



**Capitol Report**

**May 28, 2021**

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**HAVE**

**A SAFE AND HAPPY MEMORIAL DAY  
WEEKEND**

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*Dear Neighbor,*

With session over, this week I am doing a wrap-up of major legislation that passed and what didn't pass this year. I do not have links to each bill here, but you can look up the bills at <https://house.mo.gov/LegislationSP.aspx>

Unless these bills say they are "Signed into law", they are still subject to the Governor's signature or veto.

I will be giving my End of Session Report at 6 PM on June 7th online during the Kansas City 5th District City Council Meeting. I will send out a link prior to the ZOOM Meeting.

Since the legislative session has ended, I will be sending out a newsletter as needed to keep you informed of what is going on with Missouri legislation and community actions in District 27. I will continue to send out the Capitol Report on a weekly basis once session reconvenes in January of 2022.

It is an honor and a pleasure to represent you and your interest in Jefferson City.

*Yours in Service,*

*Rich*

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It was a challenging legislative session, but I am hard at work to serve your interest in Jefferson City.

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**Here is a summary of some of the bills that were debated this year.**

**GOOD LEGISLATION THAT PASSED**

**ADOPTIVE AND FOSTER PARENTS (HB 429):** Expands eligibility for a tax credit of up to \$10,000 to offset adoption costs and grants foster parents a tax deduction for their costs of

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providing foster care. **(Signed into law April 22.)**

**BENEVOLENT TAX CREDITS (HB 430):** Expands eligibility for a tax credit of up to \$10,000 to offset adoption costs and increases the amount of tax credits for contributions to domestic violence shelters and maternity homes. **(Signed into law April 22.)**

**RELIGIOUS BOARDING SCHOOLS (HB 557):** Establishes state oversight and minimal health and safety standards for religious boarding schools, which currently are unregulated in Missouri.

**MENTAL HEALTH PARITY (HB 604):** Prohibits health insurance plans from imposing certain restrictions on mental health treatment that aren't imposed on treatments for physical ailments.

**POLICE REFORM (SB 53):** Prohibits police from using chokeholds on suspects in most circumstances, requires law enforcement agencies to track and report use-of-force incidents, increases penalties for officers who have sexual contact with those in custody and grants prosecutors more authority to seek to overturn past wrongful convictions.

**PRESCRIPTION DRUG MONITORING (SB 63):** Creates a statewide database to monitor the prescription and dispensing of opioids.

**ORDERS OF PROTECTION (SB 71):** Authorizes lifetime orders of protection in extreme cases of stalking and harassment, modernizes the definition of stalking and allows protection orders to cover abuse against pets.

**WAYFAIR (SB 153):** Makes it easier for local governments and the state to collect sales taxes for online purchases that already were due under statute but rarely paid.

**FUEL TAX (SB 262):** Gradually increases the state fuel tax from the current 17 cents per gallon to 29.5 cents a gallon in 2025 to

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generate new revenue for road and bridge projects.

### **GOOD LEGISLATION THAT DIDN'T PASS**

**MEDICAID FUNDING (Budget Appropriation):** Sought to provide the full funding of Medicaid to implement a constitutionally mandated expansion of the program that will take effect with the start of 2022 fiscal year on July 1.

**MISSOURI NONDISCRIMINATION ACT (HB 275):** Sought to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity in employment, housing, banking or public accommodations.

**ABSENTEE VOTING (HB 412, HB 656, HB 867, HB 1100, HB 1102):** Sought to allow all voters to be eligible to vote by absentee ballot in advance of Election Day without providing a reason to election officials.

**UNEMPLOYMENT REPAYMENT (HB 1083):** Sought to waive the repayment of excess unemployment benefits from Missourians who, through no fault of their own and due to errors by the state, received more benefits than they were entitled to.

**FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT ALLOWANCE (SB 43):** Sought to renew a tax on health care providers that is vital to leveraging federal Medicaid funds and is set to expire Sept. 30.

### **BAD LEGISLATION THAT PASSED**

**GUN NULLIFICATION (HB 85):** Purports to declare many federal gun laws unenforceable in Missouri and authorizes federal gun offenders to extract \$50,000 fines from local police departments whose officers assisted federal agents in their arrests.

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**PRIVATE SCHOOL VOUCHERS (HB 349):** Redirects state revenue for tax breaks to provide partial vouchers for K-12 students to attend private schools.

