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Capitol Report

March 14, 2024

Dear Neighbor,

Session adjourned this morning and now the legislature heads into our Spring Break. From my past experience, I have found that bills that have not been vetted or passed at this point have a tendency of not being passed into law.

I am disappointed that nothing has been done to address the issue of gun violence that has plagued our state. I am also disappointed that the so called "school funding formula" is still inadequately funding our schools.

Upon our return, we will begin to discuss the state budget. With some Republican legislators wanting to eliminate the corporate income tax in our state, I worry about shortfalls in the budget for our schools, roads and bridges.

There is much work to be done when we reconvene in two weeks and I will continue to press forward for our district.

Have a great weekend and Happy St. Patrick's Day!

Yours in Service,

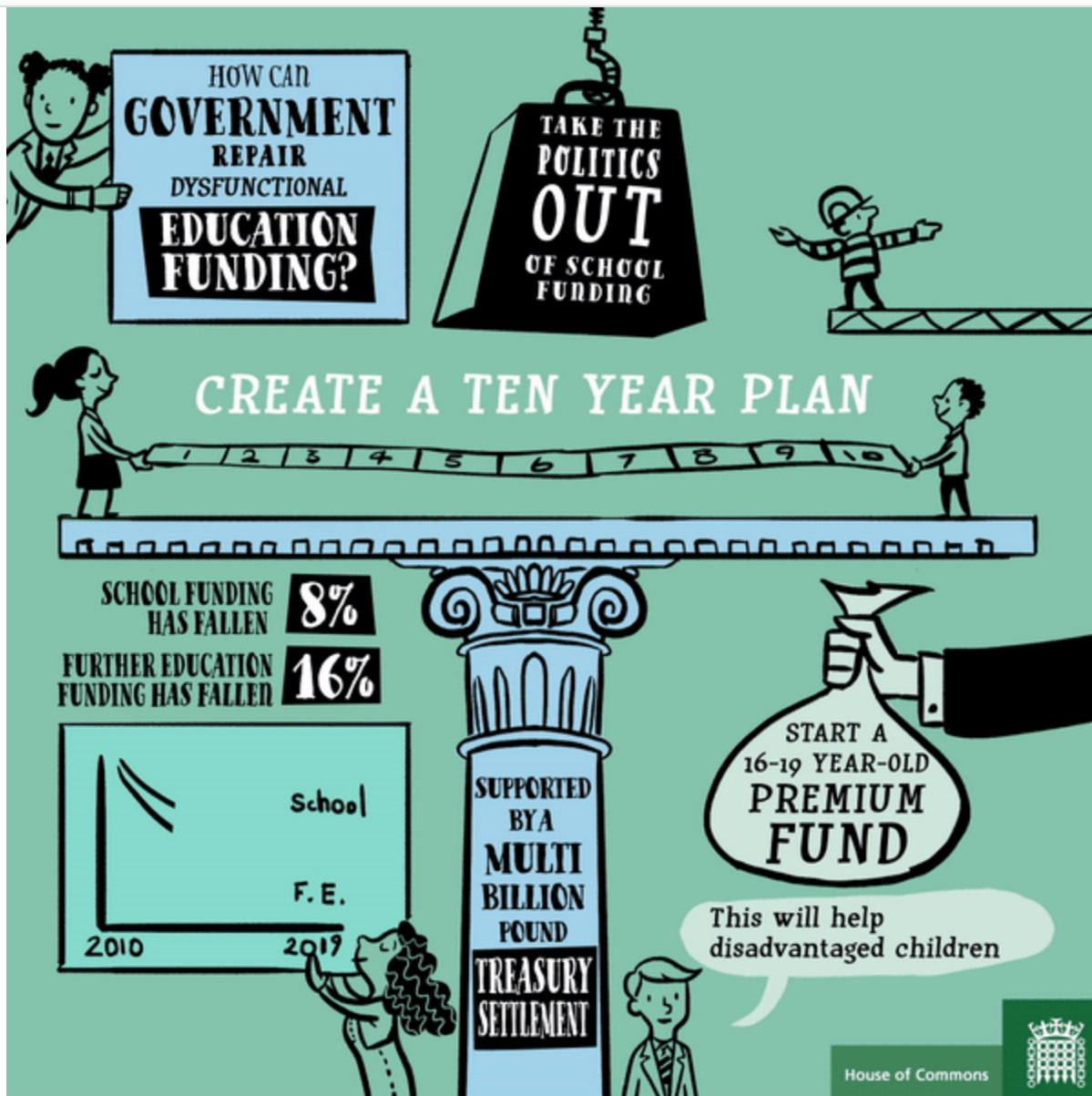
Rich

House Legislative Dashboard



HAPPY
St. Patrick's
DAY

A festive St. Patrick's Day graphic. The text "HAPPY St. Patrick's DAY" is rendered in a bubbly, 3D font with a green-to-yellow gradient and a sparkling texture. A green leprechaun hat with a purple band and a gold buckle is positioned behind the word "St. Patrick's". Three green shamrocks are scattered around the text: one at the top left, one at the bottom left, and one at the bottom right.



Senate approves wide-ranging omnibus education bill

The Missouri Senate on March 12 ended a two-day Democratic filibuster of legislation seeking to expand the

state's private school voucher program by transforming it into an omnibus bill containing numerous provisions intended to bolster public education – and convince Democrats to stand down, even though they still voted against it.

Senate Bill 727 started as a 12-page bill limited to expanding Missouri's voucher program, which the Republican-controlled legislature first created in 2021. Those provisions would double the annual cap on the tax credits used to fund the program from \$50 million to \$100 million and allow students statewide to participate, instead of just those living in more populous cities or counties. It also would expand eligibility to kids from families with incomes of up to 400 percent of what it takes to qualify for the free and reduced lunch program, or about \$220,000 a year for a family of four.

