

Welcome December 2020



It is an honor and privilege to serve the 26th District in the Missouri House of Representatives. I've enjoyed getting to know so many people in our community, and I hope this e-mail newsletter allows me to hear from more of my constituents. Please forward this e-mail to your friends and family in the 26th District who want to know how what happens in the legislature affects all our lives.

2020 has been a year of uncertainty and struggle. This holiday season, if you know of a child or an elderly individual living within the boundaries of the 26th district that has been affected by COVID-19 or is underserved and could use a little extra cheer, please click the link below and submit their information to us by **December 14, 2020**.

Help The Bland Legacy and Phenomenal Kids Childcare Learning Center bring some joy back to the 26th district!

[Submit Information Here](#)

*** Gifts will be given on a first come first served basis***

THE BLAND LEGACY
AND
PHENOMENAL KIDS CHILDCARE LEARNING CENTER
PRESENTS...



2020 ANNUAL
COMMUNITY
HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Virtual TOY DRIVE

LET'S MAKE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON MAGICAL FOR THE 26TH STATE DISTRICT COMMUNITY
PLEASE DONATE TOYS AND GIFT CARDS THROUGH 12/16/2020

FOR CHILDREN, TEENS, AND SENIORS

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: BROOKE HOLLINGSWORTH-BLAND AT THEBLANDLEGACY@GMAIL.COM



Ashley Bland Manlove
26th District, Missouri State
House Of Representatives



amazon smile
You shop. Amazon gives.

The Bland Legacy and Phenomenal Kids
Childcare Learning Center presents the 2020
Annual Community Holiday Celebration
Virtual Toy Drive.

2020 has been a year of the unknown... but
The Bland Legacy and Phenomenal Kids
Childcare Learning Center wants to make sure
we provide holiday cheer for families in
Kansas City!

Join State Representative Ashley Bland
Manlove, The Bland Legacy and Phenomenal
Kids Childcare Learning Center for the 2020
Holiday Celebration featuring the Virtual Toy
Drive. The holiday gift giveaway caravan will
feature Santa, Her Elves and The Vetter Ryder
Corvette Club.

Please help us make this holiday season
magical for the children, teens and seniors in
the 26th State District community.

**Please donate gifts by visiting
Amazon [HERE](#)**

**Monetary donations go
directly to: Phenomenal Kids
Childcare Learning Center by
clicking [HERE](#)**

**For more information visit
www.phenomenalkidschildcare.com**

**Or contact Brooke Hollingsworth Bland
at Blandlegacy@gmail.com**

**Please share and spread the word! Thanks
So Much For Your Help and Support!**

COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

Food/Household/Utility Resources:



Need food and hygiene items, emergency rent or utilities assistance, diapers or pull-ups, help with medicines and medical devices? CAC may be able to help. Click [HERE](#) for more information.

Harvesters Community Food Network

Click [HERE](#) to find service in your area

[Community Action Agency of Greater Kansas City](#)

[Spire - Natural Gas Assistance](#)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

[Full Employment Council - Kansas City](#)

[KCTV5 - Job Connection](#)

[Ford - Claycomo](#)

[Truman Medical Center](#)

[Kansas City Research Hospital](#)

Access to resources for COVID 19 assistance can be found by clicking below.

[COVID Resources](#)



COVID-19

FREE TESTING CLINIC

Testing symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals

Walk-ins welcome, appointments preferred



Monday - Friday
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

*Lunch will be held from 11:50 a.m. - 12:40 p.m.,
and there will not be testing during this time.*

**Visit jacohd.org/events to see
dates + locations and to register.**

Testing provided by the Jackson County Health Department

CAPITOL UPDATE

This Capitol Update will recap November 2020 and also give an update as to where we are as of the first week of December 2020. If you have any questions or would like further information please contact us at 573.751.2124 or at ashley.blandmanlove@house.mo.gov

VOTERS REPEAL CLEAN MISSOURI REDISTRICTING REFORMS

Two years after ratifying by a wide margin an innovative new system for redistricting state legislative seats, Missouri voters had second thoughts on Nov. 3 and narrowly approved a Republican-promoted constitutional amendment to repeal that system before it had a chance to be implemented.

Amendment 3, which passed with 51 percent voter support, undoes the redistricting reforms established by the Clean Missouri amendment that won 62 percent approval from voters in 2018.

