



Dear Neighbor,

Monday, February 27, the House Special Committee on Urban Issues I chair without dissent recommended passage of House Committee Substitute for House Bills 930, 361 and 326 sponsored respectively by Representatives Ashley Bland Manlove, Raychel Proudie and LaKeySha Bosley.

These bills are all known as the Missouri CROWN Act (Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair).

The committee substitute prohibits any public or private pre-kindergarten program, public or private elementary or secondary school or public or private school board or other school administrative body that receives or benefits from state financial assistance or that enrolls pupils that receive state student financial aid from discriminating against students based on their hair texture or hairstyle, if the hair texture or hairstyle is commonly associated with a particular race or ancestral

origin.

Covered hairstyles include those designed to protect textured hair from damage so it may be worn in its natural state as braids, locks, twists or Afros.

My committee members worked together on a bipartisan basis to do our best to draft language that has the best chance of passing the House and Senate so Missouri can join the 20 other states that have passed their own versions of the CROWN Act.

Also on Monday, House Committee Substitute for House Bill 301, an omnibus crime bill that passed the House on February 9, was heard by the Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. The bill includes all the provisions of Blair's Law that I had introduced as a separate bill that were added to it by an amendment that was approved by an overwhelming voice vote in the House.

Blair's Law is designed to reduce Kansas City's plague of sometimes deadly celebratory and indiscriminate gunfire by making discharging a firearm within or into city limits with criminal negligence a serious state offense instead of just a city ordinance violation. It is named after 11-year-old Blair Shanahan Lane who was killed here by such gunfire during the July 4 holiday in 2011.

Blair's mother, Michele Shanahan DeMoss, who has been on a mission since her daughter's death to warn people of the dangers of celebratory and indiscriminate

gunfire and to strengthen the penalties for it to help deter such dangerous and irresponsible behavior, once again came to the Capitol to testify for the legislation.

As some of you may know, apparent celebratory gunfire likely claimed another victim here about the time the Chiefs won this year's Super Bowl when a Kansas City police sergeant was wounded outside Police Headquarters at 1125 Locust and hospitalized with non-life-threatening injuries at approximately the same time a report was received of multiple nearby gunshots.

HCSHB 301 is expected to be voted on by the Senate committee next week.

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 House committee appointments:

Special Committee on Urban Issues, Chair
Subcommittee on Appropriations - General Administration

Consent and House Procedure

Crime Prevention and Public Safety

Special Committee on Election Contests

Joint Committee on Legislative Research

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



Representatives Anthony Ealy, Michael Johnson and me (from left) outside of the Governor's mansion after a Missouri Legislative Black Caucus meeting with Governor Mike Parson.

WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Tuesday, February 28th, 2023

STATE CONTROL OF St.L POLICE ADVANCES

The House Crime Prevention & Public Safety Committee voted 20-4 on Feb. 23 to advance a bill putting the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department back under state control.

The measure, House Bill 702, passed on nearly a straight party-line vote with all Republicans voting supporting it, and most Democrats voting opposing it.

A state-appointed Board of Police Commissioners had governed the St. Louis department for more than 150 years, but the state's authority ended when 63.9% of Missouri voters approved a statewide ballot measure in 2012 restoring local control. Proposition A, as it was known, passed in every Missouri county but one.

The full House of Representatives is expected to debate the bill re-imposing state control in the coming weeks.

SENATE VOTES TO EXTEND POST-PARTUM CARE

The Senate on Feb. 21 granted first-round approval to legislation providing one-year of post-partum care for women and infants under Medicaid.

However, the bill passed only after conservative lawmakers added language prohibiting women who receive abortions from receiving coverage and also delaying the extended benefits from taking effect until the number of existing Medicaid recipients is reduced.

At present, Medicaid provides just two months of post-partum care, which health care advocates have long contended is woefully insufficient to serve the needs of low-income mothers and babies.

The bipartisan push to expand post-partum care under Medicaid received a boost following the U.S. Supreme Court's elimination of the constitutional right to an abortion last summer. With abortion now outlawed in Missouri in nearly all circumstances, the demand for post-partum care is expected to significantly increase.

Although conservative senators who traditionally have opposed expanding Medicaid for any reason now seem more amenable to extending post-partum care, they demanded that restrictions be added in order for the bill to advance. However, critics contend those restrictions likely don't comply with federal Medicaid requirements.

A second vote is required to advance the measure, Senate Bill 45, to the House of Representatives.

BILL SEEKS TO LET UTILITIES PASS ON COSTS

The House Utilities Committee on Feb. 22 heard legislation that would allow investor-owned electric companies to charge existing customers for the planning and construction of future nuclear power plants.

The bill would circumvent an existing voter-approved law prohibiting companies from passing on costs until after a new facility is on line and generating power.

For more than a decade, Ameren Missouri has been seeking to repeal or amend the state’s “construction work in progress” law as a precursor to possibly building another nuclear power plant in the state. Ameren operates Missouri’s only existing nuclear facility in Callaway County. Voters enacted the CWIP law in 1976 with 63.1% support as construction on the Callaway plant was underway.

House Bill 225 would carve out an exemption to the CWIP law for proposed new nuclear plants.

Supporters say charging customers upfront for a project’s cost is the only way to make it financially feasible.

Opponents say shareholders – not consumers – should

bear the costs and associated risks of building a new nuclear facility, especially since the legislation would not require a plant to actually be built for a company to recoup its planning expenses from customers.

The committee took no immediate action on the bill.

SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL PASSES

The Senate voted 29-4 on Feb. 22 to grant final passage to a \$627.15 million supplemental appropriations bill for the final months of the 2023 fiscal year which ends June 30. The bill has gone to the governor who quickly signed it into law so an 8.7% pay hike for state workers included in the measure can take effect March 1.

For many years, Missouri has ranked dead last in the nation in average state government employee pay. Although it was the largest percentage bump in state worker salaries in at least several decades, the pay raise authorized in House Bill 14 just barely keeps up with inflation and doesn't change Missouri's lowest-in-the-nation status.

Other spending authority in the bill includes \$275 million for disaster aid grants, \$148.71 million for matching grants to federally qualified health centers, \$20 million to bolster security at local schools and \$3 million for the Wood Energy Tax Credit Program, along with other items.



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No entry fees to participate

**2023 PARADE THEME:
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Entries are strongly encouraged to incorporate the "Happy Go Lucky" theme into their entry to have the best chance of winning a prize.

Parade Entry Prizes

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3rd Place = \$100



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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?

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**.



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:

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Kansas City, MO 64106

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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 10 a.m. until food runs out 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 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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Please don't hesitate to contact me
with any feedback, questions or
ideas!