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DISTRICT 14 **ASHLEY AUNE**
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

CAPITOL REPORT

May 25, 2023



Hello K.D.,

I hope this email finds you well and looking forward to a relaxing Memorial Day weekend with family and friends! **I'm keeping this week's update short and sweet, but stay tuned for an email about an End of Session Town Hall in July.**

As always, thanks for checking in. Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's anything I can do for you.

Take Care,

**Representative Ashley Aune**

District 14 | (573) 751-3618

Legislative Update

SPEAKER SAYS INITIATIVE LIMITS INTENDED TO THWART ABORTION VOTE

In an extraordinary admission, [House Speaker Dean Plocher](#) on May 12 conceded Missouri voters “absolutely” will restore abortion rights if given the chance and that blocking them from doing so was **majority Republicans’ motivation this year for trying to make it more difficult to use the initiative petition process to amend the state constitution.**

Legislation imposing restrictions on the initiative was a top Republican priority but failed to win final passage after GOP infighting ground the Senate to a halt during the final days of the 2023 legislative session. Republicans increasingly have complained about the initiative after voters used it several times in recent years to bypass the legislature to enact policies – such as **Medicaid expansion, legislative ethics reform and marijuana legalization** – that enjoyed wide support among Missourians but were opposed by GOP lawmakers.

HOUSE CLEARS CHILD CARE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR BALLOT

The House of Representatives on May 12 voted 97-27, with 31 members voting “present,” to put a proposed constitutional amendment on the statewide ballot that would authorize the legislature to **broadly exempt from taxation all real and personal property primarily used for child**

AG WITHDRAWS ATTEMPT TO BAN GENDER-AFFIRMING MEDICAL CARE

Ahead of another expected defeat in court, Attorney General Andrew Bailey on May 16 quietly terminated an emergency administrative rule he sought to impose that essentially would have **banned gender-affirming medical care in Missouri.** A St. Louis County judge had already temporarily blocked the rule from taking effect and in doing so indicated Bailey’s action amounted to unconstitutional legislating by an executive branch official.

Hours after news of the rule’s withdrawal became public, Bailey issued a statement asserting the rule is no longer necessary now that the Republican-controlled legislature has passed legislation restricting gender-affirming health care for minors. However, while the legislation, [Senate Bill 49](#), is limited to barring certain types of care only for those under age 18, Bailey’s rule was far more expansive and also would have applied to adults.

Gov. Mike Parson is expected to sign SB 49 into law. He is also expected to sign a companion measure, [Senate Bill 39](#), passed this year to prohibit transgender children, as well as college athletes, from participating on sports teams that don’t correspond with their birth gender.

GOVERNOR SIGNS \$2 BILLION SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET BILL INTO LAW

Gov. Mike Parson on May 15 signed into

care. The Senate previously approved the measure in March on a 33-0 vote.

[Senate Joint Resolution 26](#) would limit any tax exemptions to property used for child care outside of the home. As a result, families could not claim a tax exemption for property used to for in-home child care.

SJR 26 will automatically go on the November 2024 ballot for voter ratification, unless the governor exercises his constitutional prerogative to set an earlier election date.

AG TELLS KC POLICE TO ENFORCE BILL THEY LACK POWER TO ENFORCE

Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey on May 23 urged the Kansas City Board of Police Commissioners to use officers to enforce recently passed legislation prohibiting medical practitioners from providing gender-affirming care to transgender children. However, as Kansas City’s police chief noted days earlier, **officers lack the legal authority to enforce the measure since it contains no criminal provisions**, thus putting the matter beyond police jurisdiction.

In a letter to Board President Mark Tolbert, Bailey claimed a failure by the board to enforce the legislation, which Gov. Mike Parson hasn’t yet signed into law and that won’t take effect until Aug. 28, would be “both dangerous and unlawful.” Bailey’s letter was in response to a largely symbolic resolution the Kansas City Council passed on May 11 declaring the city to be a sanctuary for those seeking or providing gender-affirming care and stating that enforcing any state law against such care would be the “lowest priority” for city personnel.

