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**Capitol Report**

**April 29, 2021**

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*Dear Neighbor,*

With only two weeks left of session, emotions will run high as some bills work through the process and others fall short of passage. This is the standard operating procedures of the final weeks of the regular legislative session which will end at 6:00 PM on May 14.

I am disappointed and frustrated that a number of my colleagues from the majority party have yet to agree to fund Medicaid Expansion which was approved last year by you, the voter.

Since I entered the House of Representatives in 2017, the legislature as a body has yet to pass a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) for our state. Missouri is the only state in the nation without a statewide PDMP program.

There is much work to be done in the final two weeks. It is my hope

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that my colleagues will join me in voting for what is best for the people of Missouri.

*Yours in Service,*

*Rich*

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### House Legislative Dashboard

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**I had the good fortune to meet and talk with Congresswoman Cori Bush (top) and St. Louis Mayor Tishaura Jones (bottom).**

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**Tax Deadline  
Extended**



## 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.



## SENATE EXCLUDES FULL MEDICAID FUNDING FROM BUDGET

The Senate voted 14-20 to defeat efforts to fully fund Missouri's Medicaid program in the state operating budget for the 2022 fiscal year. Because the House of Representatives also excluded full Medicaid funding from its version of the budget, the issue isn't open for reconsideration when the two chambers negotiate the final appropriations bills in the coming days.

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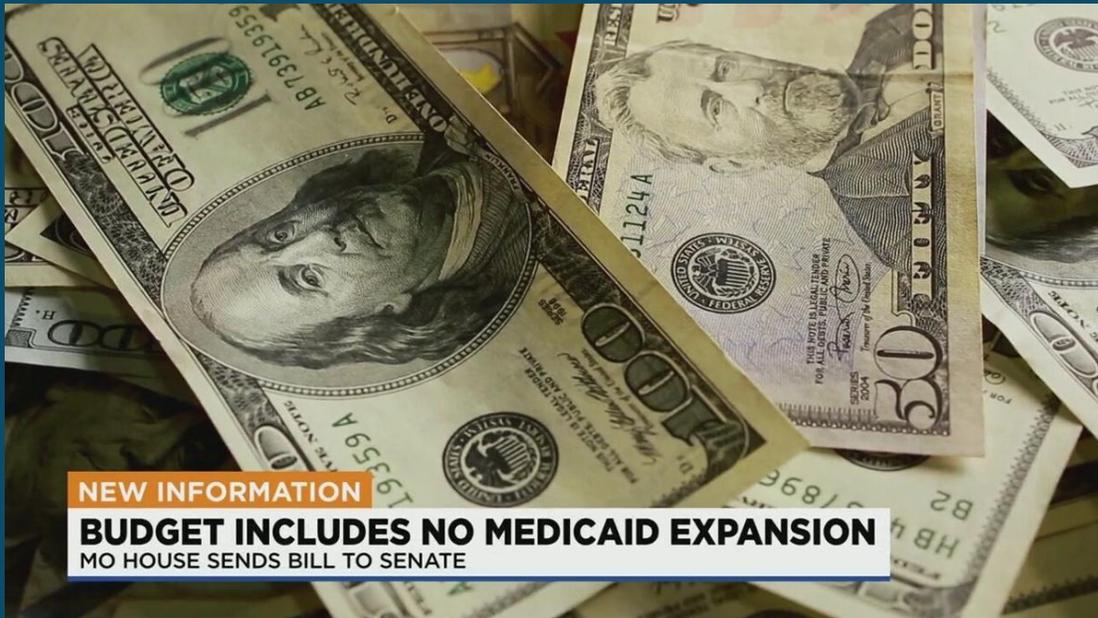
Under a constitutional amendment Missouri voters approved last year, every Missourian with an income at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible for Medicaid as of July 1, which also is the first day of FY 2022. However, without full funding to cover the additional recipients, the program could exhaust its spending authority well before the end of the fiscal year. An estimated 275,000 additional Missourians will be eligible for the program.

