



Capitol Report

February 24, 2022

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Dear Neighbor,

The Supplemental Budget Bill was passed during today's session and signed by Gov. Parson.

School lunch programs across the state had exhausted their state funds, so it was crucial for our kids that the appropriation was passed. The bill also includes a 5.5 percent pay increase for state workers and it keeps the state Medicaid program afloat for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Next up is to preserve Medicaid Expansion in Missouri. This debate is over: The people of Missouri want Medicaid to cover more people. The special interests and ideologues still fighting against it cannot stand the fact they lost, so they are once again trying to undo the will of Missouri voters. Even the governor

wants to see this done. This is the second year in a row he has fully funded Medicaid, including for the expanded population.

Weakening our Medicaid program only hurts our state's most vulnerable and punishes working Missourians for being unable to afford private health insurance. Missouri citizens will have to rely on the whim of Missouri politicians year after year to continue receiving benefits. This resolution makes our state's Medicaid program grossly unstable, unreliable, and arbitrary.

I will continue to stand up for our uninsured and underinsured in Missouri as I believe accessible healthcare is a right that should be afforded to all people.

Yours in Service,
Rich



[You can view the proposed redistricting maps for the state and congressional districts here.](#)



Lawmakers grant final approval to \$4.6 billion spending bill signed by the Governor.

Today, Governor Mike Parson signed the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 supplemental budget bill, HB 3014, that was passed by the General Assembly this morning. The bill allows for current operations of state government to continue through FY 2022. "We are happy to sign the supplemental budget bill into law today," **Governor Parson** said. "This bill not only gives our

dedicated state team members a long overdue pay increase, but also appropriates critical funding to our K-12 schools and child care system. We thank the General Assembly for working to get this important piece of legislation passed and to my desk."

The House of Representatives voted 133-12 on Feb. 24 to grant final passage to in a nearly \$4.6 billion emergency supplemental appropriations bill distributing billions of dollars in federal pandemic relief funds to local public school districts and fully funding the state's Medicaid program for the rest of the FY 2022 fiscal year, among other spending allocations. The House action came one day after the Senate approved the bill on a 25-7 vote. **I voted YES.**

Passage of the bill also came a day after the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education exhausted its spending authority for reimbursing local schools for costs of student meals. That authority will be replenished with House Bill 3014, which Republican Gov. Mike Parson signed into law less just hours after its passage.

The final bill includes funding for a 5.5 percent pay increase for state workers and spending authority to ensure no state employee earns less than \$15 an hour. Although Parson requested that pay plan, House Republicans cut the state worker base wage to \$12 an hour. A Senate committee later restored the governor's full pay plan, which Parson deems necessary to retain state employees amid a highly competitive labor market.

Parson had wanted the bill finalized by Feb. 1 so that the pay increases to take effect then, but the House shelved it for four weeks before finally advancing it to the Senate, where action on the bill was further delayed for days amid to a spat between a small group of hardline conservative Republicans and the chamber's GOP leaders. While the hardliners ultimately allowed the bill to come to a final vote, they all voted against it.

Timely action was needed within the next few weeks to prevent

the state Medicaid program from exhausting its spending authority. Majority Republicans intentionally underfunded Medicaid in the FY 2022 state operating budget in a last-ditch attempt to thwart a voter-mandated expansion of the program's eligibility, but the Missouri Supreme Court later ruled the state was still constitutionally required to provide services to the expanded population. Lawmakers also faced a March 24 deadline for allocating about \$2 billion in federal money for local schools or the state would have forfeited the funding.



Legislation to undo Medicaid expansion advances to Senate

The House of Representatives on Feb. 24 voted 95-45 to advance a proposed constitutional amendment aimed at undoing a voter-mandated expansion of eligibility for the state's Medicaid program. **I voted NO**. The measure, House Joint Resolution 117, now goes to the Senate.

Missouri voters ratified the Medicaid expansion amendment in 2020, but Republican lawmakers attempted to block implementation of it in 2021 by refusing to provide sufficient spending authority in the state budget to cover the added recipients. The state Supreme Court subsequently ruled the constitution still requires the state to provide services to the expanded population.

HJR 117 would accomplish what the Supreme Court said isn't currently allowed by amending the constitution to grant lawmakers the power to block services to the expanded population by withholding funding. If the Senate also approves HJR 17, it would go on the Nov. 8 statewide ballot for voter ratification.

LEGALIZING
MAKES CENTS



Missouri Marijuana Legalization Bill Aims High but Expectations Remain Low

Previous efforts languished in committees.

An [ambitious new bill](#) called the Cannabis Freedom Act from [Missouri state Rep. Ron Hicks](#) (R–St. Charles County) aims to legalize recreational marijuana consumption, provide relief to nonviolent offenders who used the drug, and allow restaurants, bars, and other private venues to sell cannabis.

[The bill](#) would allow adults aged 21 or older to purchase and possess cannabis from licensed sellers. The bill intends to get rid of the existing statutes that criminalize marijuana activity and does not specify a possession limit for the drug. The bill would also make home growing legal with a limit of up to 12 plants, and home growers could contract out their own product to licensed sellers. [State Rep. Richard Brown](#) (D–Kansas City), the bill's co-sponsor, says he supports legalization because "it's just time" to stop punishing those who use marijuana. He also said that the bill's bipartisan support (which [currently](#) includes eight Republican sponsors and six Democrats) means it could make it to the House floor for debate. Brown says that during his six-year tenure in office, a House debate on marijuana legalization has never occurred.

[Continue Reading](#)



I spoke with U.S. Senator Roy Blunt on Wednesday about the possible timeline for passage of the Build Back Better Plan. Portions of such funding can be used by MoDOT to make safety improvements along Bruce Watkins Drive (71 Highway).



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COMMUNITY NEWS AND HAPPENINGS





On Tuesday, I filed for re-election as State Representative for District 27 in Missouri. It's hard to believe that it was 6 years ago when I first ran for this office. Today, I am thankful to you, the

people I represent; for the support you have given me as this is the final time I will be able to run for this seat due to term limits.





A delegation from the YMCA of Kansas City recently visited the capitol. I was happy to see my friend Andrea Toney from the Cleaver Family YMCA.

The Pandemic aint over!



A video player interface with a green border. The video shows a man with a grey beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit and a patterned tie, standing in front of a large, white, domed building (likely a state capitol). The video player includes a play button, a volume icon, and a progress bar showing 00:16 / 01:00. In the bottom right corner of the video frame, there is a logo that says 'VacciNATION' with a green outline of the state of South Carolina.

Please continue to be safe during the pandemic.
I made a Public Service Announcement recently
and it can be viewed by clicking on my photo.



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Maurice Weaver

1928 - 2022

[You can read Mr. Weaver's obituary here.](#)

**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.



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Tips Hotline

816-474-8477

Web Tips

www.KCcrimestoppers.com

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* 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.



Rep. Richard Brown

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MO House of Representatives

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