ETHICS COMMISSION FINES FORMER HOUSE SPEAKER \$47,392

The Missouri Ethics Commission on May 23 imposed a \$47,392 fine on former House Speaker John Diehl for multiple violations of state campaign finance laws, including **using**

law a supplemental appropriations bill that authorizes more than \$2 billion in additional state spending for the final months of the 2023 fiscal year, which ends June 30. Lawmakers granted final approval to the measure on May 5.

Major spending items in [House Bill 15](#) include **\$425.16 million for the voter-approved expansion of Medicaid eligibility, \$217.94 million for school nutrition programs, \$119.14 million for child care services and \$74.38 million in state funding for local charter schools.**

The governor has yet to act on the various appropriations bills that make up the \$51.51 billion state operating budget for the 2024 fiscal year. As a practical matter, Parson must sign those measures before the new fiscal year begins July 1.

PARSON APPOINTS VETERAN ATTORNEY AS ST. LOUIS PROSECUTOR

Gov. Mike Parson on May 19 appointed Gabe Gore as St. Louis city circuit attorney. Gore, a partner in the politically connected Dowd Bennett law firm, replaces Kim Gardner, who resigned the post three days earlier.

Gore, 54, worked as a federal prosecutor in the 1990s. In 1999, Special Counsel John Danforth, a Republican former U.S. senator from Missouri, recruited him to assist with Danforth’s high-profile investigation into federal agents’ 1993 siege and subsequent raid of the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas. Gore later spent 23 years in private practice.

In 2014, then-Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, appointed Gore to serve on the Ferguson Commission, which was created in the aftermath of the widespread protests and demands for law enforcement and municipal court reform following the police shooting of an unarmed Black teen in August of that year. In 2015, Nixon appointed Gore as a Democrat to the Missouri State Board of Governors, a post he still holds even though his term expired in

campaign funds for personal expenses. Diehl signed a consent order agreeing with the commission's findings and accepting the penalty.

Diehl, R-Town and Country, served slightly more than four months as House speaker before resigning his legislative seat on the final day of the 2015 session after [The Kansas City Star](#) reported on sexually charged texts he had exchanged with a 19-year-old legislative intern 30 years his junior that indicated an inappropriate relationship between the two.

Although he has been out of public office for eight years, Diehl continued to maintain his campaign committee. The campaign finance violations were discovered during an audit of Diehl's committee initiated by the commission's staff in April 2022.

January 2021.

SUPREME COURT HEARS CHALLENGES TO SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAW

The Missouri Supreme Court heard a pair of cases on May 24 that **argue the state's compulsory school attendance law is unconstitutionally vague in violation of the due process rights** of two Laclede County women convicted in separate cases of failing to ensure their children attended school on a "regular basis."

Both women were charged in March 2022 in cases involving children in the Lebanon School District. The mother of one first-grader was convicted and sentenced to seven days jail in jail. The other mother, of a kindergartener, was given a suspended 15-day jail sentence and placed on probation. In both cases, the district initiated enforcement action after each child had missed 15 full days of school. For at least one of the children, some of the absences were due to illness, which the district doesn't consider excused unless there is a doctor's note.

Missouri Mobile ID



WHAT IS A MISSOURI MOBILE ID (MID)?

It's a new era of the driver's license and Mobile ID (mID) is one way we're taking Missouri to the next level. Mobile ID is a highly secure, digital version of your driver's license or state-issued ID available in an app on your smartphone.

Mobile ID keeps user data secure and protects personal information by only storing info with the Missouri Department of Revenue and on the user's device.

Mobile ID offers the convenience of contactless transactions when verifying your identity. Mobile ID allows you to have up-to-date versions of your license, like after an address change or license renewal, while you wait for your printed card to arrive in the mail.

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