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, implementing expansion will secure Missouri an additional \$1.5 billion under the most recently passed COVID-19 relief bill. Such a large influx of spending is expected to create tens of thousands of jobs and provide a massive stimulus to the state's economy. Only four majority Republicans joined the Senate's 10 Democrats in voting for full Medicaid funding and the economic benefits that would follow.

Republican Gov. Mike Parson's administration has already submitted its plan for implementing expansion to the federal government. Failure to follow the plan at this point could result in Missouri losing the billions of dollars in federal Medicaid funding the state already receives.

House and Senate negotiating teams could begin hammering out the final version of the 13 appropriations bills that make up the state operating budget as early as May 3. Lawmakers must grant final passage to the bills by no later than May 7 or the budget process would be required to start over in a special session this summer.

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## Missouri Democrats push back against moves to halt Medicaid expansion

COLUMBIA, Mo. (KMIZ)

Missouri House Democrats and health care advocates said that health care is a basic human need that should be available to workers during a rally Tuesday outside the Missouri Capitol.

Currently, childless adults are not eligible for coverage through the state's Medicaid program. This is set to change July 1 after voters approved a constitutional amendment last summer that made Missouri the 38th state to expand Medicaid coverage through the Affordable Care Act. Childless adults will be covered if they make less than \$17,700.

This would expand Medicaid to about 275,000 additional Missourians if there is funding for the program.

**Democrat Representative Richard Brown said, "It's imperative that we make sure children and poor people have health insurance in the**

state. It makes all of us better in the state of Missouri. It makes all of us healthier."

However, Republicans in the state legislature have voted not to pay for the expansion, saying that doing so would be irresponsible and that voters were misled. Last month the GOP-led House voted down a \$1.6 billion bill to fund expansion last month. About \$119 million would have come from state funds, with the rest provided by the federal government.

[Continue Reading](#)



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FAMILIES PLAN**

- ✓ **CHILDCARE**
- ✓ **PAID FAMILY LEAVE**
- ✓ **FREE COMMUNITY COLLEGE & PRE-K**
- ✓ **TAX CREDITS TO FIGHT POVERTY**

**RED & BLUE**  
PRESIDENT BIDEN'S  
ADDRESS TO CONGRESS  
ENCORE PRESENTATION  
3AM ET / MIDNIGHT PT

**Biden's American Families plan to offer free college for American students**

COLUMBIA, Mo. (KMIZ)

President Biden announced a \$1.8 trillion American Families Plan ahead of his first address to Congress Wednesday. The plan

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includes having universal, quality-preschool to all three and four-year-olds and It will provide Americans two years of free community college.

The American Families Plan will also provide direct support to families to make sure that low- and middle-income families spend no more than seven percent of their income on high-quality child care. According to the administration, this would save the average family \$14,800 on child care expenses a year.

"Any time you say free nothing is free in life and this isn't free, somebody is going to be paying for it, and if the government is doing it that means it's going to be taxpayers so it's not free, I think it's a ridiculous idea," Bayse said.

However, Missouri Democratic Representative Richard Brown said this is a very inclusive plan to help Americans get educated, as well as support Missouri families.

"This is a start in the right direction," Brown said. "Families are asking for help out there, and right here in Missouri I see this as a way to help out our families here and take care of our own."

Aubrey Kelley, a student at Ozarks Technical Community College, said the education aspect of the plan will encourage more young students to get a higher education.

[Continue Reading](#)

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**I don't know why but  
I'm suddenly very  
concerned about gas  
prices right now guys.**



## Pump prices could rise under plan to raise Missouri's gas tax

[Kurt Erickson](#)  
[STLToday.com](#)

JEFFERSON CITY — A House committee unanimously endorsed a plan Monday to raise Missouri's gasoline tax, setting up a potential showdown among tax-averse Republicans in the closing days of the legislative session.