Clean Missouri's redistricting system was to be used for the first time in 2021, when new districts for the state Senate and House of Representatives will be redrawn to account for population shifts under the 2020 Census.

Under Clean Missouri, new districts would have been drawn by a non-partisan state demographer based on criteria that promote competitiveness and partisan fairness. With Amendment 3, commissions consisting of equal numbers of Democratic and Republican loyalists will have first crack and drawing new districts, with a panel of appellate judges getting the job if the partisan commissions fail to agree.

Amendment 3 also eliminated an existing requirement that new districts be apportioned based

on the total state population, with each district having roughly the same number of residents. Instead, Amendment 3 contains amorphous language that could exclude children and other residents who aren't eligible to vote from being counted for redistricting purposes and allow districts that vary widely in the number of total residents.

In addition, Amendment 3 enacts new legal hurdles that make challenging an unconstitutional redistricting plan nearly impossible. This is significant since during the last redistricting cycle a decade ago, the Missouri Supreme Court invalidated newly crafted Senate districts for failing to follow constitutional requirements. Courts might be barred from even considering such a case under Amendment 3.

SPECIAL SESSION FOR ADDITIONAL SPENDING GETS UNDERWAY

The Missouri General Assembly convened in a rare lame-duck special session on Nov. 5 so that lawmakers can consider a \$1.28 billion supplemental budget bill requested by Republican Gov. Mike Parson. This is Missouri's first lame-duck session – one held after a general election but before new lawmakers take office – since 1970.

Parson said the session is necessary to reallocate federal coronavirus relief funds. However, there is some question whether that's true since lawmakers already provided the governor broad authority to allocate those funds when they passed the original FY 2021 state budget. The governor's plan includes a provision allowing the state recoup unspent federal coronavirus funds already allocated to Missouri counties. If the state does seek to claw back money, it's unclear what impact it might have on counties forced to return funding or how that revenue would be reallocated.

The House Budget Committee is expected to hear the supplemental spending bill on Nov. 10, with the full House scheduled to debate and pass the bill the next day. However, the Senate doesn't plan to consider the measure until the week before Thanksgiving.

Just before the session got underway, House Majority Leader Rob Vescovo, D-Arnold, asked the governor to expand its scope to include legislation to provide businesses with legal immunity from lawsuits relating to COVID-19. At a news conference a short time later, Parson said he would be open to doing so if lawmakers can quickly reach a consensus on the highly controversial issue. The state constitution prohibits lawmakers from considering legislation in a special session that hasn't been requested by the governor.

PARSON LEADS REPUBLICAN SWEEP OF STATEWIDE OFFICES

Missouri voters granted Gov. Mike Parson a full term in the office he inherited more than two years ago as he led a sweep of all five statewide executive branch offices on the ballot this year. Parson, a Republican, won 57.2 percent of the vote to beat State Auditor Nicole Galloway, a Democrat who received 40.6 percent support.

While all five winning Republicans are incumbents, only Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft was previously elected to his post. Parson was lieutenant governor when he ascended to the top job in June 2018 following the resignation of his predecessor. He subsequently appointed the other three – Lt. Gov. Mike Kehoe, Attorney General Eric Schmitt and State Treasurer Scott Fitzpatrick – to fill vacancies.

Because Galloway's term as state auditor doesn't expire until January 2023, she will remain as the only Democrat currently holding statewide office. She is eligible to seek another term in 2022.

Republicans maintained their supermajorities in both the Senate and House of Representatives, but failed to pick up seats in either. Democrats flipped one Republican-held House district in Springfield by 34 votes. If that Democratic pickup holds following an expected recount, Republicans will have a 114-49 advantage in the House when the 2021 legislative session begins in January. The breakdown in the Senate remains unchanged with Republicans outnumbering Democrats 24-10.

VOTERS REJECT EXECUTIVE TERM LIMITS AMENDMENT

Missouri voters on Nov. 3 rejected extending term limits to all statewide executive branch elected officials, with the proposal receiving just 48 percent support. As a result, the governor and state treasurer will remain the only two statewide officials whose tenure is constitutionally restricted to eight years.

Amendment 1 would have prohibited the lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general and state auditor from being elected to more than two four-year terms, with partial terms of less than two years exempted. The Republican-controlled General Assembly placed Amendment 1 on the statewide ballot.

