



April 26, 2024

Only three weeks remain in the 2024 legislative session. Senate appropriations dominated Senate activity with most of its time spent reviewing and modifying the proposed FY2025 budget. Meanwhile, the House is eying every opportunity to advance its proposals to the Governor. Activity will only become more chaotic as the last days of session are approaching quickly.

In Brief

- Following a national search, Governor Mike Parson appointed Jason Summers to succeed Sara Parker Pauley as the Director of the Department of Conservation effective June 1, 2024. Director Pauley is retiring after 30 years of public service. Mr. Summers served as the Deputy Director of Resource Management for the department. His appointment requires confirmation by the Missouri Senate.
- On Tuesday, the Federal Trade Commission [issued a final rule](#) that it believes promotes competition by banning **non-compete agreements** nationwide. The new rules take effect 120 days following its publication in the *Federal Register*. It prohibits employers from entering new non-compete agreements on or after the effective date and prohibits employers from enforcing current non-compete agreements with workers other than senior executives. Additional information about the new rule may be found [here](#).
- This week, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments regarding whether local governments can criminalize homelessness by making it a crime to sleep outdoors on public property. Texas, Tennessee, and Missouri have all passed bans on camping on public property, but the Missouri bill, [HB 1606 \(2022\)](#) see § 67.2300, was struck down by the MO Supreme Court over this provision. Several cities across the U.S., with both Republican and Democratic leaders, have established tougher anti-camping regulations to reduce the number of homeless people living on city streets. The issue being argued centers around the Eighth Amendment and whether fines and jail terms are considered cruel methods of punishment for the allegedly innocent and unavoidable behavior of existing outside due to lack of shelter.
- **Senator Greg Razer resigned his Senate seat** to accept Governor Mike Parson's appointment to the State Tax Commission.

Budget Update

The Senate Appropriations Committee dedicated most of the week reviewing the House's proposed FY2025 budget proposal and conducted the mark-up process to craft its version. During the State of the State address in January, Governor Parson proposed a \$53 billion budget. The House cut nearly \$2 billion in spending out of that plan. Throughout the course of

two days, the Senate Appropriations Committee reinstated almost all those funds cut by the House.

Chairman Lincoln Hough (R-Springfield) moved swiftly through the eighteen budget bills over the course of Tuesday and Wednesday's hearings. Several Senators received new decision items (NDIs) for individual projects and organizations throughout their districts. Some of the larger items added by the Senate include \$9.5 million for an EMS First Responder grant program, \$1 billion in ARPA spending for various higher education projects, a **\$17.5 million increase for World Cup, \$30, million for the downtown loop**, \$363 million in bonding for construction improvements on I-44, an additional \$75 million for various road projects throughout the state and restored \$3 million for tourism funding.

There also were some large cuts made including removal of several vacant full time employee line items and expiring grant authority spending. While most of the committee action moved swiftly without controversy, there was one last minute inclusion aimed at Kansas City that proved otherwise. *Ultimately, language was included that cuts all state funding for cities that become sanctuaries for immigrants and requires any money received by those cities to be paid back with interest.*

The eighteen budget bills are expected to be debated by the full Senate next week, with every change and inclusion being heavily scrutinized. There are rumblings of select Senators wanting to cut significant sums from all departments through a series of amendments. Regardless, the Senate and House must reconcile any differences and pass the bills before the quickly approaching May 10th constitutional deadline.

Senate Floor Activity

Nuclear construction tax exemption

The Senate debated SB 1388, sponsored by Senator Greg Razer (D-Kansas City) this week. The bill authorizes a state and local sales tax exemption for the purpose of constructing a new nuclear security enterprise located in Kansas City. After considerable debate, the Senate eventually provided its first of two necessary approval votes.

House Floor Activity

Ballot measures

The House dedicated floor time Thursday morning to debate SJR 74, sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). This resolution, upon voter approval, **requires constitutional amendments to receive a majority vote in at least five of the state's eight congressional districts.** Currently, constitutional amendments must win a simple majority of voters statewide. During the resolution's legislative progression, the language was modified prohibiting foreign interference including sponsoring or contributing to campaigns, specifying owners of petitions and votes must be residents of the state, and clarifying only U.S. citizens may vote. During House floor debate, the resolution was amended to remove unnecessary references and clarify public review and comment period provisions. After considerable debate, the House passed the proposal by a 102-49 vote. It now returns to the Senate for further review.