With no comment or debate, the House Transportation Committee voted 13-0 in favor of the plan, which would phase in a 12.5-cent increase over five years.

The current tax on gasoline and diesel is 17-cents per gallon, which is among the lowest in the nation.

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With Republicans in control of both chambers, pushing tax hikes across the finish line in the Missouri Legislature has not been a significant priority.

But Senate President [Dave Schatz](#), R-Sullivan, was able to cobble together a coalition of Republicans and Democrats to send the measure to the House last month.

House Speaker [Rob Vescovo](#), R-Arnold, has previously said he's against tax hikes. And, with three weeks left in the annual session, it remains unclear how quickly it could come up for a vote.

Voters in 2018 turned down a proposed gas tax increase.

The [proposal would raise the tax at the pump by 2.5 cents annually](#) for five years, resulting in a 29.5 cent per gallon tax. It would be the first increase since 1996.

The increase will boost Missouri from 49th lowest in the nation to a middle-of-the-pack position among surrounding states.

The legislation also includes a rebate program: Drivers could save their gas purchase receipts and apply for compensation once per year.

The measure also phases in an increase in electric vehicle fees and creates the Electric Vehicle Task Force, which would analyze the impact of electric vehicles on transportation funding.

In all, the tax would generate more than \$450 million to fix the state's roads and bridges.

Of that, an estimated 30% to 40% of the proceeds would come from out-of-state motorists passing through Missouri, Schatz has said.

The proposal has the backing of Gov. Mike Parson, as well as business and labor groups, who [presented a study last week](#) saying the increase could create between 9,800 and 24,800 jobs.

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The study by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Missouri AFL-CIO said the higher tax could pump life into the economy.

“When these benefits are quantified and the multiplier effect is accounted for, the proposed infrastructure investment would generate over \$1.8 billion in sales in Missouri’s economy,” the report noted. “This economic activity would result in an increase in \$722 million in earnings across the state and create over 17,000 jobs in the state.”

It also comes as President Joe Biden is negotiating a plan with Congress to send trillions of dollars to states to rebuild aging infrastructure.

The legislation is [Senate Bill 262](#).



**HOUSE APPROVES RESTRICTIONS  
ON POLICE CHOKEHOLDS**

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The House of Representatives on April 28 granted preliminary approval to legislation that would prohibit police from using respiratory chokeholds, except in situations where the use of deadly force is warranted. A second vote is required to advance the bill to the Senate.

House Bill 876 also includes a controversial provision creating a so-called “law enforcement bill of rights” establishing new legal protections that advocates for policing reform say would make it even harder than it already is to hold officers accountable for misconduct.

Maryland, which in 1974 became the first state to adopt a law enforcement bill of rights, repealed its statute last month, citing the obstacle it proved to be in firing problem officers, including some who had been convicted of crimes.

HB 876 also contains provisions attempting to crack down on officers who engage in sexual misconduct on duty, improve criminal background checks for potential officers and provide salary increases to county sheriffs, among other provisions.

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CHECK YOUR MAILBOX: Over the next several weeks, the Unclaimed Property Division will send out over 75,000 postcards to potential account owners about unclaimed money. A reminder that you can search <http://ShowMeMoney.com> 24/7 and claiming your money is always free.



## Missouri falls behind in nationwide effort to track COVID-19 infections in fully vaccinated people

- Michele Munz - St. Louis Post-Dispatch (TNS)

Apr. 29—ST. LOUIS — A nationwide effort to track cases of COVID-19 in fully vaccinated people has gotten a slow and confusing start in Missouri.

At the start of this month, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention asked states to instruct their local health departments and health systems to collect real-time information on such "breakthrough infections." States are to collect the data and enter it into a national database.

But county health departments and health systems in Missouri say they were never given such instructions.

By mid April, when the CDC announced its first tally of breakthrough infections across the U.S. — about 5,800 — it caught a disease

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investigator for the St. Louis County Department of Public Health by surprise.

