



July 07, 2023

Capitol Report

Hi All,

I hope your summer is going well. This interim has been amazing for me. I found a job that I love and that will work with me on my legislative schedule when we're back in session. I have had the opportunity to travel to a legislative conference and have another planned at the end of the year to learn about policy in different states and municipalities. It's amazing what we can accomplish when we work together.

Don't forget that this is an interactive process so I'd love to hear from you about issues that matter to you. Thanks for signing up for my reports!

Sincerely,





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Topline News

 <p>WOMEN IN POLITICS A TOWN HALL EVENT</p> <p>Join us for a Town Hall discussion about today's political climate and how it impacts women's decisions to engage in civic leadership.</p> <p>UNITED WE .</p> <p>American Public Square WAT JEWELL</p>	<p>I'm a panelist on July 11th!</p> <p>Join me for a panel discussion about today's political climate and how it impacts women's decisions to engage in civic leadership. Click the image or the link here to register.</p>
<p>Join me for a Town Hall - July 13th!</p> <p>Rep. Ashley Aune and I would love to see you at our next Town Hall on July 13, 2023 to be held at the new beautiful Green Hills Library.</p>	 <p>TOWN HALL MEETING</p> <p>GREEN HILLS LIBRARY JULY 13 6-8 PM</p>

This Week in Jefferson City

Judge Russell begins rare second term as chief justice

Missouri Supreme Court Judge Mary Rhodes Russell took over as the court's chief justice on July 1, becoming the first woman in the court's history to get a rare second term in the post. Russell, who previously served as chief justice from 2013-2015, replaces Judge Paul Wilson, whose term in the administrative role ended.

Because the position rotates among the court's seven members every two years, only five judges in the court's modern history have served as chief justice for more than one term. Prior to Russell, the last person to do so was Judge William Ray Price Jr., who held the post from 1999-2001 and again from 2009-2011, before retiring from the court in 2012.

An October 2004 appointee of Democratic Gov. Bob Holden, Russell is the state high court's longest serving current member. Her latest term as chief justice will run through June 30, 2025.

Parson strikes \$555 million from record-high state budget

Gov. Mike Parson on June 30 issued 179 line-item vetoes to strike \$555.3 million in spending authority from the state budget for the 2024 fiscal year, which started July 1. However, the remaining \$51 billion budget still includes record state spending and is roughly \$3 billion more than the \$48 billion budget originally authorized for FY 2023.

With the state beginning the new fiscal year with an unprecedented revenue surplus of \$7.8 billion, including \$5.7 billion in general revenue, there wasn't an issue with having enough money in the state treasury to cover all of the spending authorized by lawmakers. Nonetheless, in most of his explanatory veto messages, Parson, a Republican, said they were necessary to "help ensure the financial stability of Missouri" in the future.

Many of the Parson's vetoes struck spending items inserted by individual lawmakers for the benefit of their districts, which could spark some override attempts when the General Assembly convenes on Sept. 13 for its annual veto session. However, overrides of line-item budget vetoes often have little practical impact. That's because although an appropriation is required for the state to legally spend money for a particular purpose, it doesn't mandate an actual expenditure.

In 2014, for example, the Republican-controlled legislature overrode 47 of Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon's budget vetoes. However, since the governor controls most executive branch expenditures, Nixon's administration simply didn't exercise the spending authority tied to many of those overrides.

Unlike with most legislation, which the governor must either sign into law or veto in its entirety, the Missouri Constitution empowers the governor to strike individual items from an appropriations bill while signing the rest of the bill into law.

Key spending authority that remains in the budget includes an ambitious \$2.8 billion plan to widen the entire length of Interstate 70 from Kansas City to St. Louis, plus another \$379 million for various road and bridge projects around the state. However, Parson rejected \$28 million for improvements to part of Interstate 44, as well as several other regional road projects.

The FY 2024 budget also provides substantial increases for Missouri's public colleges and universities, allocates the minimum level of basic funding for local public school districts called for by state law and, for the second year in a row, fully funds the state's share of districts' student transportation costs. In addition, the new budget increases funding for expanded public pre-K offerings and bumps state reimbursements for home care workers who assist elderly or disabled Missourians to boost their average pay from about \$12 an hour to \$14 an hour.