**POLICE OVERSIGHT (SB 26):** Grants special rights to police officers who are under investigation that could make it harder to hold problem officers accountable for their actions and makes it more difficult for local governments reduce police funding, even if necessary due to declining revenue collections.

**COVID LIABILITY PROTECTIONS (SB 51):** Shields businesses, health care providers, nursing homes and religious institutions from lawsuits relating to COVID-19 exposure.

### **BAD LEGISLATION THAT DIDN'T PASS**

**TRANS CHILDREN (HB 33):** Prohibits medical providers from providing care relating to gender transitioning to anyone under age 18.

**PHOTO VOTER ID (HB 334):** Sought to require voters to possess an unexpired government-issued photo identification in order to cast a ballot.

**MINIMUM WAGE (HB 726):** Sought to repeal a law voters enacted in 2018 that is gradually increasing the state's minimum wage to \$12 an hour by 2023 and revert to the state's previous minimum wage of \$7.85 an hour.

**CENSORING HISTORY (HB 952, HB 1141):** Sought to prohibit public schools from teaching curricula that highlights traditionally overlooked or downplayed aspects of American history, including the impacts of slavery and racism.

**RUSH LIMBAUGH (HB 1200, HB 1230, HB 1259):** Sought to

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honor the controversial radio talk show host and Missouri native.

**INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM (HJR 20):** Sought to amend the Missouri Constitution increase the number of signatures required to bypass lawmakers and place issues directly on the statewide ballot using the initiative petition process and to require a two-thirds supermajority, instead of the current simple majority, to ratify constitutional amendments.

**TRANS ATHLETES (HJR 53):** Sought to amend the Missouri Constitution to require trans athletes attending public schools to participate only on sports teams that correspond with gender on their birth certificate.

**ATTACKING PROTESTERS (SB 66):** Sought to grant immunity from prosecution to people who assault or kill protestors who enter private property or public roadways and make it a felony to impede traffic as part of a protest.

### **OTHER LEGISLATION THAT PASSED**

**LOCAL HEALTH ORDERS (HB 271):** Prohibits local officials imposing restrictions relating to public health emergencies that exceed more than 30 days in a 180-day period

**COLLEGE TUITION CAP (HB 297):** Removes an existing statutory cap on how much public colleges and universities may increase tuition in a given year.

**COLLEGE ATHLETES (HB 297):** Ensures that college athletes are able to earn compensation from the use of their name, image, likeness or reputation.

**STATE INVESTMENTS (HJR 35):** Asks Missouri voters to amend the state constitution to grant the state treasurer more flexibility in how state funds are invested.

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**KC POLICE RESIDENCY (SB 53):** Eliminates the requirement that Kansas City police officers reside in the city limits.

**OTHER LEGISLATION THAT DIDN'T PASS**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS' SALARIES (HCR 7):** Sought to block a new salary schedule for statewide elected officials, lawmakers and judges from taking effect on July 1.

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (HJR 6):** Sought to amend the Missouri Constitution create a state-level Department of Defense to oversee the Missouri National Guard, which currently is part of the state Department of Public Safety.

**ILLEGAL SLOT MACHINES (SB 10):** Sought to crackdown on the recent proliferation of illegal slot machines at various businesses throughout the state.

**GAMBLING (SB 98):** Sought to authorize the Missouri Lottery Commission to regulate video lottery terminal for use in businesses and also legalize and regulate gambling on the outcome of sporting events.

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## **HEARING SET IN LAWSUIT TO FORCE MEDICAID EXPANSION**

Cole County Circuit Judge Jon Beetem has set a hearing for June 18 in a lawsuit seeking to force Gov. Mike Parson's administration to begin implementing Medicaid expansion as required by the Missouri Constitution. The lawsuit was filed May 20 on behalf of three Missourians who will qualify for the health program under new eligibility requirements that will take effect July 1. The filing came one week after Parson, a Republican, publicly went back on earlier promises to implement the constitutionally mandated expansion of the program.

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Under a constitutional amendment voters ratified last year, Missourians with a household income of 138 percent of the federal poverty level or less soon will qualify for Medicaid. An estimated 275,000 additional people will be eligible for the program.

After Republican lawmakers refused to include full Medicaid funding in the state operating budget for the 2022 fiscal year, which also begins July 1, Parson on May 13 withdrew an expansion implementation plan his administration had already submitted to federal authorities. Parson claimed he can't implement expansion without a specific legislative appropriation for it.