"I wasn't sure how they were following it," said Dr. James Hinrichs. "I am very confused as to how this is being collected and by whom."

The county health department has been tracking down breakthrough infections on its own initiative and has been waiting for instruction from the Missouri Department of Health and Human Services on what to do with the data, Hinrichs said.

The latest CDC tally of breakthrough infections is now up to 7,157 out of more than 87 million people in the U.S. who have been fully vaccinated. (Fully vaccinated is defined as two weeks past their last dose.)

The breakthrough number is a tiny fraction and completely expected, as the vaccines are highly, but not 100%, effective. But tracking breakthroughs is needed to identify any unusual patterns — such as trends in age or sex, the batch of vaccines involved or whether a variant is the cause.

"To date, no unusual patterns have been detected in the data CDC has received," the agency states on its breakthrough infection website.

Of the nearly 7,200 cases in fully vaccinated people across the U.S., nearly a third had no symptoms. Just 7% (498) ended up in the hospital, and 1% (88) died.

[Continue Reading](#)

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**Governor Parson Announces LIHEAP Energy Assistance Program Changes to Help More Missourians Pay Energy**

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## Bills

Governor Mike Parson announced that the [Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program](#) (LIHEAP) Energy Assistance (EA) Program is extending one-time primary heating bill payments through May 31, 2021.

In addition, eligibility for both the heating and cooling programs are expanding from Missouri households with incomes up to 135 percent of the Federal Poverty Level to include Missouri households with an income of up to 60 percent of State Median Income (SMI). This change will now allow a family of four with an annual income of up to \$51,021 to receive benefits compared to an annual income of \$35,364.

“Missourians have spent a lot more time at home due to COVID-19, especially those learning and working remotely, which has caused some families to have higher than normal energy bills,” **Governor Parson** said. “Expanding the current LIHEAP Energy Assistance heating program time frame and the household income eligibility for this year’s heating and cooling programs will help relieve more families of this financial strain.”

### 60 Percent of the SMI

Number of Persons	Monthly Income	Yearly Income
1	\$ 2,211	\$ 26,531
2	\$ 2,891	\$ 34,694
3	\$ 3,571	\$ 42,858
4	\$ 4,252	\$ 51,021
5	\$ 4,932	\$ 59,184
6	\$ 5,612	\$ 67,348

To determine eligibility for households over six people, add an additional \$128 per person per month or \$1,536 per year.

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In addition to meeting the income criteria, households must also meet the following criteria to qualify for LIHEAP:

- Be responsible for paying home heating costs
- Have \$3,000 or less in bank accounts, retirement accounts, or investments
- All household members must be a U.S. citizen or legally admitted for permanent residence

Missourians can submit a LIHEAP application form online, by mail or fax, or drop off a paper application form in person.

Missourians in need of information on LIHEAP, Food Stamp, Medicaid, Child Care Subsidy, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefit programs can visit [dss.mo.gov](http://dss.mo.gov). Individuals can also apply for these services 24/7 online by visiting [MyDSS.mo.gov](http://MyDSS.mo.gov), sending completed applications and verification documents by email to [FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov](mailto:FSD.Documents@dss.mo.gov) or by fax to 573-526-9400.

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# Financial Support for Missouri Renters Impacted by COVID-19.



**Struggling to pay rent or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic? Missouri State Assistance For Housing Relief (SAFHR) may be able to help – learn more and find out how to apply!**

SAFHR for Renters is an assistance program administered by the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC), funded by the federal government COVID stimulus package.

## What help does SAFHR for Renters provide?

- Provides rent and utility assistance for eligible Missouri residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Covers up to a total of 12 months of rent and utility bills, back to April 2020 and for up to 3 months in the future.
- Utilities include gas, electric, water, sewage/waste water, fuel (propane, wood, etc.) and trash.
- Money is paid directly to landlord or utility company.

