

Capitol Report

May 6, 2022

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Dear Neighbor,

The appropriations conference committee met and differences were ironed out between the House and Senate versions of the FY 2023 operating budget on Wednesday. The compromise language went back to each chamber for a final vote and was Truly Agreed and Finally Passed in the House to meet the constitutional deadline.

With only one week left It becomes crunch time with everyone trying to add their bills on to others' as amendments to get them across the finish line. Inside this week's newsletter, I give a brief synopsis of the budget bills and explain how and why I voted on these appropriations.

I would like to thank all the teachers for your hard work as we conclude Teacher Appreciation Week and congratulations to all of our Graduates in the Class of 2022. I also want wish all the mothers a Happy Mother's Day as we love you and thank you for all you have done for us.

Yours in Service,

Rich



To read more on these bills <u>click here</u> To Lookup an individual bill click here





Lawmakers finalize \$44.73 billion state operating budget

Lawmakers on May 6 granted final approval to the nearly \$44.73 billion state operating budget for the 2023 state fiscal year, completing the process just hours ahead of a hard constitutional deadline and avoiding a special legislative session to finish the job. Lawmakers also signed off on a separate bill allocating \$2.9 billion in federal pandemic relief funds, along with a plan to provide \$500 million in tax rebates to certain Missouri taxpayers.

The final budget includes some big spending increases including an additional \$214 million to fully fund the state's share of local public school districts' student transportation costs for the first time in three decades and \$27 million to increase minimum pay for public school teachers to \$38,000 a year. Despite a record revenue surplus, basic state funding for local schools remains flat from the current fiscal year.

One Senate-backed spending reduction that held after final budget negotiations eliminated a House-backed \$500,000 increase for Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt's office. The Senate removed the spending bump as retaliation against Schmitt, a Republican, for filing around four dozen frivolous lawsuits against public school districts over their COVID-19 mitigation efforts. Nearly all of those lawsuits have since been dismissed without going to trial.

The budget also fully funds the state's Medicaid program, including a constitutionally mandated eligibility expansion Missouri voters approved in 2020. Majority Republicans had continued to resist funding the expansion until the Missouri Supreme Court ruled last year that the state constitution required the state to provide those services.

In addition to the normal operating budget, lawmakers approved a bill to spend \$2.9 billion in federal relief funds, with significant amounts going for a wide range of infrastructure improvements, including broadband expansion and the removal of lead pipes from water systems. Lawmakers also passed three other bills providing \$903.66 million spending authority for various capital improvement needs.

Lawmakers also endorsed a plan to set aside \$500 million in general revenue for income tax rebates to individuals earning less than \$150,000 a year, or \$300,000 annually for married couples. The House had originally proposed \$1 billion in rebates targeted for the wealthiest Missourians. Like the House proposal, the final plan

provides nothing to low-income taxpayers.

The governor is expected to sign the various appropriations bills into law sometime before the FY 2023 state fiscal year begins on July 1. However, the state constitution empowers him to strike spending authority he doesn't want from budget bills while otherwise approving them.



The following is a breakdown of how I voted on the 15 appropriation bills for the \$46.52 billion FY 2023 budget.

I voted YES on CCS SCS HB 3002 (Elementary and Secondary Education) for the first time in 31 years, public education is fully funded in our state, transportation is fully funded and we will increase teacher pay in Missouri. Funding is also available for the Parents as Teachers program and for Career Ladder for teachers.

I voted NO on CCS SCS HCS HB 3003 (Higher Education) because there is bad language in the bill that will require DACA

children who have lived in the U.S. most or all of their life to pay higher international tuition rates in Missouri. This is discriminatory toward these students. I taught many of these kids in my career as an educator and we could be helping our universities and colleges by not having this language in the bill.

I voted YES on CCS SCS HCS HB 3004 (Transportation) because it improves funding for public transit and restores AMTRAK service to twice a day between Kansas City and St. Louis.

Office of Administration). Money was placed into the state pension plan to ensure the health of retirement benefits for state employees. We are providing long needed pay raises for state employees and investing in upgrading technology for our state agencies.

Natural Resources and Conservation) because all budgetary requests made by these departments were fulfilled and there were no major programs that were underfunded. It also included an increase in spending for urban agriculture and for food insecure areas of the state. Low income weatherization funds were also made available in this bill as well as funding for existing African-American Museums throughout the state.

Lvoted YES on CCS SCS HCS HB 3007 (Economic Development, Insurance, Labor and Industrial relations), There are lots of good investments to grow jobs in our state made with this bill. There are grants for small businesses in this bill. There is funding for Juneteenth celebrations, Minority work force development and grants for minority entrepreneurs.