Supporters said Amendment 1 would create uniformity by subjecting all six statewide elected offices to term limits instead of just the governor and state treasurer. Opponents said there was no compelling reasons to change a system that allows voters to decide how long a person stays in office.

PARSON ADDS COVID LAWSUIT IMMUNITY TO SESSION AGENDA

Gov. Mike Parson on Nov. 12 expanded the current special legislative session to add a bill that would provide businesses, schools, churches and medical providers with legal immunity from lawsuits related to COVID-19. The expansion came two days after the House of Representatives passed a \$1.28 billion supplemental budget bill that was the original purpose of the session.

Parson, a Republican, said medical providers, businesses and other organizations need to be able to function without fear of lawsuits over COVID-19 exposures and related issues. Critics of the proposal say legal immunity will encourage reckless behavior and further worsen the spread of the coronavirus in Missouri, which already is shattering records for case growth on a regular basis.

The governor originally called the special session so that lawmakers could reallocate federal coronavirus relief funds that must be spent by the end of the calendar year, as well as address a few other midyear spending priorities. The House of Representatives passed the measure, House Bill 134, on a vote of 133-4. It now goes to the Senate, which is scheduled to debate it Nov. 20.

The COVID-19 liability bill is expected to start in the Senate, with the House not returning to consider it until the first week of December. The lame-duck session must end no later than Jan. 4. The 2021 regular legislative session will begin two days later on Jan. 6, when newly elected lawmakers will be sworn in.

STATE REVEUE COLLECTIONS DROP 4.2 PERCENT IN OCTOBER

Net state general revenue collections decreased 4.2 percent in October, going from \$659.6 million in October 2019 to \$631.9 million this year, as the state's monthly revenue intake continued a downward trajectory following a massive infusion of cash in the early months of

the 2021 fiscal year due to a three-month delay in the 2020 income tax filing deadline.

This year's April 15 income tax filing deadline was pushed back to July 15 to give Missouri taxpayers a reprieve during the early weeks of the COVID-19 crisis. While the delay caused revenue collections to slow to a trickle during the final months of FY 2020, that instead revenue flowed into the state treasury during the first two months of FY 2021. That influx, however, appears to be over.

Despite the decline in revenue collections in October, year-to-date net collections through the first four months of FY 2021 were still up 25.3 percent compared to the same period in FY 2020, going from \$2.97 billion last year to \$3.72 billion this year, based on the strength of July and August collections.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK IN SENATE STALLS SPECIAL SESSION

Due to a COVID-19 outbreak among Republican senators and staffers, the Senate on Nov. 16 postponed a special legislative session to as pass a supplemental budget bill and also exempt Missouri businesses and other entities from COVID-related lawsuits. The Senate had planned to debate the bills Nov. 20, but now isn't expected to return until sometime after Thanksgiving.

The postponement came several days after Senate Republicans held a caucus retreat in Branson. In photographs of the event posted on social media, most participants weren't wearing masks, including Gov. Mike Parson, who contracted COVID-19 in September. The number of senators and staffers who have tested positive for the disease wasn't immediately made public.

The House of Representatives passed the \$1.28 billion supplemental budget bill on Nov. 10. The bill seeks to reallocate federal coronavirus relief funds that must be spent by the end of the calendar year and also address a few other midyear spending priorities. The bill must still clear the Senate before it can be sent to the governor to be signed into law.

Two days after the House passed the budget bill, Parson, a Republican, expanded the special session to include legislation providing businesses, schools, churches and medical providers with broad legal immunity over COVID-19 exposures and related issues. That bill will first go through the Senate, with the House returning to consider it sometime in December.

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which has successfully pushed for a succession of laws over the years shielding businesses from lawsuits, has advocated for COVID liability exemptions since last spring when the pandemic began. Critics say legal immunity would discourage protected entities from taking necessary steps prevent the spread of the coronavirus, which continues to spiral out of control throughout Missouri and has prompted some cities to reinstitute restrictions on gatherings and business operations.

Despite repeated pleas from the Missouri Hospital Association and other medical organizations, Parson has steadfastly refused to order a statewide mask mandate or impose other restrictions. Instead, Parson on Nov. 10 significantly relaxed guidelines for when teachers and students at Missouri schools should quarantine following COVID-19 exposures. Despite the more lax standards, numerous local public school districts, as well as the University of Missouri, are shifting to on-line only classes, either immediately or following the Thanksgiving break.

