



**State Representative
Mark A. Sharp
District 37**



1-29-24

Dear Neighbor,

This week started off with the Special Committee on Urban Issues that I chair, voting on the House Committee Substitute for House Bill's 1477 and 1437. Sponsored by myself and Representative Sherrie Gallick, House Bill's 1477 & 1437 create the state offense of discharging a firearm within or into city limits with criminal negligence.

This is an attempt to combat the serious and sometimes deadly celebratory gunfire that we

experience in Kansas City but also in St. Louis. This legislation was voted out of committee by a vote of 4 yes and 0 no.

After I left that committee, the Special Committee on Education Reform met to vote on the House Committee Substitute for HB's 1485, 1764 and 1941 to expand public Charter schools into St. Louis County, St. Charles County and the city of Columbia.

This legislation allows public Charter schools to open in these designated areas, currently they are not allowed to.

As the ranking minority member sitting on this special committee, I want to be very clear. I support all students, whether they attend a traditional public school, public charter school or a private institution.

My community is already very concerned about a public school open-enrollment bill that could decimate school districts in the Kansas City area, Hickman Mills School District in particular.

So far this session, many so-called education

related bills are in some way making an attempt to create more school choice options for families.

As a result, the focus has been completely taken away from improving education for all of Missouri's students and families particularly in our public schools in our urban and rural communities.

I voted no for HCS HB's 1485, 1764, 1941.

This Wednesday, the Special Committee on Property Tax Reform will be voting on House Joint Resolution's 68 and 79. If these resolutions are to pass the Missouri General Assembly and are signed by the Governor, upon statewide voter approval the Jackson County tax accessor job will become an elected position.

Below are a list of my committee assignments and my legislative assistant's email if you have any questions or would like to be added to my email list:

Special Committee on Urban Issues,
Chairman

**Special Committee on Education Reform,
Ranking Minority Member
Special Committee on Public Policy, Ranking
Minority Member
Special Committee on Property Tax Reform
Special Committee on Election Contests
Joint Committee on Legislative Research
Joint Committee on Legislative Research -
Revision Subcommittee
Crime Prevention and Public Safety
Consent and House Procedure
Subcommittee on Appropriations -
General Administration**

My legislative assistant, Mariah Gilmore

Mariah.Gilmore@house.mo.gov



This past week while chairing the Special Committee on Urban Issues we heard legislation from myself and Representative Sherrie Gallick from Cass County that creates the state offense for discharging a firearm with criminal negligence into or in city limits, named Blair's Law.



WEEKLY CAPITOL UPDATE

Monday, Jan. 29, 2024

PARSON PROPOSES \$51.82 BILLION BUDGET

In his sixth and final State of the State address, Gov. Mike Parson proposed a \$51.82 billion state operating budget for the upcoming 2025 fiscal year, plus another \$898 million for capital improvement projects. As is tradition, Parson delivered the speech before a joint session of the Missouri House and Senate in the House chambers on Jan. 24.

The FY 2025 spending plan includes an additional

\$120.6 million in basic state funding for local K-12 public school districts, plus an additional \$14 million for districts' student transportation costs. Parson also asked for \$51.7 million in state childcare subsidies.

The governor is recommending a 3% increase in core funding for Missouri's public colleges and universities, which would collectively provide the schools an additional \$32.5 million. Parson also is asking for \$314.7 million for capital improvement projects at college campuses.

Now that the governor has submitted his proposed budget, the process shifts to the General Assembly. House Budget Committee hearings on the governor's plan are slated to start Jan. 29. Lawmakers face a May 10 constitutional deadline for granting final passage to the various appropriations bills that will make up the FY 2025 state budget. The new fiscal year begins July 1.

While offering details of his proposed budget, Parson spent little time discussing bills he wants the legislature to enact this year. The policy proposals he did make were for lawmakers to expand childcare tax credits to improve access and affordability and to increase criminal penalties for fentanyl trafficking and exposing children and minors to the sometimes-deadly drug.

Parson also highlighted what he saw as major accomplishments of his administration such as attracting many new jobs and businesses to the state, increasing

funding for K-12 public schools and boosting teacher pay, constructing or reconstructing over 1,000 highway bridges and better maintaining Missouri's lengthy highway system, all while winning passage of significant individual income tax reductions.