I voted YES on CCS SS SCS HCS HB 3008 (Public Safety) because there were no cuts in this area and there were allocations for programs for violence prevention and treatment for

survivors of violence. This bill includes funding to provide body cameras for the Missouri Highway Patrol and funding for school safety applications. There is also funding additional funding to investigate police misconduct.

I voted YES for CCS SCS HCS HB 3009 (Corrections) because it provides funding to increase pay for correctional employees. There are other employers in the marketplace that pay higher salaries than the salaries of our correctional officers and we need to be competitive in pay to retain and recruit Department of Corrections employees. It also includes money for a new healthcare provider for the state inmates.

I voted YES on CCS SS SCS HCS HB 3010 (Mental Health and Health) because over \$300 million was allocated for Home/Community provider rate increases. There is \$130 million for Medicaid, funding for opioid treatment and increases for senior services such as Meals on Wheels and senior centers. There are increases to serve persons with developmental disabilities in this bill.

Services) because the bill has some troubling language that affect the women I serve. We are removing reproductive health service options from individuals by taking away individual's choice of care providers. At the same time, this bill provides funding for abortion alternative organizations. This bill does fully fund Medicaid however, women's reproductive health care is continuously under attack and I support the women who need these services. There are good things in the bill that support organizations like the Boys & Girls Club to help underserved communities, so I voted PRESENT instead of NO.

Judiciary, Public Defender and General Assembly)
because funding increased for public defender legal
services. People have a right to adequate counsel in our legal
system. Poor people will continue to suffer in the criminal justice

system without adequate legal representation.

I voted YES on CCS SCS HCS HB 3013 (pays the leases of state offices and related services).

I voted YES on SCS HCS HB 3017 (Operating Supplemental Budget). We previously passed this bill at the beginning of session to keep the state operating.

I voted YES on SCS HCS HB 3018. There were provisions to support the School for the Blind and language to appropriate spending authority for the blind. There are many blind constituents in our district in particular those served by Alphapointe.

Bill). To appropriate money for the several departments and offices of state government and several divisions and programs for planning and capital improvements including but not limited to major additions and renovations, new structures, and land improvements or acquisitions, and to transfer money among certain funds.

Plan Act). These are federal stimulus dollars the state received due to the COVID pandemic resulting in the loss of revenue to the states and the financial harm felt by our citizens. The final version of this bill was drawn up as a floor substitute bill in the Senate and there are a lot of pet projects that were not properly vetted or debated on the Senate floor. There were no hearings on some items in the bill. I did not feel in good conscience that I could vote for this bill because it was turned over to the House less than 12 hours before we were set to vote on the bill. Members in the House did not have adequate time to review everything that was put into the bill by the Senate. There are a lot of good things in the bill such as money is invested for broadband infrastructure. We learned how important broadband is to both urban and rural communities during the pandemic. We are

spending the dollars we received from the federal government and set aside about 10% of the funds for future investment. This money was made available to help stabilize the American economy and therefore I believe we need to be fiscally responsible in spending this money so I voted NO.

I voted YES on SCS HB 2090 AA provides a tax credit of \$500 for individuals and \$1,000 for couples who have a Missouri Income Tax Liability for individuals with an annual income under \$150,000 and \$300,000 per couple. I would have preferred a tax refund to all Missourians rather than the tax credit because this is your money. Not everyone qualifies for the tax credit. Despite this, I supported the bill because there are people who need the tax credit. This bill also provides that our state employees would be paid every two weeks instead of twice a month.

These Budget Bills will now be sent to the Governor for signature to enact this legislation into law.



Senate ties photo voter ID to no-excuse absentee voting

The Republican-controlled Senate is poised to approve legislation imposing a strict photo voter identification requirement,

overcoming Democratic opposition by agreeing to also create a no-excuse absentee voting period two weeks prior to an election. Once the Senate takes a final vote, the bill will return to the House of Representatives, which can either accept the Senate changes or seek to negotiate a compromise version.

As originally approved by the lower chamber, House Bill 1878 was largely limited to Republicans' latest attempt to require voters to show a government-issued photo ID in order to cast a ballot. The Missouri Supreme Court has twice ruled such laws violate the constitutional rights of legal voters who do not possess and cannot easily obtain a photo ID.

The Senate, however, on May 4 added numerous amendments to the bill, including a controversial provision that would grant the secretary of state the unprecedented power to withhold funding from local election authorities who, in the secretary's opinion, aren't satisfactorily maintaining their voter rolls. The power of the purse traditionally is reserved for the legislature and governor through the state budget process.

