



State Representative
Mark A. Sharp
District 37

**Dear Neighbor,
I would like to start this update first by saying thank you Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for making the ultimate sacrifice to move our society in the right direction and trying to eradicate racism. You are an inspiration to us all!**

I have officially been added to two more special committees bringing my committee assignments to a total of 10. My new committees are the Special Committee on Education Reform, Ranking Minority Member, and the Special Committee on Property Tax Reform, which is one of the largest committees in terms of the number of members assigned to this committee that I think I've ever been on.

When serving on the Education Reform Committee I will always keep the interests of all public schools in mind and do my best to

remind my colleagues of the same. As far as the Property Tax Reform Committee, I believe some legislation that we will be considering will involve Jackson County, however I'm not sure which bills will be referred to this committee yet. More to come soon on this front.

Staying on education, the Elementary & Secondary Education Committee will be voting on House Bill 1989, sponsored by Rep. Pollitt in the majority party from Sedalia, Missouri, to allow statewide open-enrollment for all public schools this coming Wednesday, January 17th, at 8 am. I admire Rep. Pollitt's dedication to working with others and making changes to this year's version of this open-enrollment bill by setting a 3% cap on how many students can leave a school district during a school year. However, the two-year carve out Rep. Pollitt and I had worked out for the Hickman Mills School District that had been in previous versions of the bill has been removed, making the bill in my opinion far worse for our area.

This bill could be extremely detrimental to school districts that can't afford to lose 3% of their

students, and if certain students leave their schools it could have a negative impact on school's test scores. We know all school districts aren't created equal, and at the end of the day this bill creates yet another way to encourage families to yank their children out of less affluent public school districts, while more appealing school districts will be able to legally poach students and student-athletes from less affluent school districts.

If you can, please go online and submit written testimony in opposition to protect school districts like Hickman Mills, Center, Grandview and KCPS.

There is movement on my flagship legislation named Blair's Law creating a state offense for discharging a firearm with criminal negligence into or within city limits in an effort to reduce the amount of celebratory gunfire not only in Kansas City but across the state. House Bill 1659 Sponsored by Chairman Roberts of the Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee has repackaged last session's Senate Bill 189 that was ultimately vetoed by Governor Parson. This renewed version has removed bill language that the Governor found problematic. Included in HB 1659 is Blair's

Law, and I appreciate Chairman Roberts for remaining committed to the passage of Blair's Law.

Also, this past week I filed legislation to extend the diaper bank tax credit. Rep. Patty Lewis has filed similar legislation, and I'll be working with her as much as I can to ensure this legislation is a top priority for the legislature.

Below are a list of my committee assignments and my legislative assistant's email if you have any questions or would like to be added to my email list:

**Special Committee on Urban
Issues, Chairman**

**Special Committee on Education
Reform, Ranking Minority Member**

**Special Committee on Public
Policy, Ranking Minority Member**

**Special Committee on Property Tax
Reform**

**Special Committee on Election
Contests**

**Joint Committee on Legislative
Research**

**Joint Committee on Legislative
Research - Revision Subcommittee
Crime Prevention and Public Safety**

**Consent and House Procedure
Subcommittee on Appropriations -**

General Administration

My legislative assistant, Mariah Gilmore

Mariah.Gilmore@house.mo.gov



As we honor the great Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I want to take a moment to recognize my favorite quote from him, a

quote that inspired me to run for office in 2019.

"Make a career of humanity. Commit yourself to the noble struggle for equal rights. You will make a better person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in."

WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Monday, Jan. 15, 2024

ASHCROFT MAY TRY TO KEEP BIDEN OFF BALLOT

Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft said in a Jan. 6 social media post that Missouri and other Republican-led states should keep President Joe Biden off the ballot this year if the U.S. Supreme Court rules former President Donald Trump is ineligible to again seek the office under the Insurrection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Ashcroft cited no legal justification for excluding Biden from the ballot this November and lacks the authority under state law to do so.

Officials in Colorado and Maine have concluded the Insurrection Clause prevents Trump from appearing on presidential ballots in those states due to his alleged role in fomenting the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the U.S. Capitol as part of his failed attempt to remain in office after losing the 2020 election to Biden.

The Insurrection Clause bars anyone who has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution and subsequently

"engaged in insurrection or rebellion" against the United States from holding public office. The conservative-dominated Supreme Court has agreed to hear Trump's appeal of Colorado's decision.

In a post on Twitter, now officially known as X, Ashcroft said, "What has happened in Colorado & Maine is disgraceful & undermines our republic. While I expect the Supreme Court to overturn this, if not, Secretaries of State will step in & ensure the new legal standard for (Trump) applies equally to (Biden)." In subsequent media interviews, Ashcroft reaffirmed his position that he could unilaterally keep Biden off Missouri's ballot.

In a Jan. 8 interview on CNN, Ashcroft struggled to come up with a legal justification for excluding Biden from the ballot when pressed by anchor Boris Sanchez. At one point Ashcroft said (referring to Biden) that there are "allegations that he engaged in insurrection," but Ashcroft could not back up his claim with any allegation and ended up shouting at Sanchez.

As secretary of state, Ashcroft oversees elections in the state but has no authority to unilaterally remove a candidate from the ballot. In fact, as the Missouri Independent noted in a Jan. 11 article, the Missouri Court of Appeals Western District ruled in 2014 that the secretary of state can't strike a candidate from the ballot who isn't legally qualified to run for office unless a court first orders the removal.

