEANUP" is on the right.



BRW Interview Series - April 2024

"A Conversation with the Elders"

Join Us for insightful and up-front conversations with long-time community activists/advocates as they share their perspectives on life, living and "changing the game" so everyone can "play to win."

SATURDAY, April 20
Calvin Neal

**Community Advocate, Outreach Worker, and
Anti-Crime Activist**

Calvin Neal has been involved with Kansas City's AdHoc Group Against Crime since 1984. Over the years, he has marched with group members to bring healing and justice to KC Metro communities and is known for his generosity and willingness to counsel and help those impacted by violence and/or homicide through his street outreach or group facilitation efforts.

Don't miss this opportunity to see and hear firsthand from this dedicated, community anti-violence advocate on how he began his journey and why he continues to serve as a "foot soldier" for peace and healing in Kansas City's urban core and surrounding area neighborhoods.

1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

**Bruce R. Watkins
Cultural Heritage Center**

3700 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., KCMO

*Talk and Audience Q&A
"Meet & Greet" Reception
Following Program*

**Free to Public - Limited Seating
To RSVP - call 816.513.0700 or
BruceRWatkinsCHC@kcmo.org**



**Brucewatkinscenter.com
kcparks.org**



KC SUMMER 2024!

CHILDREN & YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES & RESOURCES



UPPER ROOM KC

- Reading/Math
- Fieldtrips
- Breakfast and Lunch
- **Ages K-8th grade**
- May 30-July 24
- Full day 7:30am-6pm
- www.upperroomkc.org
- 816-363-3819



BOYS & GIRLS CLUB KC

ATOMIC BLAST SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

- **Ages 5-12:** math, science, reading and writing
- **Ages 13-18:** college tours, first job and internship programs
- June 3 - Aug 2
- Full day 7am - 6pm
- www.helpkckids.org
- 816-361-3600



KANSAS CITY YMCA

SUMMER PROGRAM

- **Ages 5-12:** full day summer camps at multiple sites
- **Ages 13-18:** summer youth volunteer program
- June 3 - Aug 9
- Full day 8am - 5pm
- www.kansascityymca.org
- 816-360-3390



TOMLIN ACADEMY PRE-K SUMMER

SUMMER PROGRAM

- **Ages 3-5** full day summer camp
- June 3 - Aug 9
- Full day 6am - 6pm
- www.tomlinacademy.net
- 816-785-7878



PARKS & REC SUMMER CAMPS

- Seven summer camp sites for
- **Ages 6-15**
- Full day 7:30am-5:30pm
- June 3 - Aug 9
- www.kcparks.org
- 816-513-7500



WE CODE KC

- ONGOING stem camps for youth
- kids learn to code, design websites, and more
- **ages 7-17**
- different days and times
- June 3 - Aug 9
- www.wecodekc.org
- 816-434-0551
- NOT a full day camp



KCPD: POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE

- **Ages 8-18**, enrolled in school
- Coaching, life skills and mentoring through weekly sports practices
- www.kcpal.org
- 816-241-6816



GRACE UNITED FREEDOM SCHOOL KC

- **Ages 5-12**
- Full day reading and math
- Fieldtrips
- Breakfast and lunch provided
- June-August
- www.graceunitedkc.org
- 816-289-6062
- Full day camp



FRONT PORCH ALLIANCE

- **"Porch Storytellers"**: Paint, draw, collage, write poetry, etc
- **"Reel Collectors"**: Training in filmmaking and storytelling
- **Ages 13-17**
- www.frontporchalliance.org
- 816-921-8812
- NOT a full day camp



YOUTH AMBASSADORS

- **Grades 9-12 only**
- Paid entrepreneurship, job skills, & financial literacy training
- Fieldtrips
- Breakfast and lunch provided
- June-August
- www.youthambassadorskc.org
- 816-793-3833



GREAT JOBS KC

- **Ages 17+ only**
- Paid job skills training, certification & job placement
- Ongoing kids can enroll any time
- Open to adults as well
- www.greatjobskc.org
- 816-581-5700
- NOT a full day camp



UNI Summer 6 week programs

- **Grades 9-12 only**
- 6 week policy program
- kids learn to create and advocate for policies they care about
- Grades 3-5 only
- Kids write and publish their own books
- www.uni-kc.org
- 816-231-0822

Negro Leagues Baseball
Museum 2024 Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS

**MARCH OF THE
MONARCHS**

Saturday, May 4

**JAZZ AND JACKIE:
SALUTE TO
JACKIE ROBINSON**

Saturday, May 11

**HEART OF AMERICA
HOT DOG FESTIVAL**

Saturday, August 3

**BUCK O'NEIL
GOLF TOURNAMENT**

Thursday, August 15
(VIP Reception is
August 14 at the NLBM)

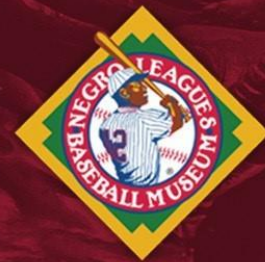
**NIGHT OF THE
HARVEST MOON**

Friday, October 25

**100TH ANNIVERSARY
MONARCHS BALL**

Saturday, November 2024
date to be determined

Additional details will be provided when available.
All dates are subject to change. For more information,
please visit www.nlbm.com or call 816.221.1920.



RIGHT TO COUNSEL

FREE Legal Services for Tenants Facing Eviction



KANSAS CITY
MISSOURI



KC is the **13th city**
to offer this service free



Helped **100s of families**
Since launching June 1

**JACKSON COUNTY
HOUSING COURT
EVICTION RATE**



without RtC

99%

VS

with RtC

<20%

816-474-5112 | gkcassistanceprogram.org/EvictionDefense/



LINC
Local Investment Commission

Part-Time Child Care Jobs Now Hiring!

North Kansas City
Kansas City Public Schools
Center
Hickman Mills
Grandview

LINC Caring Communities Sites

Contact: Carol Green, (816) 739-9314, cgreen@klinc.org

Apply: klinc.org/jobs

**The reward has been raised to
\$30,000 for Dominic**



**GREATER KANSAS CITY CRIME STOPPERS
816-474-TIPS HOTLINE**

**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

FROM: Det. Kevin Boehm, Crime Stoppers Coordinator

SUBJECT: Reward Increase – 9 Year Old Dominic Young Homicide

KANSAS CITY, MO --- The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Greater KC Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline continue to seek information in the January 20, 2018 homicide of 9 year old Dominic Young Jr. at 71 Highway and Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd.

Dominic Young Jr. was apparently hit by a stray gunshot while occupying a vehicle driven by his father and died as a result of his injuries. Dominic, his father and brother were en route to Grandview at the time. The vehicle driven by Dominic's father was hit by gunshots from other vehicles apparently engaged in a gunfight according to statements.

KCPD found a possible crime scene near the intersection where the father said the shooting happened. When the father arrived home in Grandview, Dominic was not responsive. Grandview police initially responded to the father's home and found the boy in critical condition. He was later pronounced dead at a hospital.

A number of community leaders and organizations including State Representative Richard Brown, former City Councilmen Kevin McManus, Scott Taylor, Scott Wagner, John Sharp; the City of KCMO and Concord Fortress of Hope Church (Pastor Ron Lindsay) have come forward to increase the existing reward in the case up to \$30,000.00. Those leaders are available for comment in regard to the case.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Greater Kansas City TIPS Hotline at 816-474-TIPS (8477), TIPS may also be submitted electronically at www.KCcrimestoppers.com, or by downloading our NEW mobile app, P3TIPS, on Google Play or the Apple iOS stores for FREE. Information leading to an arrest and/or filing of charges could be eligible for up to \$30,000.00 in reward money. ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS.



Remain Anonymous • Receive Cash Rewards

Tips Hotline

816-474-8477

Web Tips

www.KCcrimestoppers.com

Free Mobile App

www.P3Tips.com

*** A program of the KC Metropolitan Crime Commission**

My office in Jefferson City is available to assist you with questions you may have about state government or legislative issues. Please call, email or write anytime. If you are unable to reach me, my assistant, Donna Gentzsch is ready to help you. If you are in Jefferson City, come by my Capitol office in room 134, and introduce yourself. The door is always open and I encourage you to visit.

[Please forward this email to your friends and family who want to know how what is happening in Jefferson City will impact them here at home.](#)



Rep. Richard Brown

Assistant Minority Floor Leader

MO House of Representatives

201 West Capitol Avenue

Room 134

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Phone

573-751-7639

Email:

richard.brown@house.mo.gov

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any feedback, questions or ideas!

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