## Am I eligible for SAFHR for Renters?

- You must be a resident of the state of Missouri, and a renter at your current or previous address.
- At least one member of your household must be financially impacted – directly or indirectly – as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. This could mean someone in your household has lost a job, had reduced pay, or incurred significant COVID-related expenses. You must be at risk of losing your housing or having your utilities shut off due to this financial hardship.
- Your income must not exceed 80% of your Area Median Income (AMI). This is determined by your county and your household size. You can determine if you meet the income requirements by viewing the SAFHR income ranges worksheet at [mohousingresources.com/safhr](https://mohousingresources.com/safhr)



## Financial assistance is here. Apply now!

Apply online at  
[mohousingresources.com/safhr](https://mohousingresources.com/safhr)

Applications are open now!\*

If you can not apply online or  
need help with your application,  
please call 833-541-1599  
or email: [mo.safhr@mhdc.com](mailto:mo.safhr@mhdc.com)

\*Application period expected to be open until Sept 2022.

Click [here](#) for more information

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## **Update**

**The Real ID deadline has been extended to May 2023.**

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Beginning May 3, 2023, residents of every U.S. state and territory will be required to present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card, or another form of ID accepted by the Transportation Security Administration, to board federally regulated domestic flights.

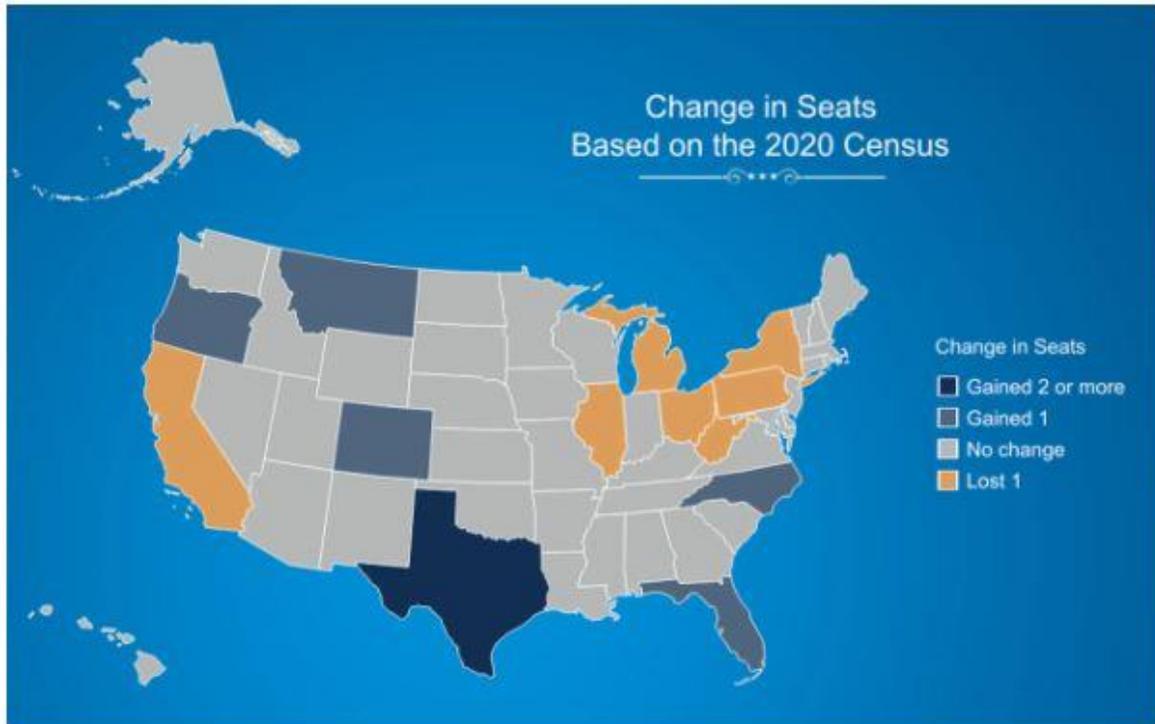
Also beginning May 3, 2023, individuals must present a REAL ID-compliant driver license or ID card, or another form of acceptable ID, to access federal facilities and to enter nuclear power plants.