In the intervening day between the original post and the CNN interview, Ashcroft and his family were victims of a "swatting" incident when Jefferson City police arrived at their home after receiving a false report of a shooting. No one was harmed because of the Jan. 7 incident, and the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported police are continuing to investigate it. Making a false police report is a class B

misdemeanor punishable by up to six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

COMMITTEE HEARS TWO GUN BILLS

The House General Laws Committee on Jan. 9 heard legislation that would amend Missouri's gun laws to allow firearms to be carried in more places by concealed carry permit holders who have completed training in firearm safety and passed criminal background checks.

Similar proposals have cleared the House of Representatives in recent years in various forms but failed to win Senate approval.

Under existing law, concealed firearms are prohibited outright or without the owners' permission in numerous categories of public places in Missouri such as amusement park gated areas, bars, hospitals, riverboat casinos and sports arenas or stadiums with a seating capacity of 5,000 or more.

Concealed firearms are prohibited on public buses, in bus terminals and on Amtrak trains. They also are prohibited in houses of worship without the consent of the "person or persons representing the religious organization that exercises control" over the facilities.

House Bill 1708 would eliminate any prohibitions on concealed carrying of firearms for the vehicles and terminals of all publicly funded mass transit systems except Amtrak, and for houses of worship, although houses of worship could still prohibit carrying concealed firearms within their premises by posting signage to that effect as private businesses already can.

HB 1708 also would expand concealed carry eligibility to all 18-year-olds which would include many high school

seniors. Now the only 18-year-olds who are eligible for concealed carry permits are those who are members of the U.S. armed forces or who have been honorably discharged from the armed forces.

Other provisions of HB 1708 would authorize retired judges and current or former state legislators who are permit-holders to join the ranks of many other categories of public and private public safety, criminal justice and judicial officials that are allowed to carry concealed firearms in some places where guns are otherwise prohibited by law.

The committee also heard separate legislation - House Bill 2291 - that would exempt guns and ammunition from all state and local sales taxes. Some Democrats on the panel noted that under the bill necessities like food would still be taxed, but weapons and ammunition would not. The bill's fiscal estimate says it would cost the state about \$31 million a year in lost revenue, and local governments would lose up to \$65.4 million annually.

The committee took no immediate action on either HB 2291 or HB 1708.

PANEL CONSIDERS OPEN ENROLLMENT

The House Elementary & Secondary Education Committee on Jan. 10 heard legislation that would authorize children to transfer to public school districts other than the one in which they reside. The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

Under House Bill 1989, the open enrollment program would begin with the 2025-2026 school year. As currently written, while districts generally couldn't

prevent their students from transferring, participation would be voluntary among receiving districts.

Proponents of the bill say open enrollment would expand the public school options available to Missouri children and their families. Since state tax dollars would follow a student from his or her home district to the receiving district, opponents note it would shift significant financial resources from less affluent districts to the more affluent ones that students are likely to transfer to under the bill. This would put further financial strain on less affluent school districts and increase the disparities in the quality of education public school districts can afford to provide.

NET STATE GENERAL REVENUE DOWN

Year-to-date net state general revenue collections decreased 1.7% through the first half of the 2024 fiscal year which began July 1, going from \$6.24 billion last year to \$6.13 billion this year. Collections had been down 2.2% through the first five months of the fiscal year.

Net general revenue collections in December 2023 increased 0.6% compared to those for December 2022, going from \$1.08 billion last year to \$1.09 billion this year.

The continuing decline in individual income tax revenue resulting from significant tax cuts enacted by the legislature is largely responsible for this fiscal year's anemic collections.

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3	\$52,320
4	\$58,080
5	\$62,760
6	\$67,380
7	\$72,060
8	\$76,680

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South KC Food Pantries

South Kansas City is fortunate to have several food pantries to help less-fortunate residents have enough healthy food to eat. These include:

Community Assistance Council, 10901 Blue Ridge Blvd. on the north end of the Ruskin High School campus, from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Persons should call 816-763-3277, ext. 100, or email info@cackc.org for appointments or questions.

Red Bridge Area Food Pantry, 100 W. Red Bridge Rd. in the First Baptist Church of Kansas City, from 10 a.m. to noon on the third Saturday each month. Persons must call 816-908-7800 for appointments by the prior Wednesday.

Harvesters (the community food network) brings the semi-truck that serves as its mobile food pantry to seven sites in south Kansas City monthly to distribute fresh produce and other healthy food to families in need. The sites are:

Center School District, 8701 Holmes Rd., from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. as long as food is left on the first Saturday of the month. Persons should drive through the bus parking lot to the district warehouse. The event is sponsored by Three Trails Community church in partnership with the Center School District.

Center District Warehouse, 8701 Holmes Rd., from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. the second Friday of each month. Persons should go to the entrance to the Center Administrative Office and drive through the bus parking lot to the warehouse where volunteers will load the food. Persons should take the Troost Ave exit. The event is sponsored by the Center Education Foundation in partnership with the Center School District.

Evangel Church, 1414 E. 103rd St., from 7 to 8:30 a.m. the second

Saturday of the month. Persons may remain in their vehicles, and food will be brought to them.

United Believers Community Church, 5600 E. 112th Terr., with vehicles lining up at 8:30 a.m. and contactless food distribution running from 9 to 11 a.m. the third Wednesday of the month.

Ruskin High School, 7000 E. 111th St., from 4 to 5:30 p.m. the third Thursday of the month. Vehicles should line up on Ruskin Way on the east side of the school, and staff and students will load the food when vehicles reach the school.

Colonial Presbyterian Church, 9500 Wornall Rd., with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and food distribution running from about 8:30 to 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. Families are asked to bring two cardboard boxes for volunteers to put the food in.

Red Bridge United Methodist Church, 636 E. 117th St., from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. on the fourth Friday of the month in the church parking lot.

Serve and Lift Center â€” South KC, 8001 Longview Rd., from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Walk-in, call for an appointment or order online at <https://catholiccharities-kcsj.org/pantry/>



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