



Capitol Report

April 15, 2021

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Dear Neighbor,

This has been the hardest week of my legislative tenure.

As a member and Vice Chair of the Committee of Ethics, I was part of an investigative matter over the past several months of one of our members. The result of the investigation has led to resignation of the representative, however, this morning, the House members have voted to reject the resignation to keep the member in question within the body until the investigation can be completed and a final report issued.

The vote was 153-0.

I also voted to support the parity in funding for charter schools in Kansas City. I have been a longtime supporter of KCPS and all of our public schools in Missouri. However, all of our public school children in Kansas City, especially children of color, have historically been underserved in the area of education. I represent the parents and children of KCPS, but I also represent the interest of the parents and children who choose to attend charter schools. Because of an

amendment that was added to HB 137 and the language was agreed to by both KCPS and KC charter schools, I voted YES.

I am in the House of Representatives to vote based on the wishes of the the people I serve in District 27 and not upon my own personal beliefs. I heard from many parents who wanted me to support this bill. I believe I voted correctly when it came to the charter funding bill.

It is an honor and I am thankful to have the opportunity to serve your interest in Jefferson City. I pledge to continue to work to the best of my ability for you and your loved ones.

Yours in Service,

Rich

House Legislative Dashboard



BILLS THIRD READ IN THE HOUSE THIS WEEK

[HB 27](#) - Modifies requirements for meeting notices and minutes of open meetings

[HB 66](#) - Changes the laws regarding taxation of aircraft

[HB 137](#) - Changes provisions related to funding for charter schools

[HB 177](#) - Modifies provision for closed meetings of governmental bodies

[HB 297](#) - Allows Southeast Missouri State University to develop a statewide mission

[HB 320](#) - Changes provisions relating to elementary and secondary education

[HB 370](#) - Creates provisions relating to the dispensing of HIV preexposure and postexposure prophylaxis

[HB 402](#) - Prohibits publishing of the names of lottery winners

[HB 475](#) - Modifies provisions relating to the professional registration of dietitians

[HB 507](#) - Modifies provisions excursion gambling boat

[HB 570](#) - Allows motor vehicles to turn left on red light when turning onto a one-way street

[HB 589](#) - Modifies provisions relating public health

[HB 825](#) - Establishes the offense of mail theft

[HB 911](#) - Designates the "US Navy SEAL Scotty Wirtz Memorial Highway" in Lake St. Louis

[HB 991](#) - Exempts federal economic impact payments from state income tax

[HB 1069](#) - Creates criminal penalties for certain offenses committed against a body of the General Assembly

BILLS SENT TO THE GOVERNOR

[HB 429](#) - Authorizes an income tax deduction for the provision of child foster care services

[HB 430](#) - Modifies provisions relating to tax credits for the adoption of children

[SB 189](#) - Creates a Negro Leagues Baseball Museum special license plate



HEALTHCARE
IS A
HUMAN
RIGHT

GOP SEEKS TO REDISTRIBUTE MEDICAID EXPANSION FUNDS

The House of Representatives on April 15 voted 143-1-4 in favor of a \$342.26 million appropriations bill that seeks to redistribute revenue made available by majority Republicans' decision to defund the state's Medicaid program by refusing to provide the spending authority necessary for a constitutionally mandated eligibility expansion that will take effect July 1.

When the House passed its version of the FY 2022 state operating budget earlier this month, it excluded Medicaid expansion funding. House Bill 21 seeks to take the leftover

spending authority and allocate it for various other programs that enjoy wide support. However, as House Democrats noted, with robust general revenue collections and a massive influx of federal economic stimulus funds, Missouri has sufficient revenue to fund those items and implement Medicaid expansion.

Because the state constitution will soon require Medicaid to cover adults earning up to 138 percent of the federal poverty level, an estimated 275,000 additional Missourians will be eligible for the program. But if the legislature doesn't authorize the necessary spending authority, the program could exhaust its funding partway through the FY 2022, which starts July 1.

Under the federal Affordable Care Act, the federal government will pay 90 percent of the cost of expansion, or about \$1.4 billion for FY 2022. In addition, Missouri would receive an additional \$1.5 billion under the most recently passed COVID-19 relief bill for implementing expansion. Such a large influx of spending is expected to create tens of thousands of jobs and have a tremendous economic impact on the state.

Because of the economic benefits, Republican Gov. Mike Parson, a longtime expansion opponent, called for fully funding Medicaid in the FY 2022 budget. Senate Republican leaders have sent mixed messages about whether they will restore full Medicaid funding in the primary budget bills, which currently are pending in the chamber.

Lawmakers have until a May 7 constitutional deadline to pass a final budget. If Medicaid expansion funding isn't included, a lawsuit seeking to force the state to follow the constitution is considered guaranteed.

**Tax Deadline
Extended**





I met with House Speaker Rob Vescovo several times this week on pending legislation and other House matters.



**MESSAGE FROM THE
DIVISION OF
EMPLOYMENT
SECURITY**

**Important Information about
Your Unemployment Claim**

The Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations is pausing the collections of both state and federal overpayments at this time while the Missouri legislature is considering legislation that may allow for the waiver of federal unemployment overpayments made during the pandemic.