SUPREME COURT HEARS CASE CHALLENGING ANTI-LABOR LAW

The Missouri Supreme Court on Nov. 16 heard arguments in a case that seeks to invalidate the remaining portions anti-union law that the state high court partially struck down earlier this year. A lower court has placed the entire law on hold while litigation remains pending. The Republican-controlled General Assembly enacted House Bill 1413 in 2018 and then-Gov. Eric Greitens signed it into law. The law contains various provisions designed to make it harder for public sector labor unions to operate, including prohibiting government agencies from withholding union dues from workers' paychecks, creating new hurdles to forming public sector bargaining units, requiring unions to be recertified every three years and subjecting government workers to immediate termination for picketing, including while off duty.

The Supreme Court on March 31 unanimously struck down that final provision as unconstitutionally overbroad in violation of public workers' free speech rights. That lawsuit, *Karney v. Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations*, didn't challenge the remainder of HB 1413.

In the current case before the high court, *Missouri National Education Association v. Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations*, the plaintiffs argue the law infringes

on collective bargaining rights protected by the Missouri Constitution and also violates union members' constitutional rights of free speech and association. In addition, they allege the law's restrictions don't apply equally to all public sector labor unions by exempting those representing police and other emergency responders. The Supreme Court will issue a ruling in the case at a later date.

FEDERAL JUDGE ORDERS REFORM OF PAROLE REVOCATIONS

A federal judge on Nov. 12 ruled various practices and procedures related to parole revocation hearings in Missouri are unconstitutional and ordered the state Department of Corrections to implement a long list of reforms, including ensuring parolees have an attorney, mandating that evidence against them be shared at least five days in advance of a revocation hearing and requiring such hearings to be conducted in a timely manner.

Ruling in a class-action lawsuit filed against the corrections department three years ago, U.S. District Judge Stephen Bough said the department intentionally failed to provide attorneys to parolees who couldn't afford one and routinely refused to disclose evidence against a parolee until the time of the revocation hearing, among other problems.

The MacArthur Justice Center, which brought the case on behalf of Missouri parolees, argued that the state's unconstitutional practices resulted in many offenders being thrown back into prison without having a legitimate opportunity to refute the evidence against them. The center alleged that parolees routinely aren't told they have a right to counsel and often are pressured into waiving their right to a hearing.

In his 55-page order, Bough said he is retaining jurisdiction over the case to ensure the department begins implementing the required reforms, a move that allows him to more quickly intervene if the agency fails to do so. The case is *Gasca v. Precythe*.

SENATE PASSES BUDGET BILL, LAWSUIT IMMUNITY DROPPED

After shelving a controversial proposal to provide businesses, schools, churches and medical providers with blanket legal immunity from lawsuits relating to COVID-19, the Missouri Senate on Dec. 2 voted 23-1 to grant final passage to a \$1.28 billion supplemental budget bill that reallocates federal coronavirus relief funds the state has already received but that must be spent by the end of December.

Although some procedural sessions are scheduled, no further legislation is expected to be considered before lawmakers formally adjourn from the lame-duck special session on Dec. 10. This will mark the second time this year that the Republican-controlled General Assembly has ended a special session without passing key legislation Gov. Mike Parson had requested.

This year's first special session ended Sept. 16 with lawmakers passing just two of the seven crime-related bills Parson, a Republican, had requested. The second special session, which began Nov. 5, originally was for the sole purpose of passing the supplemental budget bill. However, Parson expanded the session a week later to include legal immunity from COVID-19 lawsuits. Under the Missouri Constitution, the governor controls what topics lawmakers may consider in special session.

Despite vocal support from the business lobby, which has pushed for additional legal protections against lawsuits since the pandemic began last spring, enthusiasm for the bill never caught hold, particularly after a COVID-19 outbreak among Senate Republicans forced a two-week suspension of legislative activities in the chamber.

Although a committee hearing was held on the lawsuit immunity Dec. 2, the Senate already announced it had no plans to consider the bill at its Dec. 3 session. While the hearing was underway, Parson sent word requesting the proposal be withdrawn. However, the issue is expected to remain a priority for the governor when the 2021 regular legislative session gets underway Jan. 6.