The Senate ultimately expanded the bill to dozens of provision spanning to 167 pages. Some 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 additional provision, though one Democrats opposed, would authorize charter schools in Boone County. Charter schools currently can operate only in Kansas City, St. Louis or in unaccredited districts.

The Senate on March 14 voted 19-10 to advance the measure to the House of Representatives, where its fate is uncertain. If the House were to make substantial changes to

the legislation, it could jeopardize its chances of reaching a final vote in the Senate.



House votes to eliminate Missouri's corporate income tax

Corporations would pay no state income taxes under legislation the Missouri House of Representatives granted first-round approval on March 12. The bill would cost the state an estimated \$884.39 million a year in lost revenue once fully implemented in 2028.

The substantially reduced revenue collections that would result from eliminating the corporate income tax would be in addition to the billions the state has already forgone due to multiple large tax cuts the Republican-controlled General Assembly has enacted over the last decade, including a \$2 billion income tax cut lawmakers approved just 18 months

ago.

Although an influx of federal pandemic relief funds in recent years has so far masked the financial consequences of the tax cuts, that is ending with flat revenue collections expected for the upcoming 2025 fiscal year and revenue declines likely coming soon. Additional major tax cuts would greatly exacerbate the situation.

Down from a high of 6.5 percent, Missouri's corporate income tax rate currently stands at 4 percent. Under House Bill 2274, the tax would be completely phased out over three years. Starting on Jan. 1, 2025, the rate would drop by one percentage point per year until being zeroed out as of Jan. 1, 2028. A second vote is required to advance the bill to the Senate.



House moves to stop state from taking foster kids' money

The Missouri Children's Division could no longer take the federal survivor benefits of foster children to help pay for their care under legislation the House of Representatives granted first-round approval on March 14. A second vote is required to advance the bill to the Senate.

At issue is money from survivor benefits a child in foster care receives from Social Security, the Veterans Administration or the Railroad Retirement Board following the death of a parent. House Bill 2227 would prohibit the Children's Division from using that money to pay for foster care costs the division otherwise would provide at no cost to the child. Under the bill, the money instead would be set aside for the child's later use.