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## **COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS**

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Ohio is among seven states that will lose a congressional seat, beginning with the 2022 election, based on the results of census 2020. Texas will gain two seats. U.S. Census Bureau

## MISSOURI WILL RETAIN EIGHT CONGRESSIONAL SEATS

Missouri will retain eight seats in Congress for the next decade according to national apportionment data released on April 26 based on the results of the 2020 U.S. Census. Congress has 435 voting members with every state entitled to at least one representative and the remainder distributed based on each state's population.

Texas will pick up two congressional seats, while Colorado, Florida, Montana, North Carolina and Oregon each will gain one. Those redistributed seats will come from seven states – California, Illinois, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The redistribution will take effect for the 2022 congressional elections, with those elected that year taking their seats in January 2023.

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By now, Missouri and other states normally would be deep into the process of redrawing congressional district lines to reflect population shifts over the past decade. However, because the detailed Census data necessary for redistricting isn't expected to be available until September, Missouri lawmakers likely won't take on congressional redistricting until a special legislative session at the end of the year.

The size of Missouri's current congressional delegation is half of what it was a century ago. The state topped out at 16 congressional seats in 1903 but slipped by three seats to 13 in 1933. Missouri lost two more seats in 1953, for 11 total, and then dipped to 10 seats in 1963. The state didn't lose another seat until the 1983 and continued with nine members of Congress until its most recent loss of a seat in 2013 to create its current eight-member delegation.

According to the Census, Missouri's population stood at 6,160,281 as of April 1, 2020. That's an increase of just 2.48 percent from the state's 2010 population of 6,011,478. After congressional redistricting, each of Missouri eight districts will contain about 770,035 residents.





**The pandemic has kept many visitors away from the Capitol this year. I was pleasantly surprised when my former students from Southeast**

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**HS, LaKesha Sonnier Golston, came by for a visit. It was great seeing her after all these years!**

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

**VACCINATION EVENT**

**Location:**

**Memorial Missionary Baptist**

11424 Hickman Mills Dr.  
Kansas City, MO 64134

**Date:**

**Saturday, May 8th**

**Time:**

**10:00am - 2:00pm**



*A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:*



**COMMUNITY  
ASSISTANCE  
COUNCIL**



**FREE FOOD, DIAPERS &  
CHILDREN'S BOOKS**



**PFIZER VACCINE**

**1<sup>st</sup> Dose - May 8<sup>th</sup>**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Dose - June 5<sup>th</sup>**

**swopeHEALTH**

FOR INFORMATION VISIT:

<https://swopehealth.org/vaccine-may8/>

CALL TO REGISTER WEEKDAYS 9:00-4:30

**(816) 321-3333**

**ALL MISSOURI RESIDENTS  
AGE 16+ ARE ELIGIBLE!  
WALK-UPS WELCOME!**

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**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.



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



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[mostopscovid](#)

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# The Pandemic aint over!

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## WHEN I'M IN EATING OUT, I STILL

-  **WEAR MY MASK**
-  **WASH OR SANITIZE MY HANDS**
-  **WATCH MY DISTANCE**

I only remove the mask when I need to eat or drink.

**COVID-19**  
— PANDEMIC —  
IS NOT OVER YET



Avoid  
**3C<sub>s</sub>**

-  **Closed** spaces
-  **Crowded** places
-  **Close-contact** settings

[www.who.int/searo](http://www.who.int/searo).

*#KeepStayingSafe*

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 driven by his father and died as a result of his injuries. Dominic, his father and brother**

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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**

Assistant Minority Floor Leader

MO House of Representatives

201 West Capitol Avenue

Room 134

Jefferson City, MO 65101

Phone

573-751-7639

Email:

[richard.brown@house.mo.gov](mailto:richard.brown@house.mo.gov)

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

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