The state constitution, however, doesn't tie expanded eligibility to the appropriations process. But it does mandate that services be provided to the expanded population, prohibit the state from treating that population differently from current eligible recipients and require state officials to maximize the amount of federal funding available to the state for Medicaid.

Under the Affordable Care Act, the federal government will pay 90 percent of the cost of expansion – about \$1.4 billion for FY 2022. Implementation also will secure Missouri another \$1.5 billion under the latest federal COVID-19 relief package. In addition to the societal benefits of increasing health care access for more Missourians, securing that much new federal spending would create an estimated 80,000 jobs and provide a substantial boost to the economy.

The lawsuit asks Beetem, a Republican, to order the Parson administration to follow the plain language of the state constitution and begin enrolling and providing services to members of the newly eligible population and maximize the state's share of federal funding for the program. The case is *Stephanie Doyle, et al., v. Jennifer Tidball, et al.*

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## **MEDICAID DIRECTOR SOUNDS WARNING ABOUT FUNDING LOSS**

Acting MO HealthNet Division Director Kirk Matthews said the continued existence of the state's Medicaid program is at risk after the legislature failed to renew a special tax that provides the bulk of its funding, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported in a May 25 story. Matthews, a former Republican state representative, made his comments the same day during meeting of the MO HealthNet Oversight Committee.

"The existence of the program will be threatened by the end of the year. I cannot overstate the impact, the importance of that," Matthews said, according to the paper. Matthews went on to say that the division might not even have sufficient funds to pay

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employees, calling the loss of the tax “crippling.”

At issue is the “federal reimbursement allowance,” a voluntary tax paid by Missouri health care providers that allows the state to leverage more federal Medicaid funding. The tax accounts for nearly 80 percent of the program’s funding. Lawmakers typically reauthorize it with little controversy, but renewal legislation derailed this year after two Republican senators insisted on adding unrelated restrictions on abortion and women’s access to birth control. Because of the impasse, lawmakers were unable to secure final passage of such a bill didn’t pass before the 2021 legislative session ended on May 14.

As of right now, the tax remains in effect, but it will expire if not renewed by Sept. 30. Gov. Mike Parson, a Republican, is expected to call a special legislative session to address the issue but hasn’t yet indicated when he might do so. The fight over reauthorizing the provider tax is separate from the legislature’s refusal to fund a constitutionally mandated expansion of the program that will take effect on July 1.

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## **FIRST BLACK WOMAN APPOINTED TO MISSOURI SUPREME COURT**

State appellate Judge Robin Ransom of St. Louis made state history on May 24 as the first Black woman appointed to the Missouri Supreme Court. Ransom will replace Judge Laura Denvir Stith, who retired in March after 20 years of service.

This appointment marks the second time Gov. Mike Parson, a Republican, has selected Ransom to fill an appellate vacancy. The first came in 2019 when he appointed her to the Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern District. Ransom, a 1991 graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Law, previously had been a St. Louis City Circuit Court judge, a post to which then-Gov. Matt Blunt, also a Republican, appointed her in 2008. Prior to becoming a judge, Ransom worked as a public defender, prosecuting attorney and family court commissioner.

Ransom was one of three finalists for the Supreme Court vacancy

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announced on May 21 by the Missouri Appellate Judicial Commission. Under the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan, the independent commission submits three names from among the applicants to the governor, who must select one or forfeit the decision to the commission.

The other two finalists were Court of Appeals Southern District Judge Don Burrell Jr. and St. Louis County Circuit Judge Bill Corrigan Jr. Burrell was appointed to the appellate bench by Blunt in 2008 and prior to that was a Greene County Circuit judge for about a decade. Corrigan, a former president of The Missouri Bar, had a long career as a private practice attorney until Parson appointed him as a circuit judge in November.

Ransom can begin serving immediately but must stand for a statewide retention vote in November 2022. If retained, she will receive a full 12-year term on the court. She is Parson's first appointment to the state high court since he took office in June 2018. Ransom's elevation will create a vacancy on the Court of Appeals Eastern District.

With Ransom replacing Stith, the seven-member state Supreme Court shifts from a majority of judges appointed by Democratic governors to a majority appointed by Republican governors. It marks the first time Republican appointees have held a majority on the court since 2002.

