



Capitol Report

April 8, 2023

[Email](#) | [Web Page](#) | [Bills Sponsored](#) | [District 27](#)

Dear Neighbor,

This was a less controversial week on the House Floor as opposed to the previous. In a straight party line vote, the Republicans passed HB 703 which imposes a lot of new restrictions on the initiative petition process in Missouri.

I feel the current process works in our state and the proposed changes make it nearly impossible for citizens to make changes

when they cannot get the change they want in the legislature. Currently, changes enacted by citizens through the initiative petition campaign include the expansion of Medicaid and the legalization of medicinal and recreational marijuana. Under the proposed legislation, the beforementioned changes in our laws would not have passed.

Sports Betting has also stalled over in the Senate. Many Missourians are eager to have the measure passed into law, but there are still gray areas that legislators are trying to iron out.

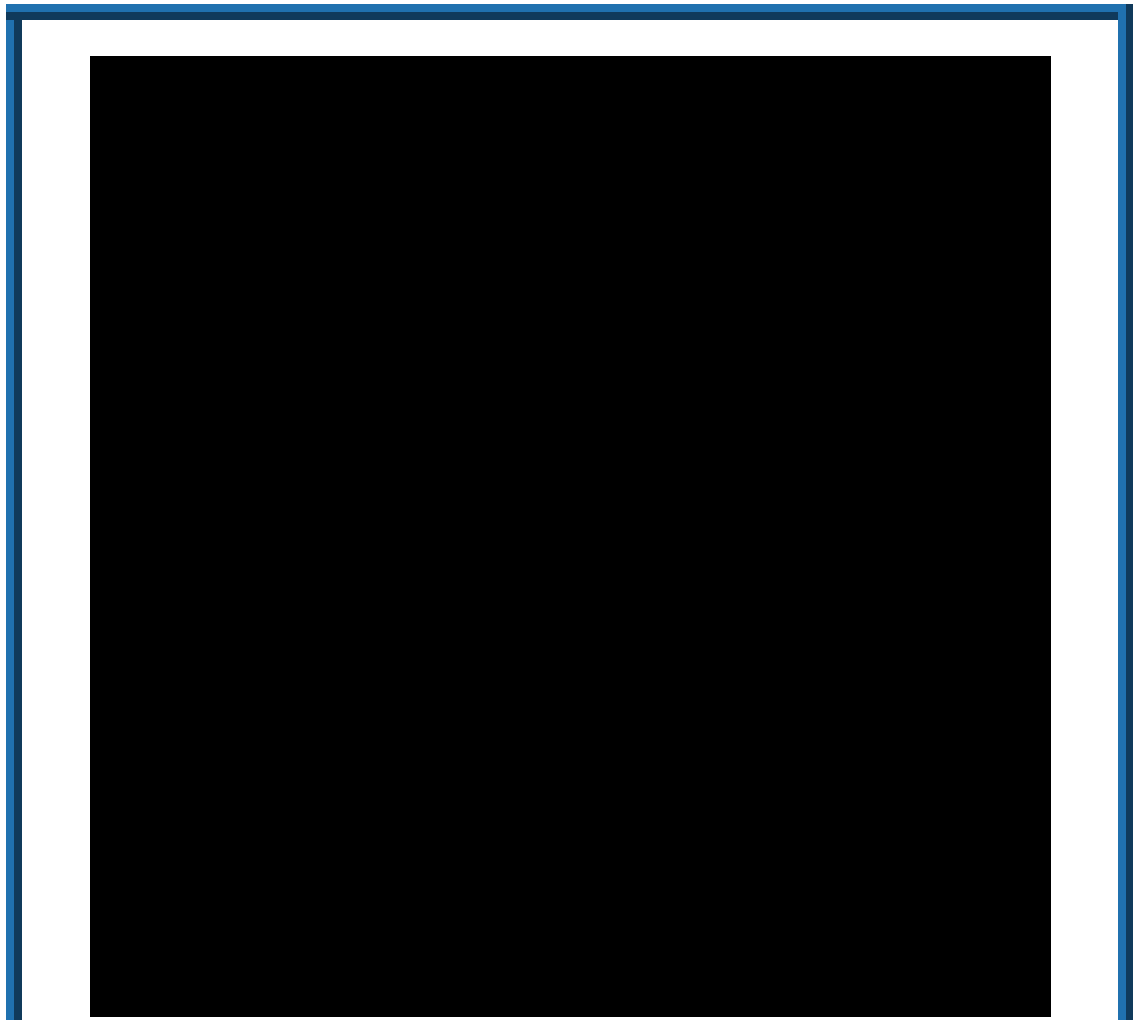
There are five weeks left in this legislative session and I am sure that some troubling legislation is headed to the House Floor, including GOP efforts to allow CCW permit holders to carry guns on public transit and into churches. I vehemently oppose these efforts and will continue to oppose them in committees and on the House Floor.

