



Dear Neighbor,

Yesterday the Missouri House third read and passed a \$46.52 billion operating budget that now heads to the Senate for consideration. Oddly enough, the version passed out of the House leaves \$1.8 billion in general revenue on the table unallocated, plus billions more in federal funds that also were unallocated. Read more about this strange outcome in the Weekly Update.

I will personally be working with Senator Barbara Washington who sits on the Senate Appropriations Committee to see how nonprofit organizations like Community Assistance Council that help needy and underserved people in the south Kansas City area can be considered to possibly receive some of these unallocated funds.

Earlier this week I was extremely pleased that the House passed the bill I introduced (House Bill 2627) by a vote of 138-0 to officially designate February as Black History Month in Missouri and to designate November as Native American Heritage Month. This long overdue legislation now awaits consideration in the Senate.

If you missed the south Kansas City listening session last Saturday hosted by the South Kansas City Alliance (SKCA) and the South Kansas City Chamber of Commerce to hear peoples' opinions on what qualities and qualifications our next police chief should have and on what our new chief's top priorities should be, **please plan on attending the SKCA meeting at 6 p.m. Monday, April 11, in the front building of the South Patrol Police Campus, 9701 Marion Park Dr., where you can submit your written comments.**

SKCA and the South Kansas City Chamber are among 15 business and civic groups that have been organizing listening sessions throughout the city. Persons' written comments will be formally presented to the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners **before** it starts to narrow down the list of applicants from its national search to a much shorter list of finalists to replace Chief Rick Smith who is retiring on April 22.

The effort to encourage widespread public input on what qualities and qualifications should be prioritized by the Police Board when it evaluates applicants will be explained by Darron Edwards, lead pastor of United Believers Community Church, and Scott Hall, senior vice president of the Chamber of Commerce of Greater Kansas City, who are among the leaders of this effort.

If anyone would like to contact me about legislation they would like me to support or oppose, please email me

at Mark.Sharp@house.mo.gov.

Here are my committee appointments:

**Crime Prevention
Elementary & Secondary Education
General Laws
Joint Committee on Legislative Research
Special Committee on Urban Issues
Special Committee on Public Policy: Ranking Minority
Member**

Email is probably the best way to reach my office. If you are unable to quickly reach me, you can contact my legislative aide Kaylee Bauer at Kaylee.Bauer@house.mo.gov.

Please scroll down to read about other state government matters and important upcoming local events.

Feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends and family who might want to know the latest news about what is happening in state government and about important local events. Be safe and God bless.

Yours in Service,
Mark A. Sharp



This week the Missouri House passed with overwhelming support my House Bill 2627, officially recognizing February as Black History Month and November as Native American Heritage Month. The bill will now be heard in the Senate.

WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Friday, April 8th, 2022

HOUSE SENDS BUDGET TO SENATE

With just four weeks left until the constitutional deadline for passing the 2023 fiscal year state operating budget, the House of Representatives on April 7 voted to advance the various appropriations bills that make up the nearly \$46.52 billion spending plan to the Senate.

But in a move criticized by Democrats, the Republican majority in the House took the unusual step of leaving \$1.8 billion in general revenue – plus billions more in federal funds – unallocated. The Senate is expected to allocate most, if not all of that funding, in its version of the budget.

With an unprecedented general revenue surplus and billions of dollars in available federal pandemic relief funds, Missouri is in a position to fund a number of long neglected needs throughout state government. This includes fully funding the voter-mandated expansion of the state's Medicaid program and providing substantial spending authority for a wide range of infrastructure improvements.

Despite the general revenue surplus, the House plan keeps basic state aid for local public school districts flat from the

current state fiscal year. Although that amount clears the low statutory bar for what is considered “full funding” of K-12 schools, it doesn’t adjust for inflation, resulting in a de facto cut in terms of spending power.

In addition, state reimbursement for student transportation costs remains \$214 million underfunded from what Missouri law says it should be. The House plan also omits funding for Gov. Mike Parson’s proposal to significantly increase minimum pay for public school teachers.

The budget process is several weeks behind the normal schedule, so senators will have just three weeks to run the appropriations bills through the committee process and get approval from the full Senate. That will leave the two chambers one week to negotiate final versions of the appropriation bills and vote to send them to the governor to be signed into law.

If lawmakers fail to finish the budget by 6 p.m. on May 6, the governor would have to call a special legislative session for them to complete the job. That has only happened once in state history, in 1997.

