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**DISTRICT 14** **ASHLEY AUNE**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

**CAPITOL REPORT**

July 21, 2023



Rep. Jamie Johnson and I held a Legislative Town Hall last Thursday evening.

**Hello K.D.,**

I hope this email finds you well! **Huge thanks to everyone who joined Representative Johnson and I for our Northland Town Hall last week.** We had a fantastic time sharing information about this past session and answering all your questions.

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

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## Legislative Update

### PROPERTY TAX RELIEF FACES UNCERTAIN ROLLOUT, POSSIBLE LITIGATION

Although the governor recently signed legislation into **law seeking to provide property tax relief to some Missouri senior citizens**, it could be quite a while before they see any benefit – if they ever do since implementation isn't guaranteed in every county and litigation challenging the measure's constitutionality seems likely.

The new law, which the legislature enacted in May as part of [Senate Bill 190](#), allows counties to grant a tax credit that essentially would freeze property taxes for taxpayers who both own and occupy their homes and qualify for Social Security benefits. But the way the law is structured, the credit is not automatic and won't be uniformly implemented statewide.

Instead, the governing body in each of Missouri's 114 counties, plus St. Louis City, will individually decide whether to authorize the credit locally, meaning some probably will while others won't. Since the law doesn't take effect until Aug. 28, most counties likely will defer action until after that time. However, some local officials have pushed for pre-emptive implementation, including in St. Louis County where the county council voted 4-3 on July 18 to reject establishing the credit.

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### PARSON SIGNS 31 BILLS INTO LAW IN SUDDEN FLURRY OF ACTIVITY

Forgoing the standard practice of acting on recently passed legislation over the course several of weeks, Gov. Mike Parson signed [31 bills](#) into law on July 6. Of the 40 measures, excluding appropriations bills, lawmakers sent the governor during the 2023 legislative session, which ended in May, Parson had signed just eight prior to his sudden flurry of activity, when he also vetoed one bill.

One measure that will impact taxes is [Senate Bill 398](#) **requiring sales taxes on motor vehicles to be collected by the dealer** at the point of sale instead of at the time the vehicle is licensed with the state. Because the taxes can run into the thousands of dollars, many car buyers find they can't afford to pay, prompting them to avoid licensing the vehicle and instead drive illegally on expired temporary tags, sometimes for years. Collecting the tax upfront will allow it to be rolled into the purchaser's car loan and ensure local governments and the state promptly get the tax revenue due to them.

Parson also signed omnibus public safety legislation, [Senate Bill 186](#), that increases minimum training requirements for law enforcement officers, expands the grounds for which the state may discipline officers, increase the fees the Missouri State Highway Patrol can charge for records, authorize state taxpayers to fund the pension system for county sheriffs and

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## HIGH COURT RULES AGAINST AG IN ABORTION RIGHTS INITIATIVE CASE

The [Missouri Supreme Court](#) on July 20 unanimously ruled **Attorney General Bailey has no legal authority** to delay circulation of an initiative effort seeking to put a proposed constitutional amendment protecting abortion rights on the November 2024 statewide ballot by refusing to certify fiscal estimates prepared by the state auditor. The court issued its ruling just two days after hearing arguments in the case.

The high court ordered Bailey to follow the circuit court's directive to immediately certify the fiscal estimate and allow the Secretary of State's Office to complete the final steps necessary to approve the abortion rights petitions for circulation – something that was supposed to have happened no later than May 1. The case is *State of Missouri ex rel. Dr. Anna Fitz-James v. Andrew Bailey, et al.*

## SUPREME COURT CONSIDERS ONE COVID CASE AS ANOTHER ENDS

While the Missouri Supreme Court considers whether [local governments](#) can intervene to appeal a case the state's **former attorney general invoked to try to intimidate them into dropping COVID-19 restrictions during the pandemic**, the current attorney general has opted not to appeal a related ruling that his predecessor had no legal authority to order local school districts to end their contagious disease mitigation efforts.

In late 2021, a Cole County judge invalidated several Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services regulations authorizing local officials to respond to public health emergencies. Not only did then-Attorney General Eric Schmitt refuse to appeal the ruling contrary to the department's wishes, he then falsely claimed the decision also invalidated any and all coronavirus restrictions, including those based on state laws not challenged in the case.

increase pay scales for Kansas City police, among many other provisions. In addition, the bill makes permanent a state law allowing St. Louis public safety workers to reside outside of the city that was to expire this year.