Enough is Enough.

Yours in Service,

Rich

House Legislative Dashboard



House GOP approves new limits on initiative petition process

On a straight party-line vote of 109-49, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives sent legislation to the Senate on April 6 imposing a wide range of procedural restrictions on the initiative petition process. However, the changes appear to violate decades of Missouri Supreme Court precedent prohibiting laws that “interfere or impede” the constitutional right to the initiative or attempt to thwart it with “technical formalities.”

The initiative process, which has been enshrined in the Missouri Constitution for more than a century, allows Missourians to bypass the General Assembly to propose legislation and place it directly on the statewide ballot for voter approval. Republicans have prioritized making the process more difficult after voters in recent years have passed several initiatives promoting issues the GOP opposes.

House Bill 703 seeks to impose a number of new technical requirements, including dictating the font type and size on petitions, specifying the shade of ink used for signatures and limiting who can circulate petitions. The bill also purports to require signatures to be thrown out in the event a court rewrites a petition’s ballot title, even though a 1978 Supreme Court ruling holds that a ballot title isn’t constitutionally required to circulate a petition.



Missouri House Democrats show support for the end of gun violence and support for common sense gun legislation.



Effort to legalize sports betting again stalls in Senate

After several hours of debate, the Senate on April 5 set aside legislation seeking to legalize sports gambling in Missouri after failing to overcome the opposition of a few senators who want lawmakers to also address the proliferation of unregulated slot machines around the state. It is unclear if the chamber will return to the measure during the final weeks of the 2023 legislative session.

Senate Bill 30 would authorize Missouri's 13 licensed casinos to operate sports books on their premises, as well as offer online wagering. It also would impose a 15 percent tax on sports bets. The House of Representatives recently approved

similar legislation but set the tax rate at only 10 percent.

The effort to legalize sports gambling in Missouri has failed for years as some lawmakers insist on tying the issue to the regulation of video lottery terminals, which are slot machine-style games that have become common in gas stations, bars and other locations.

The Missouri Gaming Commission and the State Highway Patrol, which respectively are responsible for regulating the state's casinos and enforcing its gambling laws, consider VLTs illegal slot machines. Although some local prosecutors have successfully brought criminal cases involving VLTs, others have been reluctant, claiming the machines are legally ambiguous



Ruling against Parson's union-busting attempt will stand

The Missouri Supreme Court on April 4 declined to hear an

appeal by Gov. Mike Parson's administration in a case involving its efforts to bust the labor union representing prison guards, actions a lower court declared "unconstitutional, arbitrary, capricious and unreasonable." The high court turned down the appeal in a one-sentence order. As a result, a prior ruling by the Missouri Court of Appeals Western District against the administration will stand.

The case originated in December 2019 when the Missouri Office of Administration, which handles payroll for state agencies, informed the Missouri Corrections Officers Association it would no longer withhold dues from the paychecks of the organization's roughly 1,300 members. The move was widely seen as an attempt to weaken the union by making it difficult to collect dues.

The Parson administration originally argued it could no longer withhold the dues because the union's contract with the Missouri Department of Corrections had expired, although negotiations on a new contract continued. However, since the state routinely withholds fees from other non-union employee organizations, OA soon shifted its rationale to claim the corrections officers group wasn't an employee organization since it included retirees who aren't active state workers.

Cole County Circuit Judge Jon Beetem, a Republican, found this claim be a pretext since OA continued to withhold dues and fees at the behest of other employee groups that include non-employee members. Beetem ordered OA to resume payroll deductions for unionized corrections workers. A three-judge panel appellate panel unanimously affirmed Beetem's decision in December. The case is *Missouri Corrections Officers Association Inc. v. Missouri Office of Administration*.



The Urban Issues Committee heard my proposed legislation, HB 34 that would allow motorists a one way turn on a red light after coming to a stop; from a one way street onto a one way street. Forty-two other states have the law including the eight states that border Missouri.