UM System ends race-conscious policies after federal ruling

The University of Missouri System is immediately ending consideration of race in admissions after the U.S. Supreme Court's conservative majority on June 29 ruled race-conscious college admission policies aimed at addressing past discriminatory practices are unconstitutional. Other Missouri colleges and universities, both public and private, are expected to take similar actions.

In a pair of separate rulings respectively involving admissions policies at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina, the court effectively reversed decades of precedent holding that such policies were justified to expand opportunities for racial minorities who historically had been denied equal access to a college education. The judges split along ideological lines, with the conservative majority declaring policies that favor racial minorities violate the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment, which was ratified shortly after the Civil War to protect the rights of racial minorities.

In a statement not attributed to any specific university official, the UM System said it would cease considering race and ethnicity as a factor in both admissions and the awarding of certain scholarships that had been aimed to improving racial diversity on its four campuses. However, the statement said the system would continue to honor financial aid commitments already awarded to current and incoming students that "were lawfully issued under previous Supreme Court and U.S. Department of Education interpretations."

The Supreme Court's abrupt ending of affirmative action in college admissions is expected to result in a decline in campus diversity, as has been case in states such as California, Florida and Michigan where consideration of race is already banned under state law.

"The devastating impact of this decision cannot be overstated," Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote for the three dissenting judges. "The majority's vision of race neutrality will entrench racial segregation in higher education because racial inequality will persist so long as it is ignored."

Hawley's Sunshine Law violations cost taxpayers \$254,000

Missouri taxpayers are on the hook for more than a quarter-million dollars as a result of Republican Josh Hawley violating the state Sunshine Law while serving as state attorney general.

Cole County Circuit Judge Jon Beetem, a Republican, on June 28 ordered the Attorney General's Office to pay \$242,000 in attorney fees in relation to litigation over Sunshine Law violations Hawley, now a U.S. Senator, committed during his two-year stint as attorney general from 2017-2018. Making Hawley's violations particularly egregious is the fact that the attorney general is the state official primarily responsible for enforcing the Sunshine Law.

In a scathing ruling in November, Beetem previously determined Hawley intentionally withheld official records deemed harmful to his 2018 U.S. Senate campaign that the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee sought through a Sunshine request. Those records involved Hawley's use of paid campaign consultants to help run the Attorney General's Office. Beetem fined the office \$12,000 for the violations – the maximum allowed by law – but delayed awarding attorney fees pending further proceedings.

Mark Pedroli, who represented the DSCC in its lawsuit, told the St. Louis Post-Dispatch Hawley should apologize to Missouri taxpayers and personally reimburse them for the court's judgment. A Hawley spokesman bizarrely responded to the paper that it is Democrats who should apologize for pursuing the case and proving Hawley broke the law and that they should reimburse taxpayers for the consequences of Hawley's wrongdoing.

Upcoming Events

 <p>Parkville Living Center invites you to Coffee Time</p> <p>Mon - Thurs 7:30am-2pm 819 Main Street - Parkville, MO, 64152</p>	<p>Various Dates - Events at Parkville Living Center Every weekday at 7:30am - Coffee Time Every Tuesday at 10:00am - Tech Connect Every Wednesday at 6:00pm - Film Group Every 3rd Friday at 6:00pm - Break Time</p> <p>Parkville Living Center 819 Main Street Parkville MO 64152 For more information: parkvillelivingcenter.org</p>
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July 15, 2023 - Reaching Riverside Community Pop Up

El Chaparral Apartments

4921 NW Gateway Ave. Riverside, MO 64150

July 13, 2023 - Community Conversation: Access to Healthy Food

Northland Health Alliance

Held at: 2908 NW Vivion Rd Riverside, MO 64150

We want to hear from you! Join the Northland Health Alliance for a conversation on how we as a community can create and support an environment where accessing and preparing healthy food is the easy, affordable choice. All Community Conversation events are open to anyone who lives, works or plays in the Northland.

FREE childcare and dinner provided. The first 30 attendees will also receive a \$25 QuikTrip gift card.

If you plan to use childcare - please RSVP by July 12 by emailing northlandkchealthalliance@gmail.com