## GOVERNOR'S LONE VETO STRIKES OMNIBUS PUBLIC SAFETY BILL

Gov. Mike Parson on July 6 vetoed a wide-ranging omnibus public safety bill, **expressing disapproval of provisions that sought to modify state laws governing expungement of criminal records and significantly increase financial compensation for those who served prison time because of wrongful convictions.** It was the only entire bill that lawmakers passed during the 2023 legislative session to fall to a veto, although Parson also issued a large number of line-item spending vetoes to the various bills that make up the state budget.

Although most of [Senate Bill 189](#)'s provisions survived in other legislation the governor signed into law, several that enjoyed strong bipartisan support did not. Those included provisions to create a statewide unit to review possible wrongful convictions, strengthen legal penalties for negligently engaging in celebratory gunfire and expand compensation for those who served prison time for crimes they didn't commit.

However, one controversial provision that won't become law sought to make a felony to harm a police dog, without regard to whether someone was acting in self-defense in response to an unjustified or illegal attack ordered by the animal's handler. Democrats have strongly opposed such legislation for years and in past sessions many majority Republicans have joined them in voting it down when it was considered as stand-alone legislation.

## FY 2023 ENDS WITH NET GR COLLECTIONS UP 2.7 PERCENT FOR YEAR

### **EX-LAWMAKER TO LEAD DIVISION OF ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO CONTROL**

Gov. Mike Parson on July 17 appointed former state lawmaker Mike Leara to lead the Missouri Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Control, which oversees state regulation and taxation of alcohol and tobacco. Leara began serving immediately but the state Senate must confirm his appointment when it reconvenes next year in order for him to remain in the post. The division is part of the Missouri Department of Public Safety.

Leara represented part of south St. Louis County in the Missouri House of Representatives from 2009-2017. After Leara left the House due to term limits, Parson appointed him chairman of the Missouri Gaming Commission in August 2019, a position he continued to hold until stepping down to become ATC supervisor.

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The [2023 state fiscal year](#) ended June 30 with net state general revenue collections for the year up 2.7 percent over FY 2022, having gone from \$12.88 billion last year to \$13.23 billion this year. However, collections had been up 5.3 percent through the first 11 months of FY 2023 compared to the same period in FY 2022.

The slower end to the fiscal year resulted from a sharp decline in revenue collections in June 2023, which dropped 17.1 percent compared to June 2022, going from \$1.47 billion last year to \$1.22 billion this year. The decline for June was driven by a 25.8 percent reduction in revenue from individual income taxes as the state continues to feel the impact of a substantial cut to the standard income tax rate that took effect in January.

Despite tax cuts eating into revenue growth during the second half of FY 2023, Missouri began FY 2024 on July 1 with an overall budget surplus of \$7.8 billion, including \$5.7 billion in general revenue. Even with so much leftover revenue in the treasury, Gov. Mike Parson recently vetoed \$555.3 billion in spending authority approved by lawmakers for FY 2024 since the ongoing tax cuts are expected to eat into the surplus over the next few years.

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## **Kansas City Residents**

## PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

# PUBLIC HEARINGS

## FIRST DISTRICT



**Thursday, Aug. 24**  
**6 - 8 p.m.**

KCPD North Patrol  
11000 NW Prairie View Rd

**Monday, Sept. 11**  
**6 - 8 p.m.**

Shoal Creek Golf Course  
8905 Shoal Creek Pkwy

[KCMO.GOV/PIAC](https://kcmo.gov/piac)



### PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PIAC) MEETINGS

Join newly-elected First District\* Council Members Kevin O'Neill and Nathan Willett for public hearings to share community improvement suggestions.

#### Eligible Requests:

- stormwater drainage/flooding
- bridges
- public property improvements
- street/roadway improvements
- municipal building improvements
- community centers
- street lighting and traffic lights
- sidewalks, curbs, and gutters
- park facility improvements
- monuments and fountains
- ball fields and swimming pools

If you are unsure about the eligibility of your request, feel free to reach out to the PIAC Office to inquire:

[piac@kcmo.org](mailto:piac@kcmo.org)  
(816) 513-1062

**LEARN MORE**

\*To find out which council district you're in, [click here](#) and scroll down to the map that takes effect Aug. 1, 2023.

## Health and Wellness

**FREE  
SPORTS  
PHYSICALS**

- Must live in Platte County.
- Uninsured or Medicaid.
- If a new patient, must present proof of income and residency.
- Must complete MSHAA form: <https://tinyurl.com/mr4abjp9>.
- Available Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Call 816.858.2412 to make an appointment.

**PLATTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

We are once again offering free sports physicals for Platte County residents who are uninsured or on Medicaid. Appointments are offered until August on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. To make an appointment, call 816.858.2412.



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