Senate Democrats push to oust human rights commissioner

Senate Democrats are urging Gov. Mike Parson to fire the chairman of the Missouri Commission on Human Rights for misleading a Senate committee during recent testimony while lobbying on behalf of a religious organization in opposition to legislation directly relating to the commission's duties.

All 10 Democratic senators signed the April 3 letter to Parson asking him to immediately remove Timothy Faber from the commission, which investigates complaints of illegal discrimination in housing, employment and places of public accommodation. Parson, a Republican, appointed Faber to the

commission in 2021.

On March 29, Faber testified before the Senate General Laws Committee against a bill to amend the Missouri Human Rights Act to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The law currently is limited to barring discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex or age. During his testimony, Faber identified himself only as a lobbyist for the Missouri Baptist Convention and didn't disclose his role as commission chairman until pressed by committee members.

“His attempt to obfuscate his position erodes the trust legislators require from members of Missouri’s boards and commissions,” the Democratic senators said in their letter. “This is especially troubling considering Mr. Faber specifically referenced the commission without disclosing his role on it. While Mr. Faber has a right to express his personal views or the views of other organizations with which he may be affiliated, his decision to place these roles before his duties as chairman makes it clear he can no longer continue in this capacity.”

During his testimony, Faber said protecting LGBTQ Missourians from discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations would violate the religious liberty of those morally opposed to homosexuality. He repeated that sentiment in a subsequent interview with the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, in which he also claimed he had no intent to deceive by not identifying himself as chairman of the human rights commission.

“When we begin looking at such things as sexual orientation and gender identity, it is going to inevitably create conflict with religious liberty,” Farber told the paper. “Religious liberty is a constitutional right. Sexual orientation and gender identity are

not constitutional rights.”

Faber’s questionable ability to fairly hear complaints before the commission is at the moment something of a moot point since the panel hasn’t been able to function for months due to the lack of a quorum. Although the commission is supposed to have 11 members, only four of those positions currently are filled since Parson hasn’t made appointments to the remaining seven spots.



Congratulations to Rep. Rasheen Aldridge who was recently elected to the St. Louis Board of Aldermen. He will be missed in Jefferson City.



House votes down expansion of business tax subsidies

The House of Representatives on April 6 rejected legislation to expand certain tax subsidies for businesses. The measure failed on a vote of 70-57, with 30 lawmakers voting “present.” The vote fell well short of the minimum 82 needed to advance the measure to Senate.

House Bill 939 sought to expand the statutory cap on an existing tax credit program that assists businesses with job retention from \$6 million to \$10 million a year. It also would have created a new \$10 million-a-year tax credit to help railroads finance track improvements.



Federal judge rejects challenge to lobbyist waiting period

A federal judge on March 30 rejected a constitutional challenge to Missouri's prohibition on former state lawmakers and legislative staffers working as paid lobbyists until two years after the end of the last General Assembly in which they served.

Missouri voters added the restriction to state constitution in 2018 as part of wide-ranging ballot initiative relating to legislative ethics and redistricting. Rocky Miller, a former Republican state representative from Lake Ozark, filed a

lawsuit challenging the restriction shortly after he termed out of the House of Representatives in January 2021, claiming it violated his First Amendment rights to free speech.

In ruling against Miller and a current House staffer who also was a plaintiff in the case, U.S. District Judge Doug Harpool said the lobbying blackout period is justified to prevent corruption or its appearance and, therefore, doesn't violate the free speech rights of former lawmakers or staff.

"A former public official's acceptance of a lobbying position months or even days after departing government, makes reasonable the belief that those officials may have exchanged political favors for their positions – and salaries – as lobbyists," Harpool wrote. "The appearance of impropriety is a reasonable and natural conclusion in such a situation."

Miller could appeal the decision to the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The case is *Rockne "Rocky" Miller, et al., v. Elizabeth Ziegler, et al.*



Highways commissioner resigns to avoid possible conflicts

Brian Treece, a Columbia Democrat, unexpectedly resigned from the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission on March 28, a little over seven months after Gov. Mike Parson appointed him to the post.

In an April 5 statement to the Missouri Independent, Treece, a longtime state Capitol lobbyist, said he stepped down from the commission, which oversees the Missouri Department of Transportation, due concerns about possible conflicts of interest with his job as vice president of strategy and development for EquipmentShare, a heavy equipment rental company.