This was the first lame-duck session – one held after a general election but before new lawmakers take office – since 1970, when Gov. Warren Hearnes, a Democrat, brought the legislature back to pass an income tax increase.

JUDGE RESTORES LAW PREVIOUSLY RULED UNCONSTITUTIONAL

In an unusual move, a Cole County Circuit judge on Dec. 1 reinstated statutes imposing special limits on fine collection and municipal operations in St. Louis County that both he and the Missouri Supreme Court had previously ruled unconstitutional.

Following the Ferguson protests in 2014, the Missouri General Assembly the next year enacted Senate Bill 5, which contained sweeping reforms aimed at reducing abusive

municipal court and policing practices focused on generating revenue for city governments instead of public safety and that often ignored the constitutional rights of residents. Although most of the reforms apply statewide, two key provisions affect only municipalities in St. Louis County.

One of those caps the amount of revenue municipal governments in the county can collect from fines and fees at 12.5 percent of a municipality's operating budget, significantly lower than the 20-percent cap SB 5 sets for cities elsewhere in the state. The other provision that applies only to St. Louis County municipalities imposes a variety of minimal standards for municipal operations and requires city police departments to be accredited. Cities that fail to comply face possible disincorporation.

A group of St. Louis County cities led by Normandy challenged those two provisions for violating the state constitution's prohibition against "special laws" that apply only to certain jurisdictions without good cause. Cole County Judge Jon Beetem, a Republican, agreed with the cities and blocked enforcement of both provisions in 2016. The state Supreme Court upheld Beetem's ruling the following year.

However, ruling in another case in December 2019, the high court completely overhauled its standard for reviewing special laws and invalidated much of its precedent on the subject, including its prior ruling involving SB 5. That prompted Attorney General Eric Schmitt, a Republican, to file a motion with Beetem in January asking him to lift his 2016 injunction barring enforcement of St. Louis County-specific provisions. Schmitt sponsored SB 5 while serving in the state Senate.

In his latest ruling, Beetem agreed that in light of the Supreme Court's new standards on what constitutes a special law, the statutory provisions imposing minimal standards for St. Louis county municipalities and capping fine and fee revenue at 12.5 percent are constitutional and should be reinstated since the legislature had a rational basis for treating the county differently than others.

"(T)hose calling for police and municipal-court reform in St. Louis County concluded that St. Louis County's municipal courts had a deeply entrenched 'culture' of revenue-driven enforcement that had developed over decades of minimal oversight, and that this culture was unique to St. Louis County," Beetem wrote. "The legislature could rationally have concluded that stricter standards were appropriate for St. Louis County because the revenue-driven

culture that causes police and municipal-court abuses was more deeply entrenched in St. Louis County than anywhere else in the State.”

The cities that originally brought the case can still appeal to the state Supreme Court. The case is *City of Normandy, et al., v. Parson*.

VETERANS HOMES WERE UNPREPARED FOR COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Officials at the Missouri Veterans Commission leaders failed to adequately prepare for and respond to COVID-19 outbreaks at the state’s seven veterans’ homes that resulted in the deaths of more than 100 resident veterans, according to a report issued Dec. 2 by a law firm hired by the state in October to investigate the matter.

Just one Missouri veterans’ home resident had died of COVID-19 prior to September. The death toll had since risen to 109 as of Nov. 18.

