



First, I want to acknowledge the severe thunderstorm that knocked out thousands of residents' power across the Kansas City metro area including my own. Many people are still awaiting for service to be restored, especially in the south Kansas City area, including my family.

According to Evergy outage updates we should expect to

have our power back on this evening or tomorrow. I am very sorry to anyone out there who has lost food or their children or their elderly relatives have had to endure hot temperatures inside their homes.

Last week Governor Parson vetoed Senate Bill 189, which was a large bi-partisan anti-crime bill that was 142 pages long. When vetoing policy bills rather than appropriations bills, the Governor must veto the entire bill. He does not have line-item veto authority.

Contained within this anti- crime package is a bill I have sponsored called Blair's Law that establishes serious state penalties for individuals discharging a firearm with criminal negligence into or within any municipality. It is intended to deter the large amount of celebratory and indiscriminate gunfire we have in Kansas City and in other cities across this state.

Blair's Law has been introduced in the Missouri

General Assembly every year since 2012, and I have sponsored the bill the previous four sessions. It is named after 11-year-old Blair Shanahan Lane who died after being struck by celebratory gunfire in Kansas City while playing in the yard during the July 4 holiday in 2011.

I must admit that it was extremely disappointing to find out Senate Bill 189 was being vetoed by the Governor especially knowing that Michele Shanahan DeMoss, Blair's mother, felt that this life-saving legislation that she has worked tirelessly on for over a decade had successfully passed!

However, it was reassuring for Governor Parson to say in his veto message that he supports Blair's Law and hopes the legislature can pass it in the next legislative session. His veto message noted he vetoed the bill due to his objections to other provisions in the lengthy bill.

With celebratory gunfire continuing unchecked in Kansas City on July 4, and four more persons being injured by apparent celebratory or indiscriminate gunfire and despite the public pleas by our mayor, police chief, faith leaders and community partners urging people not to shoot their firearms, it seems obvious that stricter penalties than those provided by just a city ordinance are needed to help local law enforcement start making arrests with laws that have some teeth to them.

What do supporters of Blair's Law do now?

First, do not give-up. Second, continue to call 911 when you hear shots fired. That data will be extremely useful when Blair's Law is passed (again) and signed by the Governor.

Third, instead of waiting months until January for the 2024 legislative session to consider this life-saving legislation again, I am working with other legislators

of both parties, organizations concerned with improving public safety and law enforcement to urge the governor to call a special session of the General Assembly to coincide with the upcoming September veto session to consider Blair's Law and other specific anti-crime measures that also have broad bipartisan support.

If Blair's Law passes in September with an emergency clause, it will become effective in time to educate the public about the beefed up penalties for this dangerous and irresponsible behavior and for the police to develop a plan to enforce the law before we have another New Year's Eve where innocent people are potentially injured or killed.



Last week I had the pleasure to visit Charleston, South Carolina for a meeting of the Council of State Governments. I was appointed by Missouri House Speaker Dean Plocher to be on the Human Services & Public Safety Committee. One issue that I am particularly interested in is improving Missouri's laws concerning re-entry for ex-offenders and creating a

certification of employability for them. With me in the photo (from left) are Missouri Representative Sarah Unsicker and Missouri Senator Holly Thompson Rehder.

On my last day in Charleston, I had the opportunity to visit a very historic piece of American history. The Old Slave Mart Museum in Charleston is one of the main sites where slaves were bought and sold during the Trans-Atlantic and domestic slave trades that went on for nearly 400 years. The atrocities that happened right here are hard to accept but we must be vigilant to continue and try and right the wrongs of our ugly past.

WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Monday, July 17th, 2023

PARSON SIGNS 31 BILLS INTO LAW

Passing up the standard practice of acting on recently passed legislation over the course of several weeks, Gov. Mike Parson signed 31 bills into law on July 6.

Of the 40 measures excluding appropriations bills lawmakers sent the governor during the 2023 legislative session which ended in May, Parson had signed just eight prior to his sudden flurry of activity when he also vetoed one bill.

One high-profile measure Parson signed (Senate Bill 190) seeks to provide tax relief to senior citizens.

One important provision of SB 190 fully exempts

Social Security benefits from state income taxes.

Another important part of the legislation authorizes

counties to provide a property tax credit to seniors
who both own and reside in their homes.

Many seniors on fixed incomes who live in counties like Jackson County - where this year's reassessment by the county has resulted in the assessed valuations of many homes nearly doubling or more than doubling and a surge of appeals of the higher assessments by property owners that are now being processed - are concerned that the higher property taxes that will result from higher assessments could cause them to lose their homes if they can't afford to pay the higher taxes.

Another measure that will impact taxes is Senate Bill 398 requiring sales taxes on motor vehicles to be collected by the dealer at the point of sale instead of at the time the vehicle is licensed with the state.

Because the taxes can run into thousands of dollars, many

car buyers find they can't afford to pay them, prompting some buyers to avoid licensing the vehicle and instead driving illegally on expired temporary tags, sometimes for years. Collecting the tax upfront will allow it to be rolled into the purchaser's car loan and ensure local governments and the state promptly get the tax revenue due them.

Parson also signed omnibus public safety legislation (Senate Bill 186) that increases minimum training requirements for law enforcement officers, expands the grounds for which the state may discipline officers, increases the fees the Missouri State Highway Patrol can charge for records, authorizes state taxpayers to fund the pension system for county sheriffs and allows increases in the pay scales for all Kansas City police officers by removing the outdated and non-competitive salary caps that are now in state law for officers of all ranks which make it difficult to recruit and even more

difficult to retain officers, which generally mirrors the language in legislation I introduced this year, among many other provisions.