HB 1878 also purports to prohibit the General Assembly from changing state election laws within 26 weeks prior to a presidential election. This provision would be unenforceable, however, since lawmakers have no authority to statutorily restrict the power of future General Assemblies to enact laws.

To overcome a Democratic filibuster, the Senate agreed to an amendment establishing a two-week period prior to an election in which voters can cast an absentee ballot without offering a reason. Under existing law, voters must have a statutorily authorized excuse for voting absentee, such as they will be absent from their home county or otherwise unable to vote in person on Election Day.

However, a provision was added stating that if the bill's photo voter ID requirement is struck down, which seems likely given

state Supreme Court precedent, then the absentee ballot provision would not be implemented.





Members of the Democratic Caucus pose in our best Derby clothes.



House makes last-ditch play on congressional redistricting

A House committee approved a revised congressional redistricting bill on May 4 in a last-ditch attempt to get new districts in place for this year's elections. The full House of Representatives is expected consider the bill May 9, but final passage remains uncertain since it also would have to go through the full process in the Senate by the time this year's legislative session effectively ends at 6 p.m. on May 13.

The House in mid-January approved a different measure, House Bill 2117, to redraw Missouri's eight congressional districts to reflect population shifts under the 2020 U.S. Census. Lawmakers had intended to grant the bill final passage before candidate filing for the Aug. 2 congressional primaries opened in late February. Due to infighting among majority Republicans, however, HB 2117 stalled in the Senate for two months before senators eventually passed a radically different version of the bill on March 24. Although the House sought to negotiate a compromise, the Senate refused, and the process has been in limbo ever since.

House Bill 2909 is an attempt to find agreement with Senate Republican hardliners. However, since it chops up many outstate Missouri cities and counties, it's unclear if the new plan has enough votes to the clear the House, which only barely passed the earlier congressional redistricting bill with just a handful of votes to spare. House Democrats unanimously opposed HB 2117 and are expected to oppose HB 2909 since it further divides some Democratic areas.

Candidates for now are filed under the outdated congressional map adopted in 2011. At least three lawsuits have been filed in state and federal courts seeking to block elections under the 2011 map and asking a judge to draw new districts that comply with

constitutional requirements.





House calls for bumping legal smoking age from 18 to 21

The House of Representatives on May 4 voted to raise the statewide legal age for cigarette smoking or vaping from 18 to 21 in order to comply with a federal law requiring states to do so by June 2023 or face the loss of federal funds. Lawmakers added the smoking provision to an omnibus health care bill, which the House ultimately passed on vote of 97-31.

The measure, Senate Bill 710, originally was limited to health care plans for public school students who suffer from seizures. However, the House added dozens of other provisions relating to health care. Negotiators for two chambers are expected to strip out many of the House changes before final votes on the bill are taken.



I recently attended an event at the Bethel AME Church in Chillicothe, MO where a cane belonging to a slave was presented on loan o the African American Museum located inside Bethel.







Could you be the owner of unclaimed property?

The Treasurer's office is currently holding **\$6,215,449.90** belonging to approximately 59,635 account owners in our district. Banks, businesses, and insurance companies turn over Unclaimed Property to the Treasurer's office after accounts have been inactive and owners cannot be

successfully contacted for a statutorily defined period of time, generally five years.

To file a claim or check to see if you have unclaimed property, you can visit www.ShowMeMoney.com or write to the Treasurer's office at PO Box 1004, Jefferson City, MO 65102-1004.



Fatality update

Statewide fatality totals as reported on the Missouri State Highway Patrol website as of May 1, 2022 2022 totals - 269

2021 totals - 276 / 2019 totals - 228 2020 totals - 240 / 2018 totals - 261

Check the status of your Missouri State Tax returns







COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS





CLASS OF



CONGRATULATIONS!



Dedicated to a Unified Vision for South Kansas Cit

Please join us to hear our lineup of great speakers and learn more about the details of the May 14 and May 21 6th & 5th City Council Districts annual spring cleanups with multiple drop-off sites in south Kansas City at our monthly meeting at 6 p.m. Monday, May 9, in the community room in the front building of the South Patrol Police Campus, 9701 Marion Park Drive.

Guest speakers will consist of Bishop Mark Tolbert, president of the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners, Charlie Shields, president of the Missouri State Board of Education, Sean Putney, the new executive director of the Kansas City Zoo, Michael Shaw, director of the KCMO Public Works Department and Jennifer Tidwell, deputy director of the Housing & Community Development Department.



The Pandemic aint over... but we're getting there!





The reward has been raised to \$30,000for 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 Gentzsch 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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Please don't hesitate to contact me with any feedback, questions or ideas!