AMENDING CONSTITUTION MAY GET HARDER

The House of Representatives on April 6 granted first-round approval to legislation aimed at requiring widespread geographic support as well as majority support by voters to approve proposed amendments to the Missouri Constitution. A

second vote is required to advance the measure to the Senate.

At present, a simple majority of the votes cast statewide is needed to ratify a proposed constitutional amendment. On occasion, an amendment unpopular in rural Missouri passes on the strength of voter support in more populous urban and suburban areas.

Under House Joint Resolution 132, ratification would require both a simple majority of the statewide vote and majority approval in at least 82 of Missouri's 163 House districts. As a result, even if an amendment passed by a wide margin in the statewide vote, ratification would fail if voters in a majority of House districts rejected it.

The same day, the House also granted first-round passage to another version of legislation it previously approved to make it nearly impossible to ratify proposed constitutional amendments placed on the ballot through the initiative petition process. **Under House Joint Resolution 133, ratification would require approval from a simple majority of all registered voters instead of the traditional simple majority of votes cast.**

Based on the nearly 4.34 million registered Missouri voters in 2020, an initiative measure would need about 2.17 million "yes" votes for passage, a number that exceeds total voter turnout in many elections.

If approved by the legislature, both HJR 132 and HJR 133 would go on the Nov. 8 statewide ballot and require simple majorities of the votes cast to be ratified.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS COULD BE CUT

On April 6 the Missouri House of Representatives granted preliminary approval to legislation (House Bill 1860) cutting the maximum number of weeks of unemployment benefits from the current 20 weeks to as low as six weeks.

A second vote is required to advance the bill, which Democrats opposed, to the Senate.

In 2015, a bill cutting the duration of unemployment benefits to as few as 13 weeks cleared the legislature, but then-Gov. Jay Nixon vetoed it. The Missouri Supreme Court later ruled a subsequent veto override was invalid because the Senate missed the constitutional window for taking its override vote.

WEAKENING VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCES

The House of Representatives on April 6 voted 97-45 to pass legislation that would severely weaken the Missouri constitution's voting rights protections. The measure, which I voted against, now advances to the Senate and would go on the Nov. 8 ballot for voter ratification if it wins final legislative passage.

The state constitution currently protects voting rights for “all” U.S. citizens who are at least 18 years old, Missouri residents and registered to vote.

House Joint Resolution 131 would change it to say “only” people who meet those requirements can vote.

That simple one-word shift would eliminate the constitution’s current absolute guarantee of voting rights to those who meet the constitutional requirements and enable the legislature to pass laws disenfranchising certain groups of otherwise eligible voters without violating the state constitution.

HOUSE BACKS LETTING UTILITIES PASS ON COSTS

The House of Representatives voted 101-40 on April 6 to advance legislation to the Senate that would authorize investor-owned electric utilities to charge customers upfront for the cost of planning or constructing a nuclear power plant. I voted against it.

House Bill 1684 would create a loophole in a law Missouri voters enacted in 1976 with 63.1 percent support that prohibits electric utilities from imposing costs on customers until a facility is on line and generating electricity.

Supporters say the change will encourage Ameren Missouri to build a second nuclear plant in the state. Opponents say utility investors should bear the upfront costs and associated risks and noted situations in other states in which customers were charged billions of dollars for plants that were never built.

REDISTRICTING FAILURE SPARKS NEW LAWSUIT

Two top Missouri Republican Party officials sued Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft on March 31 seeking to block him from using the state's decade-old congressional districts for the 2022 elections and asking a judge to draw new districts given the General Assembly's failure to do so.

The lawsuit is similar to one filed weeks earlier on behalf of Democratic voters.

The House of Representatives and Senate remain deadlocked over redrawing Missouri's eight congressional districts to reflect population shifts under the 2020 U.S. Census.

In the absence of new districts, Ashcroft allowed candidates for the Aug. 2 congressional primaries to file in accordance with the state's outdated congressional map enacted in 2011.

Both the Republican and Democratic lawsuits contend the current districts are unconstitutional and can't be used since they aren't based on the most recent Census.

The two cases were filed in Cole County and assigned to the same judge. As of April 6, no action had been taken on either case.

NET GENERAL REVENUE UP FROM LAST YEAR

Net state general revenue collections for the first nine months

of the 2022 fiscal year were up 5.6 percent compared to the same period in FY 2021, going from \$7.85 billion last year to \$8.29 billion this year, according to the Missouri Division of Budget & Planning.