The division currently collects about \$6.57 million a year in such benefits on behalf of kids in foster care. Supporters of ending this practice say it's unfair to force children to pay for their own care and note that when they age out of the system they typically have no assets and are left to fend for themselves. Instead, they say the kids should have that money available to pay for college tuition or otherwise begin their lives outside of the system.



Darren Forbes, 27th District resident, visited with me with Blue Valley Industries and ETIAS to lobby for more funding for persons with disabilities.



House endorses limiting STL earning tax on remote work

The Missouri House of Representatives on March 11 granted preliminary approval to legislation aimed at stopping St. Louis from imposing its local earnings tax on people who work remotely from outside the city for companies located in the city. A second vote is required to advance the bill to the Senate.

St. Louis and Kansas City are the only Missouri municipalities authorized to impose a 1 percent earnings tax on people who either live or work in their cities. While both cities historically had exempted remote work conducted elsewhere from being subject taxation, St. Louis changed its policy during the pandemic and sought to levy the tax on non-city residents working remotely.

The issue is currently being litigated, with St. Louis losing at the trial level. The Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern District recently heard arguments in the case but hasn't yet issue a ruling. House Bill 1516 would specify that remote

work performed from outside the city cannot be taxed, and effectively preempt an appellate ruling in the city's favor moving forward.



House votes to clarify Jackson Co. assessor must be elected

The Missouri House of Representatives advanced a proposed constitutional amendment to the Senate on March 7 that would clarify Jackson County is required to have an elected county assessor. The action came on a vote of 116-10, with 18 lawmakers voting “present.”

A 2010 constitutional change that Missouri voters ratified with 74.1 percent support requires all charter counties to have an elected county assessor, except those with populations between 600,000 and 700,000 residents – an exemption that at the time applied only to Jackson County.

With the 2020 U.S. Census, however, Jackson County's population now exceeds 700,000 residents, meaning it no

longer enjoys the constitutional exemption. Despite that fact, the Jackson County assessor has remained an appointed position, with the county erroneously claiming a state law keeps the exemption in place even though the county's population has moved outside of the protected range. However, since constitutional provisions trump statutory ones, the law the county cites cannot apply to this situation.

House Joint Resolution 68 would eliminate the population exemption to leave no argument that Jackson County is constitutionally required to have an elected assessor. If also approved by the Senate, HJR 68 automatically would go on the Nov. 5 statewide ballot for voter ratification.



The Missouri Cattlemen are regular visitors to my office. Chuck Miller, President of the Missouri Cattlemen, is standing next to me.



**STOP
PLAYING
POLITICS WITH
THE COURTS**

Senate approves measure to override court rulings on fees

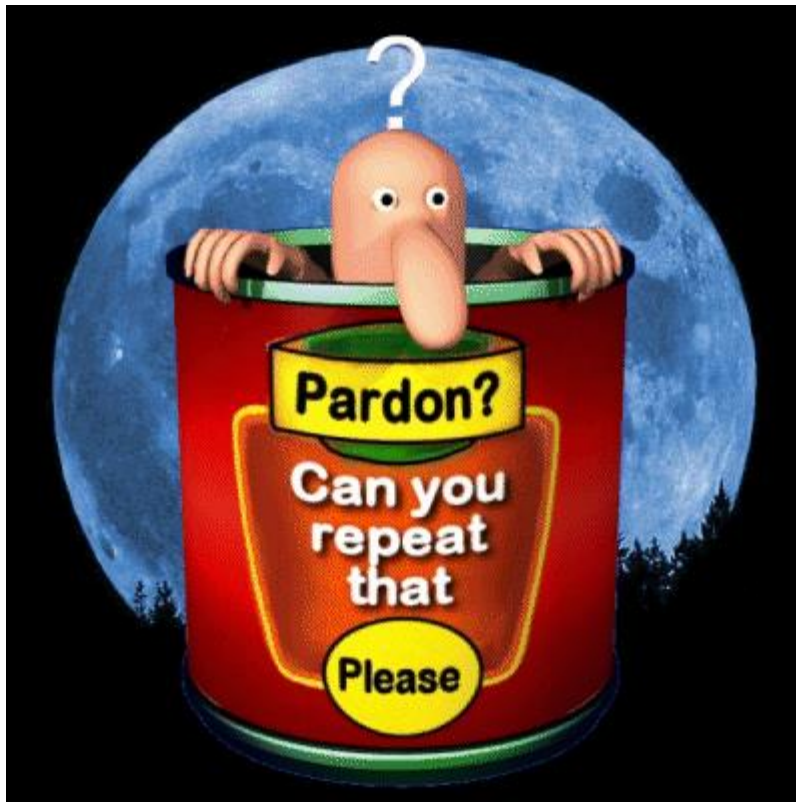
The Missouri Senate on March 7 voted 25-7 to approve a proposed constitutional amendment that seeks to circumvent longstanding Missouri Supreme Court precedent prohibiting revenue from fees imposed on court cases from being used for purposes other than judicial operations. The

