



Dear Neighbor,

Last week the House Special Committee on Urban Issues which I chair heard House Bills 640 & 729 which are very similar.

Both bills remove the relatively low and outdated salary cap in state law for the Kansas City police chief which has become non-competitive with the salaries paid by cities of similar size. HB 729 sponsored by Rep Chris Brown also removes the salary caps in state law for other ranks in the department such as lieutenant colonels, majors, captains, sergeants, master patrol officers, master detectives, detectives, investigators and police officers.

HB 640, which I sponsored also removes the discriminatory language in state law that prohibits the Board of Police Commissioners from hiring anyone as chief who is more than 60 year of age.

Removing the discriminatory age restriction and the relatively low salary cap for the police chief were priorities of our city's Public Safety Coalition, a group of 16 civic, neighborhood and faith-based groups from all parts of the city organized by the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce to promote public input and participation in hiring our new chief. Both the South Kansas City Chamber of Commerce and the South Kansas City Alliance are members.

I also greatly support Mayor Quinton Lucas coming to Jefferson City to testify in favor of this legislation.

Removing the age restriction and the relatively low salary cap for our police chief are important so our city can become more competitive with other cities of similar size in attracting and retaining the best and brightest law enforcement professionals to serve as our police chief.

Before the Board of Police Commissioners hired Chief Stacey Graves who I fully support, there were interested candidates who dropped out of the running for the position because they were earning more at smaller cities or were excluded from consideration because they were over 60.

The outdated salary caps for all other ranks also hinder our

ability to retain our brightest and best officers, especially since several other cities in our area pay higher salaries.

This afternoon, the Special Committee on Urban Issues voted 5-0 to recommend passage by the full House of House Committee Substitute for House Bills 640 & 729 with bipartisan support from the Democrats and Republicans who sit on the committee.

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 as of now:

**Special Committee on Urban Issues, Chair
Special Committee on Election Contests
Crime Prevention and Public Safety
Consent and House Procedure
Appropriations - General Administration**

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



The above picture shows me presiding at last week's hearing of the House Special Committee on Urban Issues that I chair on bills sponsored by Rep. Chris Brown and me to remove outdated salary caps for Kansas City police officers and discriminatory language prohibiting the Board of Police Commissioners from hiring anyone as police chief who is over 60 years of age.

The below picture shows Mayor Quinton Lucas, who came to the capitol to testify on behalf of my bill, and me on the side gallery of the Missouri House. I had the distinct pleasure of introducing the mayor as a special guest on the House floor as he joined House Speaker Dean Plocher at the dais.



WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Monday, January 30th, 2023

PANEL VOTES TO WEAKEN INITIATIVE PROCESS

On straight party-line votes, the House Elections & Elected Officials Committee on Jan. 26 voted to advance four proposed constitutional amendments that either seek to effectively gut the initiative petition process, make it more difficult to amend the Missouri Constitution by initiative petition or both.

Majority Republicans supported the measures, while minority Democrats opposed them.

The initiative petition process empowers Missourians to propose and enact constitutional amendments and legislation independently of the General Assembly. In recent years, it has been used successfully to enact several proposals the legislature had long blocked, including Medicaid expansion, legislative ethics reform and legalizing medical and adult recreational marijuana use.

As a result of being bypassed on these and other issues they

oppose, some legislators have prioritized making it much more difficult or virtually impossible to enact laws or constitutional amendments through the initiative petition process.

While some measures would raise the minimum number of voters' signatures required for an initiative to qualify for the ballot, most would impose some type of super-majority requirement for voters to ratify constitutional amendments proposed by initiative petition, thus allowing a minority of voters to thwart the will of the majority.

The more straightforward of the proposals would require a two-thirds super-majority of votes cast for ratification. Others are more creative, with one requiring the support of both a simple majority of the statewide vote and majority approval in at least 82 of Missouri's 163 House Districts.

Two proposals would require constitutional amendments to receive support from a simple majority of all registered voters, rather than a majority of votes cast, which would set such a high ratification threshold that the vast majority of all such ballot measures would fail – even those that somehow managed to achieve near unanimous voter support – since voter turnout in many elections is less than 50%.

Most of the super-majority requirements would apply only to

constitutional amendments proposed by the initiative process, while those the General Assembly put on the ballot could still pass with a simple majority of votes cast.

Any of these proposals that pass the legislature automatically will go on the November 2024 statewide ballot for voter ratification using the existing simple-majority threshold.

The proposals include deceptive ballot language apparently designed to increase voter support saying they will only allow U.S. citizens to vote on ballot measures proposed through the initiative petition process.

However, the Missouri Constitution already restricts all voting to citizens.

BILLS TARGET TRANSGENDER CHILDREN

During a 10-hour hearing that stretched into the early morning hours of Jan. 25, the House General Laws Committee considered six bills tightly restricting medical care for transgender children and limiting their participation in girls' sports.

In what some characterized as an attempt to reduce public participation, the hearing was announced with barely more than the 24-hour minimum public notice required by

Missouri's Sunshine Law.

As has happened in previous years, however, transgender children, along with their parents and supporters, still flooded the Capitol to oppose the bills, far outnumbering the handful of proponents who showed up to testify.