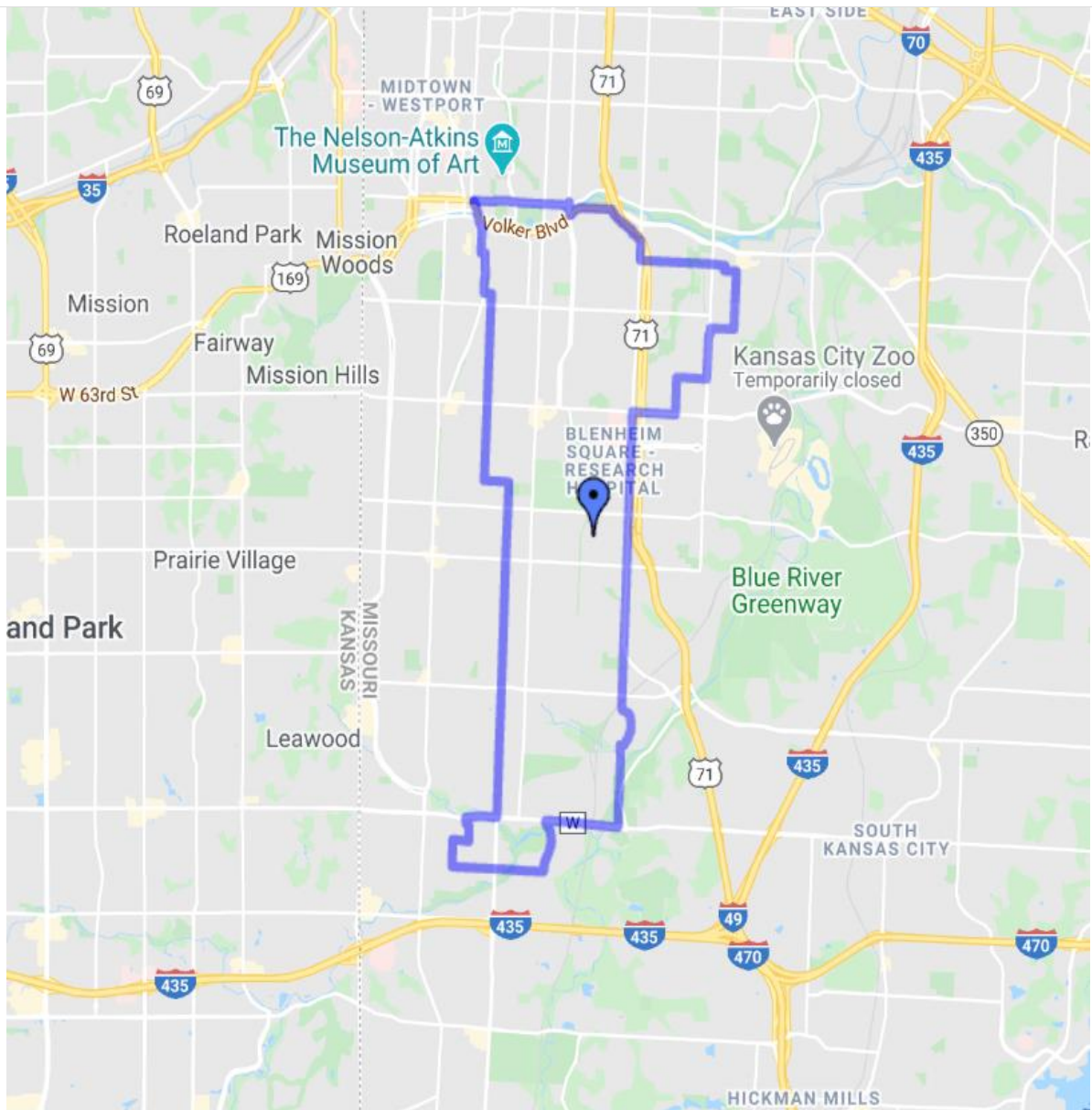
“Headquarters should have known by the beginning of summer 2020 – well before the fall outbreak – that COVID-19 spreads covertly through asymptomatic carriers and is difficult to control in a residential setting like a nursing home,” according to the report by investigators with the St. Louis law firm of Armstrong-Teasdale. “But despite several months to prepare for a predicted fall surge in COVID-19 cases, MVC Headquarters did not develop any comprehensive outbreak plan. As a result, they did not have an opportunity to vet the plan with outside agencies or other long-term care facilities, or test the plan to identify areas of needed improvement. The lack of a comprehensive outbreak plan led to confusion and inefficiencies, and it almost certainly contributed to the inability to contain the spread of COVID-19 once it was introduced into the Homes.”

The report includes a long list of corrective recommendations, including improved coordination between leadership MVC headquarters and veterans’ home staff to develop comprehensive plans for preventing and containing COVID-19 outbreaks.



Representative Ashley Bland Manlove
Missouri State Capitol - Room 101-I
Jefferson City, MO
573.751.2124
ashley.blandmanlove@house.mo.gov

[Subscribe to our Mailing List](#)



This email was sent to shauna.frank@house.mo.gov

[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)

Missouri State Representative · 201 W Capitol Ave · Missouri State Capitol · Jefferson City, MO 65101-1556 · USA