measure now advances to the House of Representatives, where a committee has already approved similar legislation.

Senate Joint Resolution 71 asks Missouri voters to amend the state constitution to authorize court fees that generate revenue for the salaries and benefits of current and retired county sheriffs and prosecuting attorneys. Supreme Court precedent has prohibited levying court fees for non-judicial purposes since at least the 1980s, but SJR 71 was specifically prompted by a 2021 decision striking down a \$3 surcharge on traffic offenses to provide funding for the Missouri Sheriff's Retirement System.

Although the purpose of SJR 71 is to authorize a funding source for law enforcement and local prosecutors that currently is unconstitutional, the ballot language written into it instead asks voters if they want "to preserve funding of law enforcement personnel for the administration of justice" without mentioning it would authorize an unlimited amount of fees to be imposed.

The House Pensions Committee voted 8-0 on Feb. 6 to advance its version of the proposal, House Joint Resolution 92. That measure is currently on House debate calendar and could be taken up at any time. If either the House or Senate version wins final legislative approval, the issue automatically would go on the Nov. 5 statewide ballot for voter ratification.



Parson criticized for freeing son of Chiefs coach from prison

Drawing fierce bipartisan criticism, Gov. Mike Parson's office on March 1 announced he had commuted the prison sentence of a former Kansas City Chiefs assistant coach who caused life-altering brain injuries to a 5-year-old girl and also injured several others during a drunken driving crash in 2021. Parson, a Republican and longtime Chiefs season ticket holder, made no public statement concerning the clemency, which he issued in February.

Prosecutors said Britt Reid, the son of current Chiefs head coach Andy Reid, was driving drunk at 83 miles per hour

when he crashed his pickup into two vehicles that were stopped along a highway entrance ramp, according to The Kansas City Star. Ariel Young, a passenger in one of the vehicles, suffered a traumatic brain injury and was in a coma for 11 days.

The Chiefs subsequently fired Britt Reid and reached a financial settlement with Ariel's family to provide for her ongoing care. Last year, Reid pleaded guilty to driving while intoxicated and causing serious injury and was sentenced a three-year prison term. Several state elected officials of both political parties condemned Parson's decision after it became public.

Jackson County Prosecuting Attorney Jean Peters Baker, a Democrat, in a statement said Parson "used his political power to free a man with status, privilege and connections." She also blasted the governor for not contacting Ariel's family or prosecutors before making his decision.

"There simply can be no response that explains away the failure to notify victims of the offender," Baker said. "To Ariel's family, I offered my resolve to continue to fight for just sentences for those who injure others due to the reckless decision to drink alcohol and operate a motor vehicle."

Under the terms of his commutation, Reid was released from prison but remains under house arrest for the duration of his term, which runs until Oct. 31, 2025. He is required to meet weekly with a parole officer, work at least 30 hours per week and undertake 10 hours of community service per month.