“In the interests of good government, I felt I should resign to avoid any perception of bias that could undermine public confidence in the great work of the department and its employees,” Treece told the Independent.



IF YOU SEE SOMETHING - SAY SOMETHING
CALL THE MISSOURI CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT HOTLINE
1-800-392-3738



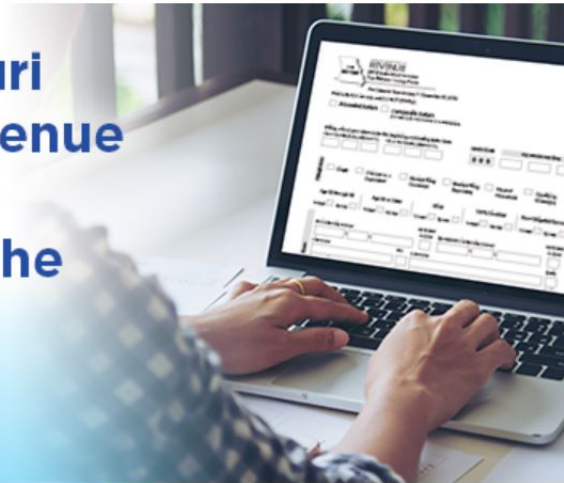
COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



Individual Income Tax Electronic Filing

The IRS and Missouri Department of Revenue are now accepting e-filed returns for the 2022 tax year

[Click here for more information](#)



Obtaining the status of your tax return

The Missouri Return Inquiry System provides information regarding the status of your Missouri tax return. After entering your information, you will also have the option of being notified by text or email when the status of your tax return changes. You may only view the status of 2018 or later year returns.

Sign up

*to receive
automatic updates!*

Receive text or email notifications each time the status of your return changes.

Access the
**Missouri Return
Inquiry System**
to find out how.



What tax years and returns can I check on?

- 2018 and forward Missouri Individual Income Tax returns
- 2018 and forward Missouri Property Tax Credit (PTC) claims

What information do I need to get started?

- Social security number
- Filing status
- Anticipated refund or balance due

When will my return information be available?

- Up to 5 business days after filing electronically
- Up to 3 - 4 weeks after mailing your paper return

What information will I receive?

- Easy-to-read graphics indicating the status of your return
- Refund issue date, if applicable



Welcome Hunger Stoppers!

2023 Pantry On Wheels! *NO COST shopping for fresh produce, proteins, dairy, and nonperishables.*

FEB 19 | MAR 19 | APR 16

2 pm - 4 pm

7820 Prospect, KCMO 64132

Heavy Construction Laborer's Union Hall Parking Lot



FEB 2 | MAR 2 | APR 6

2 pm - 4pm

8200 Paseo, KCMO 64132

NEW! Enter Marlborough Community Center Front Door on 82nd to Sign In

Resource Rep's Inside: Community Assistance Council, ReStart Outreach, ReDiscover Outreach

Distribution while supplies last. Check cor.org/hunger for inclement weather and COVID updates.

POWERHOUSE
CYCLE & DYNO

BASHLIN
INDUSTRIES INC
UP / DOWN / ALL-AROUND COMPACT



Local 53 Riding Group
Invites you to ride for



**Working
Families'
Friend**

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH

(RAIN DATE SATURDAY MAY 13TH)

REGISTRATION AT 9:30 AM TO 10:30 AM

KICKSTANDS UP AT 11:00 AM

STARTS AND STOPS AT

IBEW LOCAL 53 UNION HALL

1100 ADMIRAL BLVD

KANSAS CITY, MO

RIDER \$25
PASS \$10
RAFFLE, FOOD &
DRINKS PROVIDED

For More Information Contact

Chad McGregor

816.699.9437

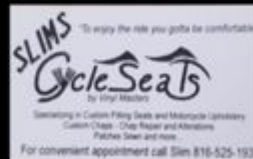
Bruce VanCompennolle

816.289.3356

© 2014



chriskeegan16@yahoo.com



Stand With



The
Tennessee **3**
#TennesseeThree



@TennesseeThree





Former Kansas City Councilwoman Mrs. Mary Williams-Neal, died on Sunday, April 2, 2023. Funeral services Saturday, April 15, at 11:00am at St. James United Methodist Church. Interment XII Gates Memorial Gardens Cemetery. Visitation 9:00am-11:00am at the church.

**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, Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McManus, former City Councilmen 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 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

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!

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list