**LABOR DEPARTMENT TO STOP
UNEMPLOYMENT
RECOLLECTION**

The Missouri Department of Labor and Industrial Relations announced on April 15 that it has paused all efforts to collect

almost \$150 million in excess unemployment benefits it mistakenly paid out last year when the state's jobless rate spiked due to the pandemic. The move came two days after a contentious hearing during which lawmakers accused the department of going back on a commitment it had made six weeks earlier to suspend its collection efforts.

According to the department, nearly all of the overpayments involved recipients who acted in good faith but, through no fault of their own, were given more benefits than they should have. Gov. Mike Parson, a Republican, originally insisted the money be paid back, even though the federal government had waived repayment in non-fraud situations.

As bipartisan pressure mounted and the House of Representatives was poised to pass legislation to block the department from pursuing most collections, the administration seemingly relented in early March and said it would suspend collection efforts in exchange for lawmakers removing an emergency clause from the bill that would have allowed the measure to take effect immediately instead of in August, as is usually the case for most new laws.

The House upheld its part of the bargain before passing House Bill 1083, but the department apparently did not, with numerous reports of the agency continuing to file wage garnishments, imposing liens and taking other aggressive collection efforts. During a hearing before the House Special Committee on Government Oversight, department Director Anna Hui insisted the agency had kept its side of the deal but some cases slipped through the cracks. Lawmakers were not mollified by her explanation. HB 1083 remains pending in the Senate, where a committee approved it on April 15.

FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

• OVER 11,300 INCORRECTLY PAID

• TOTAL LOSS: **\$44,000,000**



Lawmakers irate over breach of trust in handling of overpayment of unemployment benefits

MISSOURIAN

By Mark Ossolinski

A bipartisan chorus of lawmakers was livid with the Missouri Department of Labor on Tuesday, accusing its director of violating their trust by continuing efforts to collect repayment from Missouri residents who had received overpayments of unemployment benefits.

Speaking before the House Special Committee on Government Oversight, Director Anna Hui apologized repeatedly to lawmakers and to Missouri residents who have received letters from her department demanding the repayment of unemployment aid paid erroneously in the past year.

The continuation of those letters, which have included threats of confiscated tax refunds, garnished wages and liens on recipients' homes, amounted to a violation of what lawmakers had understood to be an agreement with the department to relax collection efforts and take a "compassionate approach" with those impacted, according to Rep. Scott Cupps, R-Shell Knob.

Hui argued that the department had followed the stipulations of the bill passed in the House. But she announced to the committee Tuesday that all collection efforts would cease, effective immediately, "in a show of good faith."

But that belated proclamation frustrated lawmakers.

"I just feel a little bit stupid, if I'm being honest," said Cupps, who asked fellow lawmakers to trust the state labor department not to continue collection efforts. "I felt like we had one of the best departments of labor in the country, and I felt like we had one of the best directors in the country. I still feel that way ... but there's a little bit of a trust issue right now."

After the department reported in February that 46,000 Missouri residents were overpaid unemployment benefits last year amid the pandemic, lawmakers in the House passed a bill in early March that would forgive the federal portion of the overpaid benefits, which the department estimates constitutes at least 75% of the \$150 million in excess claims paid out by the state.

Many of the Missourians who were notified of overpayments hold occupations such as school bus drivers, school cooks and substitute teachers, a point of emphasis for lawmakers while they deliberated the bill.

While the bill received bipartisan support, Democrats argued unsuccessfully for the adoption of an amendment that would also waive the remaining state portion of the overpayments. Forty other states have policies that place the financial burden on states rather than recipients in the event of erroneous payment.

Republicans voted down the measure, fearing its impact on the stability of the state's unemployment trust fund, which employers pay into.

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.



I enjoyed a bowl of ice cream with Katie Ashcroft
and her husband, Missouri Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft.

REAL ID
New deadline: October 1, 2021
Will you be ready? [Click here to learn more.](#)



Missouri House rejects lawmaker's resignation as report on abuse allegations finalized

[Jack Suntrup](#)

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri House rejected a Kansas City-area Republican's attempt to resign on Thursday, ensuring he remains in office when the House Ethics Committee releases the results of a monthslong investigation into physical and sexual abuse allegations against him.

In a remarkable and brief action that played out on the House floor, a House clerk read Rep. [Rick Roeber's](#) resignation letter, submitted on Tuesday, aloud to the chamber.

House Speaker [Rob Vescovo](#), R-Arnold, asked if any members objected to Roeber's resignation.

The chairman of the House Ethics Committee, Rep. [Travis Fitzwater](#), R-Holts Summit, objected and moved the resignation be postponed until the full House considers his committee's forthcoming recommendations.

He said the ethics committee needed "to finalize its proceedings" and "to bring forth on this floor" the "statement and report" from the ethics committee.

"We just want to make sure that ... the ethics committee gets to do the full process," he said.

Rep. [Richard Brown](#), D-Kansas City, the top-ranking Democrat on the Ethics Committee, agreed with Fitzwater.