Year-to-date net general revenue had been up just 2.2 percent through the first eight months of the fiscal year.

The big jump in year-to-date revenue in just one month was due to unusually strong collections in March, which saw net collections rise by a whopping 42.6 percent compared to March 2021, going from \$650.2 million last year to \$926.9 million this year.

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In partnership with local first responders,
we're giving away 500 Hormel Cure 81 hams
to families in need.

Tuesday, April 12
4:00 p.m. start

The event runs for up to two hours
or until all hams are distributed.

KCPD East Precinct
2640 Prospect Ave
Kansas City, MO 64127





Little Blue River Cleanup April 16, 2022

9am-1pm @ Little Blue Valley Park

8259 S. Noland Rd. KCMO

Register Online

mostreamteam.org/calendar-of-events.html

or

SCAN ME



YOU ARE INVITED TO A

RIBBON CUTTING!

4:30 PM TUESDAY, APRIL 19 2022
1401 E 77TH TERRACE, KCMO 64131

*Join Marlborough Community Land Trust in
celebration of the newest addition to
Kansas City's perpetually affordable
community land trust.*

HAPPY HOUR TO FOLLOW!



Marlborough Community Land Trust

GreenLight Fund | Kansas City



GreenLight Fund | Kansas City
PRESENTS



A VIRTUAL LAUNCH OF YOUTH GUIDANCE KANSAS CITY

WEDNESDAY
APRIL 20
7PM

**YOUTH
GUIDANCE**
GUIDING KIDS TO BRIGHT FUTURES

Join us for a free event as we welcome the Youth Guidance **Becoming a Man (BAM®)** and **Working on Womanhood (WOW®)** programs to Kansas City.

BAM® and WOW® provide school-based group counseling and mentoring for students in grades 6-12 to support social-emotional learning and mental health.

FEATURING:

A screening of *Launching Opportunity*, a short film telling the story of Youth Guidance's launch in Kansas City, followed by a panel of community leaders discussing how Kansas City can support well-being and success for young men and women of color.

PANELISTS INCLUDE:



Garrett M. Webster, Sr.
Executive Director
Youth Guidance
Kansas City



Mayor Quinton Lucas
Kansas City, Missouri



Angel McGee
Manager of
Community
Partnerships and
Events
Kansas City Royals



Derek A. Jordan Sr.
Principal
Smith-Hale Middle School
Hickman Mills C-1
School District



Samantha Trujillo
WOW Counselor
Youth Guidance
Kansas City



Anthony Purville
BAM Counselor
Youth Guidance
Kansas City

[Register now!](#)

LEARN MORE SPRING 2022



FREE SATURDAY NATURE PROGRAM

for 4th-8th Graders

MARCH 26 - MAY 14 2022



Enjoy some "me" time while your child makes new friends and has fun in nature!

DATES

Saturdays March 26 - May 14, 2022

TIME

10am - 12pm

with 30 minutes of optional creative play before and after class

LOCATIONS

At 2 different locations:

- Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center, 4750 Troost
- Lakeside Nature Center, 4701 East Gregory Blvd.



SIGN-UP NOW! → Full details and registration at: greenworkskc.org/programs
Questions? Contact Desiree@greenworkskc.org



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Need Help Paying for Internet?

The COVID-19 pandemic has made internet access more important than ever. If you need internet access for work, school, job seeking, or accessing services, we may be able to help.

This program is open to people who live in the greater KC region. It is only open to households with limited incomes.

It can help you:

- Find affordable internet service
- Pay off an old balance
- Get caught up on your current internet service
- Pay for internet service for six months

Funds are limited. Apply Now!

Call **816-200-0599**, visit
<https://kcconnect.me>
or scan this code with your
mobile device. Some
restrictions apply.



Medicaid Enrollment

We can help!

Kansas City Health Department

2400 Troost Ave, Kansas City, MO 64108

Every Tuesday 12:00pm - 4:00pm

FREE assistance

from experts with

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(Since Medicaid was expanded to include more people,
you could be eligible!)



swopeHEALTH"





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AT KIDSEATFREE@INFLUENCECHURCH.COM

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South KC Mobile Food Pantries

Many families in south Kansas City are being forced to rely on community food pantries such as Community Assistance Council's to have enough to eat.

Fortunately, 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.



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State Representative Mark A. Sharp

Missouri House of Representatives

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mark.sharp@house.mo.gov

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