In addition, the bill makes permanent a state law allowing St. Louis City public safety workers to reside outside of the city that was to expire this year.

Other newly signed laws include ending the so-called “cliff effect” in the state’s social safety net programs that results in a small increase in income causing participants to lose all benefits, establishing tax breaks for film productions and other entertainment industry jobs, prohibiting insurance companies from requiring patient cost-sharing for diagnostic breast examinations and prohibiting texting or using a cell phone without a hands-free device while driving.

Most of the new laws will take effect Aug. 28. A handful

of provisions in some bills contain emergency clauses causing them to take effect immediately upon being signed into law.

FISCAL YEAR ENDS WITH COLLECTIONS UP

The 2023 state fiscal year ended June 30 with net state general revenue collections for the year up 2.7% over FY 2022, having gone from \$12.88 billion last fiscal year to \$13.23 billion this year.

However, collections had been up 5.3% through the first 11 months of FY 2023 compared to the same period in FY 2022.

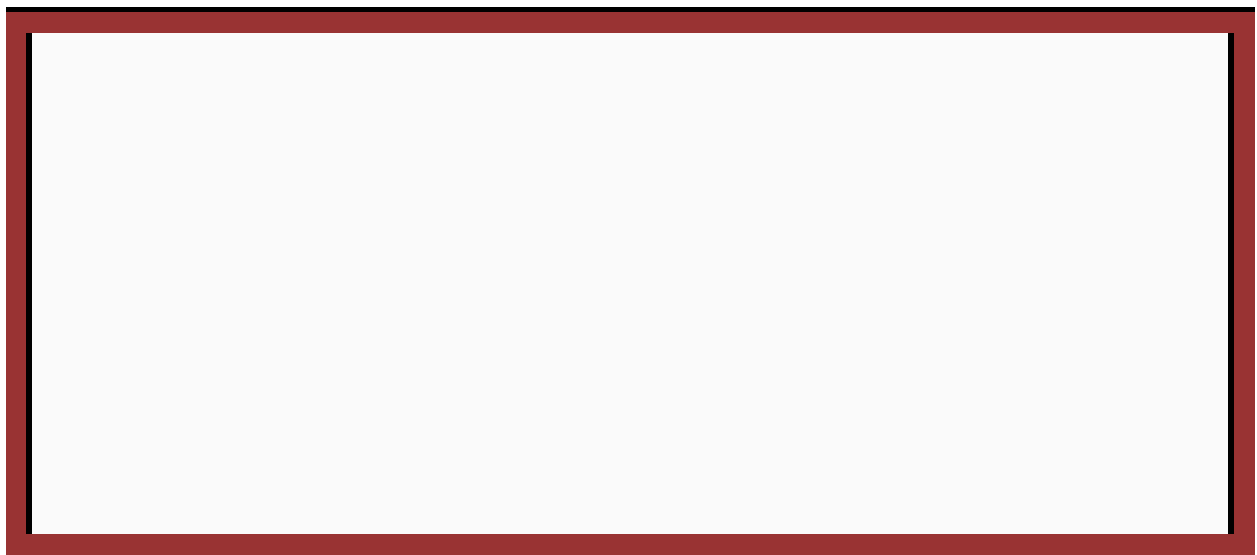
The slower end to the fiscal year resulted from a sharp decline in revenue collections in June 2023, which

dropped 17.1% compared to June 2022, going from \$1.47 billion last year to \$1.22 billion this year.

The decline for June was driven by a 25.8% reduction in revenue from individual income taxes as the state continues to feel the impact of a substantial cut to the standard income tax rate that took effect in January.

Despite tax cuts eating into revenue growth during the second half of FY 2023, Missouri began FY 2024 on July 1 with an overall budget surplus of \$7.8 billion, including \$5.7 billion in general revenue.

Even with so much leftover revenue in the treasury, Gov. Mike Parson recently vetoed \$555.3 million in spending authority approved by lawmakers for FY 2024 since the ongoing tax cuts are expected to eat into the surplus over the next few years.



FREE ADMISSION



PEACE RIDE & FAMILY EVENT #10



23 JULY 2023, SUNDAY
12:00PM-5:00PM

SWOPE PARK BANDSTAND:
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SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION



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THIS IS A FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENT WITH DRIVING INVOLVED. PLEASE TAKE THIS INTO CONSIDERATION AS NO ALCOHOL OR DRUGS ARE PERMITTED AT THIS EVENT AS A SAFETY PRECAUTION

CALL TO PARTICIPATE:
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first call
PRESENTS



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= CARE CAMP =

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PRODUCTIVE LIFESTYLE BY UNPACKING THE IMPACT OF SUBSTANCE
USE IN THE FAMILY WITH EDUCATION, RESILIENCE AND SAFETY.

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1

\$1,481

2

\$2,003

3

\$2,525

4

\$3,048

5

\$3,570

6

\$4,092

How do I apply?

GOOD NEWS!

Applying is easy, and there are several convenient and accessible ways to do it!

Online:

Visit <https://mydss.mo.gov/healthcare/apply> to apply quickly via the DHSS web portal

By Phone:

Call the Missouri Family Support Division at (855)-373-4636 or (855)-373-9994

By Mail or Email:

Print and fill out an application provided at the web address listed above and mail to:

Family Support Division
615 E 13th St
Kansas City, MO 64106

Or email to:

FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov

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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 – 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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Missouri House of Representatives

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