



Dear Neighbor,

Happy New Year!

I hope you and your loved ones were safe and are ready for the start of a new year.

I was pleased to hear no one was injured or killed from celebratory and indiscriminate gunfire this New Year's Eve, because there was certainly an unusually high amount of gunfire even for this city.

A high ranking member within the Kansas City Police Department who worked the evening of New Year's Eve told me our city sounded like a war-torn country with all the gunfire they heard.

Also, citizens around the city did their part by calling shots fired into the 911 dispatch center. So much so, dispatch became overwhelmed with calls and some calls were not connected.

Having these shots fired called into our 911 dispatch center

will certainly help once Blair's law is passed and local law enforcement agencies begin to aggressively enforce the law, as they will know which areas historically have the highest amount of celebratory and indiscriminate gunfire.

I want to personally thank our new Kansas City Police Chief Stacey Graves for allowing Michele Shanahon DeMoss (Blair's mother), Mayor Lucas and me to join her in a press conference held just before New Year's Eve urging people not to discharge their firearms within or into city limits.

It's also worth mentioning that the Kansas City Star newspaper today published a strong editorial urging passage this year of Blair's law which I greatly appreciate. Blair's law would create a state offense for discharging a firearm into or within city limits with criminal negligence.

Regular session will begin Wednesday January 4th with the swearing-in of legislators followed by the legislative ball that evening. I look forward to going into my sophomore term and continuing to represent my childhood area that is very dear to my heart.

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 current committee appointments (some of these could change with the new session):

**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 Rachael Cunningham at Rachael.Cunningham@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



Representative Michael Johnson and I speak with our new Kansas City Police Chief Stacey Graves about her priorities during a meet and greet Chief Graves hosted at the East Patrol Division with local legislators prior to the press conference urging people not to discharge their firearms on New Year's Eve.

WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Monday, January 2, 2023

LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS JAN. 4

The 102nd Missouri General Assembly gets underway Jan. 4 with opportunities for lawmakers to use an unprecedented \$6 billion budget surplus to make transformative investments in the state tempered by a pending crash in revenue collections as a massive income tax cut enacted in September takes effect.

As of Jan. 1, the individual income tax rate paid by most Missourians will drop sharply from 5.3% to 4.8%. Additional cuts will kick in over the coming years to eventually drop the income tax rate to 4.5%. The cuts are expected to cost the state about \$2 billion a year in lost revenue once fully implemented.

Through the first five months of FY 2023, net state general revenue collections increased a whopping 14.6% compared to the previous year. With the new tax cuts, however, state budget officials predict growth of just 1.3% for the year by the time FY 2023 ends on June 30. For FY 2024, budget officials expect net general revenue growth of a mere 0.7%.

While the current budget surplus the state acquired from an influx of federal pandemic relief funds and inflation-driven growth in sales and income tax collections is temporary, the tax cuts are permanent. If in coming years state government has insufficient revenue to pay for basic operations, lawmakers cannot reverse the cuts on their own

and would need voter approval for any significant increase.

Although Democrats picked up three seats in the House of Representatives during the November general election, Republicans will again have veto-proof super-majorities in both chambers, outnumbering Democrats 111-52 in the House and 24-10 in the Senate, where the partisan breakdown remains unchanged from last year.

Powerful Republican legislative leaders are expected to use their super-majorities to take another run at limiting Missourians' power to enact legislation via the initiative petition process, with dozens of proposals on the subject already filed. The initiative petition process has been used several times in recent years to pass high-profile issues such as Medicaid expansion, marijuana legalization and legislative ethics reform that the legislature failed to act on.

Although a near total ban on abortion, including those involving cases of rape or incest, took effect in Missouri this summer following the U.S. Supreme Court's elimination of abortion as a constitutional right, some Republican legislative leaders are expected to attempt to restrict Missouri women from getting abortions in states where it remains legal.

Influential Democratic legislative leaders plan to push for more state support for public education, including higher minimum teacher salaries to address a continuing shortage of qualified teachers in many school districts.

They also plan to advocate for expanded access to post-partum

care for women and infants, as well as protection and expansion of voting rights.

The 2023 legislative session runs through May 12. Lawmakers face a May 5 constitutional deadline for passing the FY 2024 state operating budget.

DEFUNDING PLANNED PARENTHOOD BLOCKED

The latest attempt by lawmakers to prohibit Planned Parenthood from receiving Medicaid reimbursements for providing non-abortion health care services to women is unenforceable, a Cole County judge ruled Dec. 28. The decision mirrors a 2020 Missouri Supreme Court decision striking down similar restrictions lawmakers had attempted to impose in an earlier state budget.

For several years numerous Republicans in the General Assembly have unsuccessfully attempted to prohibit Planned Parenthood from participating in Missouri's Medicaid program, known as MO HealthNet, by crafting restrictive appropriations language purporting to bar the organization from receiving Medicaid funds.

In its 2020 ruling, the Supreme Court said that under the Missouri Constitution appropriation bills must be limited to appropriating funds and cannot establish policy, which the restrictions on Planned Parenthood attempt to do.

Judge Jon Beetem issued his ruling in a brief order and said funds from the Medicaid appropriation are available to all

service providers. Beetem's order also bars the state from refusing to reimburse Planned Parenthood for providing eligible services in the future.

"Language purporting to deny Plaintiffs access to funds that are otherwise available to other MO HealthNet providers is ineffective and/or unconstitutional," Beetem wrote.

"Defendants are enjoined from denying any claim of reimbursement for MO HealthNet services made by Plaintiffs solely due to lack of an appropriation."

The state could appeal Beetem's ruling but its chances to prevail appear slim given the Supreme Court's established precedent on the issue.

The case is *Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region, et al., v. Robert Knodell, et al.*

New Meeting Time!

Coffee

and

CONVERSATION

with



COUNCILWOMAN PARKS-SHAW

SATURDAY

JANUARY
21ST

STARTS AT 10:00 AM



11900 Blue Ridge Blvd.



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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 3:30 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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KcCrimestoppers.com



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State Representative Mark A. Sharp

Missouri House of Representatives

Room 102-BA

201 W Capitol Ave

Jefferson City, Mo 65101

Phone

573-751-9469

Email

mark.sharp@house.mo.gov

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