"This is a very serious allegation that has been brought forth before this body," he said. "Our work is not yet done. It's not right to accept this resignation and to allow this member to escape without us giving full recognition to what has taken place here."

The forthcoming ethics report — Vescovo and Fitzwater have said it would be released next week — follows allegations leveled by Roeber's now-adult children during the 2020 campaign that he abused them when they were minors.

[Continue reading](#)



I met with Roger Best, president of my alma mater, the University of Central Missouri to discuss funding for higher education.



FEMA to help offset funeral costs for COVID-19

By: Ariel Rothfield

Posted at 8:16 PM, Apr 13, 2021

KSHB.com and last updated 10:49 PM, Apr 13, 2021

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is offering up to \$9,000 per burial to help families cover the funeral expenses for loved ones who died of COVID-19.

The application process can be started by calling 844-684-6333.

There is no deadline.

To qualify for funeral assistance:

- The death must have occurred in the United States, including the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories.
- The death certificate must indicate the death was attributed to COVID-19.
- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen, noncitizen qualified or qualified immigrant who incurred funeral expenses after Jan. 20, 2020.

There is no requirement for the deceased person to have been a U.S. citizen, noncitizen qualified or qualified immigrant.

Assistance is limited to \$9,000 per funeral with a maximum of \$35,500 per application.

According to FEMA, those eligible for funeral assistance may receive the money via check or by direct deposit.

[FEMA funeral assistance website](#)



There are four weeks left in the Legislative Year and I will continue to work to the best of my ability for your best interest.



My good friend Kevin Battle came to the Capitol this week.

All Missourians 16 & over
are eligible for COVID-19 vaccines.

[mostopscovid](#)

Truman Medical Centers has available services for Jackson County residents during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

If you are experiencing a fever, a new cough or new shortness of breath, you can call **404-CARE (2273)** and speak to a health care professional to be screened for COVID-19.

TMC
TRUMAN MEDICAL CENTERS



[Click Here to get on the Wait List
for COVID 19 Vaccine at Truman Medical Center.](#)

COMMUNITY BUILDERS OF KANSAS CITY HOSTS DRIVE-THRU EVENT:
KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE

GET VACCINATED!

Location:

Concord Fortress of Hope Church

11050 W Longview Pkwy

Kansas City, MO 64134

Date:

Saturday, April 17th

Time:

10:00am - 2:00pm



MODERNA VACCINE

1st Dose - April 17th

2nd Dose - May 15th

swope HEALTH 

FOR INFORMATION VISIT:

<https://swopehealth.org/vaccine-form/>

CALL TO REGISTER WEEKDAYS 9:00-4:30

(816) 321-3333

ALL MISSOURI RESIDENTS
AGE 18+ ARE ELIGIBLE!

Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine?

We are making it easier for you to get in line.
Here's how it works:

Go to www.trumed.org
Click on the pop up link that reads
"click here to register."

When you sign up online, we will contact you when the vaccine becomes available. At this point, we are unable to estimate when we'll call for your appointment date.

Wait times depend on vaccine supply.

We appreciate your patience.

You may also call 816-404-CARE (2273) if you want to talk to a scheduler. Lines may be busy. Please be patient.





The Pandemic aint over!





COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



Introducing myKCMO
the new City app

*Faster and easier connection
to city services.*

311 requests	Track your case	Upload photos
Report Potholes	Connect with staff	Make payments

DOWNLOAD myKCMO TODAY!

Download on the **App Store** | GET IT ON **Google Play**

myKCMO | CITY OF KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

The advertisement features a teal background with a white circular graphic on the right showing a hand holding a smartphone displaying the myKCMO app interface. The interface includes icons for 'Report an Issue', 'Issues Reported', 'Connect with Staff', 'Municipal Court', 'Pay Online', 'Electoral Officials', 'Leaf and Branch', and 'Hear From Us'. The app name 'myKCMO' is visible at the bottom of the phone screen.

“This cutting edge new app will enable residents and visitors to more conveniently access information and report local issues,” said City Manager Brian Platt. “The more efficient workflow and request tracking system will allow us to respond quicker and more efficiently to concerns.”

Its features will help residents:

- Report and track 311 requests more easily
 - Upload photos to show us the problem
 - Connect directly with the staff member responding to the problem
 - Make payments through the app
 - Receive alerts when your 311 case is updated, and for other city emergencies
-

“The new myKCMO app highlights Kansas City government’s commitment to providing the basic services our residents expect, making it faster and easier for Kansas Citians to share with the City what requires attention in their own neighborhoods,” said Mayor Quinton Lucas. “myKCMO will be a helpful tool in our efforts to fill potholes and improve roads, and I encourage all to download the app today.”

The myKCMO app is available for free download to your phone or tablet. Type “myKCMO” to find it in the Apple App Store or Google Play.

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



**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 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, 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

Free Mobile App

www.P3Tips.com

* A program of the KC Metropolitan Crime Commission

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.



Rep. Richard Brown

Assistant Minority Floor Leader

MO House of Representatives

201 West Capitol Avenue

Room 134

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Phone

573-751-7639

Email:

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