HARDLINERS PUNISHED FOR OBSTRUCTION

Senate President Pro Tem Caleb Rowden on Jan. 23 retaliated against four members of the chamber's hardline right-wing faction for their constant obstruction of proceedings by stripping them of their committee leadership posts. The hardliners responded by spending most of the rest of the week engaging in more obstruction.

The hardline Republican faction has long been a thorn in the side of Senate GOP leadership, with its obstructionist tactics sharply reducing the number of bills to win final legislative passage in each of the three previous years.

From the outset of the current session, the hardliners have significantly escalated tensions by blocking the Senate from considering even routine business, finally prompting Rowden, R-Columbia, to take punitive action.

At a news conference, Rowden announced he had stripped committee chairmanships or vice-chairmanships from state Senators Bill Eigel of St. Charles, Denny

Hoskins of Warrensburg, Andrew Koenig of Manchester and Rick Brattin of Harrisonville. Hoskins also lost his position on the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. Rowden was flanked by more mainstream Senate Republicans during his announcement.

Because the Senate allows for unlimited debate, a small group of senators can force the chamber to a standstill by holding the floor for extended periods. However, the filibuster traditionally is invoked on a relatively limited basis and usually with the intent of encouraging compromise on a contentious issue.

The hardliners, by contrast, have resorted to filibustering daily on procedural matters in an ongoing, but largely unsuccessful effort to force the Senate to capitulate to their demands to pass a variety of far right-wing proposals that enjoy limited legislative support.

AUDITOR CLAIMS ASHCROFT VIOLATING LAW

State Auditor Scott Fitzpatrick issued a report on Jan. 22 accusing Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft of violating the law by refusing to provide information to auditors on implementation of a new statute relating to cyber security reviews of local election authorities.

Under the law in question which the legislature enacted last year, the Secretary of State's office is required to

perform cyber security reviews of Missouri's 116 local election authorities. A separate state law grants the State Auditor's office access to all records of agencies subject to an audit.

“With a major election cycle right around the corner, verifying the implementation of the new cyber security reviews was a vital part of our audit,” Fitzpatrick said in a news release accompanying the audit. “The law clearly provides our audit staff with the authority to receive and review this information, and it's disappointing the Secretary of State's Office stood in the way of our efforts to perform a thorough analysis of how the new cyber security reviews have been implemented.”

In his official response accompanying the audit findings, Ashcroft said the disclosure of the details of his reviews could jeopardize election security. However, he cited no legal authority for withholding that information from auditors.

The audit also criticized Ashcroft for withdrawing Missouri from its membership in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), saying the move cuts off local election officials from information necessary to identify and correct inaccurate voter registration records without providing an alternative to obtaining that information. In his response, Ashcroft said the benefits of ERIC, which Missouri joined in 2018, were less than expected.

“I can respect why Secretary Ashcroft felt it was necessary to end the relationship with ERIC, but that doesn’t negate the responsibility to have a plan in place to replace that data so the office has a reliable way to ensure we don’t have dead voters registered in Missouri as we enter a major election year,” Fitzpatrick said.

TRANSGENDER HEALTH CARE STILL TARGETED

The House Emerging Issues Committee on Jan. 24 voted to recommend legislation for passage that would repeal the scheduled sunset of a law enacted last year that bans minors from receiving most gender-affirming care.

The ban on gender-affirming care currently is set to expire in 2027. The sunset provision was included in last year’s bill as part of a compromise brokered to overcome a filibuster by some Senate Democrats.

The legislation - House Bills 2019 & 2020 - also would prohibit medical providers from being required to perform gender reassignment surgeries or other gender-affirming care, although no evidence has been offered that this has ever happened in Missouri.

The committee, however, took no action on related legislation it heard the prior week that seeks to erase the legal existence of transgender people by statutorily defining someone as “male” or “female” based on their

reproductive systems at birth. Also not advancing, at least for now, are bills seeking to restrict which public restrooms transgender people can legally use.

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MAYOR PRO TEM RYANA
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DARRELL CURLS PRESENT:

5TH DISTRICT Problem Solvers Community Meeting

Monday, February 5, 2024

6PM-7:30PM

SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY CENTER
4201 E. 63RD ST.,
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FOR MORE INFORMATION: Rachel Casey,
rachel.casey@cackc.org, 816-762-3277 x 103, www.cackc.org/resources

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		3	\$52,320
		4	\$58,080
		5	\$62,760
		6	\$67,380
		7	\$72,060
		8	\$76,680

*AREA MEDIAN INCOME



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