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## **COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS**

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## RAYTOWN CHAMBER UNVEILS NEW TOURISM CONNECTION

The Raytown Area Chamber of Commerce and Tourism is excited to announce the expansion of the Tourism side of the Chamber. The Tourism Committee has been hard at work and made recommendations to the Raytown Chamber Board of Directors and with their approval, the Committee has secured the following:

- New Website - [www.VisitRaytown.com](http://www.VisitRaytown.com)

- A New Logo - see above
- Hashtag - #VisitRaytown
- Facebook Page - @VisitRaytownMO
- Email Address: [connect@visitraytown.com](mailto:connect@visitraytown.com)
- Mission Statement: The mission of Visit Raytown is to brand and market the Raytown area as a recreation, tourism, and business destination to generate positive economic impact.

Visit our website at

[www.visitraytown.com](http://www.visitraytown.com) or [www.raytownchamber.com](http://www.raytownchamber.com)



**COVID-19 Vaccine Walk-In appointments are available at our two hospital campuses (2211 Charlotte and 7900 Lee's Summit Road) 7am to 2 pm Monday through Friday. In addition, one may schedule a vaccine at [www.trumed.org](http://www.trumed.org) or by calling 816-404-CARE.**

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## CHECK THE STATUS OF YOUR RETURN!

Want to receive regular updates  
on your 2018, 2019 or 2020  
Individual Income Tax Return?

Give the return tracker  
application a try!



After you have filed your  
return, sign up here to  
receive tracker email  
or text notifications.

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# MISSOURI CORONAVIRUS

STAY INFORMED

mostopscovid

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# The Pandemic aint over!

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But we're getting there!

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The reward has been raised to  
**\$30,000** for Dominic

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**GREATER KANSAS CITY CRIME STOPPERS  
816-474-TIPS HOTLINE**

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FROM: Det. Kevin Boehm, Crime Stoppers Coordinator**

**SUBJECT: Reward Increase – 9 Year Old Dominic Young Homicide**

**KANSAS CITY, MO --- The Kansas City, Missouri Police Department and the Greater KC Crime Stoppers TIPS Hotline continue to seek information in the January 20, 2018 homicide of 9 year old Dominic Young Jr. at 71 Highway and Emanuel Cleaver II Blvd.**

**Dominic Young Jr. was apparently hit by a stray gunshot while occupying a vehicle**

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driven by his father and died as a result of his injuries. Dominic, his father and brother were en route to Grandview at the time. The vehicle driven by Dominic's father was hit by gunshots from other vehicles apparently engaged in a gunfight according to statements.

KCPD found a possible crime scene near the intersection where the father said the shooting happened. When the father arrived home in Grandview, Dominic was not responsive. Grandview police initially responded to the father's home and found the boy in critical condition. He was later pronounced dead at a hospital.

A number of community leaders and organizations including State Representative Richard Brown, Mayor Pro Tem Kevin McManus, former City Councilmen Scott Taylor, Scott Wagner, John Sharp; the City of KCMO and Concord Fortress of Hope Church (Pastor Ron Lindsay) have come forward to increase the existing reward in the case up to \$30,000.00. Those leaders are available for comment in regard to the case.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers Greater Kansas City TIPS Hotline at 816-474-TIPS (8477), TIPS may also be submitted electronically at [www.KCcrimestoppers.com](http://www.KCcrimestoppers.com), or by downloading our NEW mobile app, P3TIPS, on Google Play or the Apple iOS stores for FREE. Information leading to an arrest and/or filing of charges could be eligible for up to \$30,000.00 in reward money. ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS.



**Remain Anonymous • Receive Cash Rewards**

**Tips Hotline**

**816-474-8477**

**Web Tips**

**[www.KCcrimestoppers.com](http://www.KCcrimestoppers.com)**

**Free Mobile App**

**[www.P3Tips.com](http://www.P3Tips.com)**

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\* A program of the KC Metropolitan Crime Commission

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My office in Jefferson City is available to assist you with questions you may have about state government or legislative issues. Please call, email or write anytime. If you are unable to reach me, my assistant, Donna Gentsch is ready to help you. If you are in Jefferson City, come by my Capitol office in room 134, and introduce yourself. The door is always open and I encourage you to visit.

[Please forward this email to your friends and family who want to know how what is happening in Jefferson City will impact them here at home.](#)



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## Rep. Richard Brown

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