Three of the bills seek to ban transgender children from participating in girls' sports, while another three would prohibit transgender children from receiving gender-affirming medical care.

The bills' sponsors said they are necessary to protect children. Opponents said they would interfere with the ability of transgender children to live their lives as who they are, jeopardizing both their physical and mental well-being.

Two other bills heard by the committee would make it a crime for someone to perform in front of children dressed as a member of the opposite sex. The legislation runs counter to this country's long tradition of drag performances in mainstream, all-ages entertainment that includes comedian Milton Berle's 1950s variety show, the long-running TV series M*A*S*H in the 1970s and the hit films Tootsie and Mrs. Doubtfire in the 1980s and 1990s.

The committee took no immediate action on any of the

bills but is expected to advance at least some of the eight measures at a later hearing for debate by the full House.

ENDING CORPORATE INCOME TAX CONSIDERED

On the heels of an individual income tax cut that's expected to cost Missouri state government about \$2 billion a year when fully phased in, the Senate Economic Development & Tax Policy Committee on Jan. 24 heard legislation to completely eliminate the state's corporate income tax.

Doing away with the tax is estimated to cost the state another \$712.14 million a year in lost revenue!

Missouri first enacted its corporate income tax, along with the state's individual income tax, in 1917. The corporate income tax rate topped out at 6.25 % in 1993 and remained at that level until a series of reductions over the last decade dropped it to the current rate of 4%. Starting in 2024, the proposed legislation would reduce the corporate rate by one percentage point each year until the tax is completely eliminated in 2027.

The committee also considered a proposed constitutional amendment to authorize the legislature to levy sales taxes on digital services, licenses and subscriptions. Such taxes currently are prohibited under an earlier constitutional amendment Missouri voters ratified in 2016 with 57%

support.

The committee took no action on either measure.

LIMITING TEACHING ABOUT RACISM ADVANCES

The Senate Education & Workforce Development Committee on Jan. 24 voted to recommend Senate passage of a bill that would prohibit K-12 public schools from teaching about “critical race theory”, a concept generally only taught at the college level that examines the historical and continuing impact of racism on American institutions and society at large.

“Critical race theory” is currently not taught in public elementary or secondary schools in Missouri. Critics of the proposed legislation worry its passage would have a chilling effect on any open and honest discussion about racism in this country in our K-12 public schools.

The legislation also would require K-12 public schools to teach “the principles of American civics and patriotism.”



APPLY
TODAY!

COHORT 12

Neighborhood Leadership Training

UMKC - Center for Neighborhoods

Spring 2023

If you are active in your neighborhood organization the Center for Neighborhood's Cohort Neighborhood Leadership Training can help you develop crucial community-building skills.

Cohort 12 will be a **FREE**, 12-week series of classes, workshops, and fellowship **occurring between February 25th and May 20th**. Tuesday night regular sessions will focus on our Four Pillars of Neighborhood Vitality; Leadership + Governance, Health + Safety, Planning + Development, and Communications + Technology. Three Saturday workshops will include hands-on lessons in a UMKC computer lab and asset-walk training in a nearby neighborhood.

Tuesday evening classes are held weekly with dinner served at 5:00 PM and classwork beginning at 5:30 PM.

Saturday workshops are usually scheduled 10 AM – 12 PM.

The deadline to apply is midnight on January 31st.

We hope you'll join us this spring!

[Click Here to apply today!](#)



Formula Distribution!!

CHC and Cradle KC are a formula distribution site! We have a variety of infant formula available. If we do not have the type of formula you need, we can request it.

Scan the QR code to submit your request

contact us at 913-371-9298 if you have questions

QR Code

Cradle KC **CHC** Community Health Council of Wyandotte County

ee.

The poster features a light pink background with decorative orange starburst and flower icons. A QR code is located in the upper right. A photograph of a baby drinking from a bottle is in the lower right. The text is in a mix of bold and regular fonts, with some elements in a darker brown color.

Understanding and Accessing MISSOURI MEDICAID

More Missourians than ever now qualify for Medicaid expansion, including parents who have not qualified before, and adults without children. Learn to see if you qualify for Medicaid and how to apply.

Am I eligible?		How do I apply?	
Medicaid eligibility depends primarily on the size of your household and your gross monthly household income (before taxes and deductions). If your monthly income is lower than the number of people living in your home, you may qualify .		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	
1	\$1,481	By Phone: Call the Missouri Family Support Division at (855)-373-4636 or (855)-373-9994	
2	\$2,003	By Mail or Email: Print and fill out an application provided at the web address listed above and mail to:	
3	\$2,525	Family Support Division 615 E 13th St Kansas City, MO 64106	
4	\$3,048	Or email to: FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov	
5	\$3,570		
6	\$4,092		

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- CHILDREN DO NOT NEED TO BE PRESENT -

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FOR MORE INFO CONTACT 314.701.7245 OR EMAIL US
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**THIS SITE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER*



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.

Serve and Lift Center – South KC, 8001 Longview Rd., from 8:30 to 3:30pm Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, 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!**