House approves emergency funding to send troops to Texas

The Missouri House of Representatives on March 7 voted 122-12, with seven members voting “present,” to approve a \$2.2 million emergency supplementary appropriations bill to provide funding to send 200 Missouri National Guard soldiers and 22 State Highway Patrol troopers to the Mexican border. The bill now advances to the Senate.

Gov. Mike 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.



Supreme Court won't review ex-KCPD officer's conviction

Without comment, the Missouri Supreme Court on March 5 declined to consider the appeal of the only Kansas City police officer ever convicted of killing a Black person. The former officer, who is serving a six-year prison term, already has asked Gov. Mike Parson for a pardon.

By not taking the case, the high court let stand former KCPD detective Eric DeValkenaere's convictions for involuntary manslaughter and armed criminal action for fatally shooting Cameron Lamb, a 26-year-old father of three, on Dec. 3, 2019. The Missouri Court of Appeals Western District rejected DeValkenaere's initial appeal in October.

DeValkenaere was investigating alleged traffic violations when he fatally shot Lamb as Lamb was parking his truck in a garage behind his house. Following a bench trial, the judge determined DeValkenaere was illegally present on Lamb's property and had no legitimate cause for using deadly force. In rejecting his appeal, the Western District said DeValkenaere offered no evidence the conviction was

erroneous.

The case took an unusual turn this summer when Republican Attorney General Andrew Bailey, whose office typically defends convictions on appeal, instead sought to have DeValkenaere's convictions reversed. Given Bailey's position, the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, which handled the case at trial, stepped in argue for the convictions to be upheld.

Publicly, Parson has been noncommittal regarding whether he will pardon DeValkenaere. After the possibility was first publicly raised in July, Black community leaders in Kansas City strongly urged the governor against doing so. The case is *State of Missouri v. Eric DeValkenaere*.



Couple can't have guns back despite gubernatorial pardon

A St. Louis couple whom Gov. Mike Parson pardoned after they pleaded guilty to misdemeanor charges for brandishing firearms at anti-police brutality protesters won't get their gun back after the Missouri Supreme Court on March 6 declined to hear their case.

The June 2020 incident generated national controversy after the St. Louis Post-Dispatch published photographs of Mark and Patricia McCloskey menacingly pointing their weapons at protesters who walked past their house on the way to the nearby home of then-St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson.

The McCloskeys originally were charged with felonies but in

June 2021 pleaded guilty to misdemeanors and, as part of their plea agreement, forfeited ownership of the weapons involved. Parson, a Republican, pardoned the couple about six weeks later.

Mark McCloskey subsequently sought a court to order to have the firearms returned. A St. Louis judge rejected McCloskey's request, finding the pardon didn't entitle them to have the weapons back. The Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern District upheld that ruling in December. The case is *Mark T. McCloskey v. State of Missouri, et al.*



Net state general revenue collections up 1.3 percent for year

Year-to-date net state general revenue collections increased 1.3 percent through the first eight months of the

2024 fiscal year compared to the same period in FY 2023, going from \$8.31 billion last year to \$8.42 billion this year, according to revenue data reported March 6 by the Missouri Division of Budget and Planning. Collections had been down 0.2 percent through the first seven months of the fiscal year.

Net general revenue collections in February 2024 increased 18 percent compared to those for February 2023, going from \$703.5 million last year to \$830.3 million this year. Growth in both income and sales tax collections contributed to the robust collections for the month.

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

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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

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COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS





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DO YOU QUALIFY?



YOU MUST MAKE LESS THAN **60% AMI***

Household Size	2021 Household Income
1	\$40,680
2	\$46,500
3	\$52,320
4	\$58,080
5	\$62,760
6	\$67,380
7	\$72,060
8	\$76,680

*AREA MEDIAN INCOME



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Apply: kclinc.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.



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* 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 Gentsch 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

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Room 134

Jefferson City, MO 65101

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573-751-7639

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

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