Committee Activity

Public safety

The House Judiciary Committee met Wednesday afternoon to discuss SB 754, sponsored by Senator Tony Luetkemeyer (R-Parkville). This bill modifies various provisions relating to **Blair's law**, juvenile offenders, persistent offenders, wrongful conviction, armed criminal action, a cyberstalking and harassment task force, endangering the welfare of a child, unlawful possession of a firearm, law enforcement animals, drug trafficking, fleeing a stop, office of the public defender, and more. MO Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, United States Police Canine Association, MO Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association, MO 911 Service Board, MO 911 Directors Association, MO Chapter of the Association of Public Communication Officials, MO Chamber of Commerce, MO FOP, MO State Troopers Association, City of Kansas City, **Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce**, **Civic Council of Greater KC**, and St. Louis County supported the bill. A member of the Citizens Police Review Board in Columbia, MO provided informational testimony and highlighted that the inclusion of civilian review boards directly affects civilian oversight entities and would prohibit the board from investigating complaints or conduct proper audits.

Attracting amateur sporting events

The Senate General Laws Committee met Wednesday morning to discuss HB 1483, sponsored by Representative Brad Christ (R-St. Louis). The bill reauthorizes a tax credit program that is used to attract amateur sports events to the state. The program includes a \$6 million cap and without changes, the credit will be sunset in 2025. During bill presentation, the sponsor stated that since the credit's passage in 2013, over 100 amateur sports events have come to Missouri and generated over \$500 million in new visitor spending. St. Louis Sports Commission, Kansas City Sports Commission, Visit Maryland Heights, Greater St. Louis Inc., **Civic Council of Greater KC**, **Greater KC Chamber of Commerce**, City of Kansas City, and the MO Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau's supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

KCATA membership

The House Local Government Committee convened in executive session on Tuesday morning to consider passage of HB1634, sponsored by Representative Sean Pouche (R-Kansas City). The bill changes provisions relating to the Kansas City area transportation authority and states if there is a commissioner vacancy who was appointed from Platte or Clay County, the Mayor of Kansas City must appoint a successor from the panel submitted by the county commission of the county where the vacancy occurred. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 9-0 vote.

Prohibited diversity statements

The Senate Select Committee on Empowering Missouri Parents and Children convened Tuesday morning to discuss SB 1125, sponsored by Senator Ben Brown (R-Washington). The bill prohibits public institutions of postsecondary education from requiring any applicant, student, employee, or contractor to submit a diversity, equity, and inclusion statement or from giving preferential consideration in admissions or employment on the basis of an individual's or entity's submission of any statement relating to a discriminatory ideology, including

any ideology that promotes the differential treatment of an individual or group of individuals based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, ethnicity, national origin, or ancestry. The bill also outlines certain disciplinary protocols for an individual or institution in violation of the act. Cicero Action and Do No Harm testified in support of the bill. Missouri Nurses Association, Missouri Coalition for Immigration Policy, Council on Public Higher Education, Missouri NAACP, PROMO, Missouri ACLU, Missouri NEA, National Association of Social Workers - Missouri Chapter, and Missouri Equity Education Partnership Action opposed the bill. Missouri State University provided informational testimony.

Business development

The House General Laws Committee convened Tuesday afternoon to consider passage of SB 894, sponsored by Senator Travis Fitzwater (R-Fulton). The bill establishes provisions relating to the promotion of business development and creates the **Regulatory Sandbox Act, which provides an expedited pathway for small businesses creating innovative products to navigate state regulation and oversight**. To spur entrepreneurship and innovation, the language allows for the waiver or suspension of certain regulations for two years by applying to the Regulatory Relief Office created within the Department of Economic Development. The bill also includes Right to Start provisions. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by an 11-1 vote. *The KC Chamber and Civic Council of Greater KC are supportive of this legislation to reduce barriers to launching a business in Missouri.*

St. Louis earnings tax

The Senate Fiscal Oversight Committee convened Wednesday morning to consider SB 1132, sponsored by Senator Andrew Koenig (R-Manchester). The bill clarifies that St. Louis cannot collect taxes on remote worker salaries and must refund any amounts already collected. No supporting testimony was presented. The City of St. Louis opposed the bill and urged committee members to wait for this summer's court decision on the issue before injecting further legislation.

Bill Tracker

Please find your updated bill list via the following link: <https://govwatch.net/report/3BrZGXRqA5>

Upcoming Hearings of Interest

House: <https://house.mo.gov/AllHearings.aspx>

Senate: <https://www.senate.mo.gov/hearingsschedule/hrings.htm>

Calendars

[House](#)

[Senate](#)

Key Upcoming Dates

May 10, 2024 – Last day to constitutionally pass the FY 2025 budget

May 17, 2024 – Last day of the 2024 legislative session

August 6, 2024 – Missouri primary elections
September 11, 2024 – Veto session
November 5, 2024 – Missouri general elections

My thanks,

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KC Chamber Missouri State Affairs 2024 Legislative Wrap Up Luncheon

Featuring Senate President Caleb Rowden and

House Speaker Dean Plocher, Others TBA

May 22, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

The American Restaurant in Crown Center

Lunch Reservations: \$65 for Chamber Members, \$85 for Non-Members

Register Using this Link: <https://tinyurl.com/3tzd26r2>