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## CAPITOL REPORT

December 22, 2023



The Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission (MMPEC) wrapped up 2023 with our final quarterly meeting in St. Louis.

**Hello All,**

I hope this email finds you and your loved ones merry and bright! As the year comes to an end, I've been busy here in the 14th District meeting with voters as well as Northland and Kansas City organizations and stakeholders about this upcoming legislative session.

**If you haven't filled out your Legislative Survey, the last day to do so online is Sunday, December 31. [Click here](#) to fill it out now.** (See below for more information.)

This will be my last Capitol Report of 2023. The 2024 session begins January 3, so expect to hear from me weekly again beginning the first week of January! Thanks for checking in. Please don't hesitate to reach out if there's anything I can do for you.

Happy Holidays,



**Representative Ashley Aune**  
District 14 | (573) 751-3618

## Legislative Update

### **GOP TO AGAIN TRY TO MAKE AMENDING STATE CONSTITUTION HARDER**

In the wake of voters in strongly Republican Ohio enshrining abortion rights in their state constitution earlier this month, GOP lawmakers in Missouri are expected to take a final desperate shot next year at making it significantly harder to amend the Missouri Constitution in an effort to avoid a similar outcome here.

Reproductive rights supporters in Missouri are working on an initiative petition to put a proposed constitutional amendment on the November 2024 ballot guaranteeing access to abortion, birth control and other reproductive health services. Abortion rights opponents are hoping the Republican-controlled General Assembly can put a separate proposed amendment on the August 2024 ballot to require supermajority voter approval to ratify future constitutional changes, instead of the traditional simple majority threshold.

It is a tactic that failed to block voters from constitutionally protecting abortion rights in Ohio. That state's Republican-dominated legislature put a measure on this year's August ballot asking voters to raise the ratification threshold for future amendments to 60 percent of votes cast in an attempt to thwart November's abortion rights vote. The August measure failed resoundingly with 56.9 percent of voters opposed, while the abortion rights measure went on to pass easily with 56.6 percent in support.

### **SUPREME COURT STRIKES DOWN LAW CRIMINALIZING HOMELESS**

A unanimous [Missouri Supreme Court](#) on Dec. 18 struck down a 2022 state law criminalizing camping or sleeping on state property and imposing other regulations on the homeless, ruling the wide-ranging omnibus bill it was a part of **violated a state constitutional requirement limiting bills to a single subject.**

As originally filed during the 2022 legislative session, [House Bill 1606](#) was limited to modifying laws on county government financial statements. By the time of its final passage, lawmakers expanded it to about 20 different provisions loosely relating to "political subdivisions."

Rather than severing the unconstitutional portions of the bill and preserving the rest, the court struck down HB 1606 in its entirety.

Because the court struck down the provisions targeting the homeless on procedural, rather than substantive, grounds, the **Republican-controlled General Assembly could attempt** to re-enact them as stand-alone legislation during the 2024 legislative session, which begins Jan. 3. The case is *Jonathan Byrd, et al., v. State of Missouri*.

### **PARSON SIGNALS POSSIBLE CLEMENCY FOR CONVICTED KC COP**

Gov. Mike Parson signaled possible support for pardoning the **only Kansas City police officer ever found guilty of killing a Black**

## **BOMBASTIC GOP SENATOR BLASTS MESSAGE OF POLITICAL CIVILITY**

In a stark example of a message not getting through to the people who most need to hear it, state Sen. Bill Eigel of Weldon Spring blasted Missouri Gov. Mike Parson on Nov. 15 for teaming up with Democratic Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly on an ad campaign promoting political civility.

In the low-key ad, Parson and Kelly urge people to “disagree better” as the 2024 election cycle gets underway. The bombastic and hard-right Eigel subsequently took to Twitter, now officially known as X, to call Parson “a joke” for being “worried about being nice” and falsely accusing Democrats of perpetrating a litany of evils.

In September, Eigel, who is seeking the Republican nomination for governor next year promised, if elected, to conduct book burnings on the lawn of the Governor’s Mansion to stamp out ideas he disagrees with. His comments resulted in widespread condemnation.

## **AG SUES JACKSON COUNTY OVER PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS**

Missouri Attorney General Andrew Bailey sued Jackson County on Dec. 18, claiming county officials failed to follow state law during the most recent property tax reassessment cycle, resulting in unjustified higher taxes on county property owners. As of Dec. 21, the county hadn’t yet filed a response to the lawsuit.

Bailey’s lawsuit, which is joined by the State Tax Commission, alleges county officials failed to give timely and proper notice of assessments, didn’t perform mandatory physical inspections of certain properties and improperly handled the process for appealing assessments.

The alleged overassessment resulted in an increased tax burden on affected property

**person** when he criticized Jackson County Prosecutor Jean Peters Baker’s handling of the case in comments during a Nov. 15 radio interview, [The Kansas City Star reported.](#)

Rumors have been swirling since June that Parson might pardon former KCPD detective Eric DeValkenaere, who is currently serving a six-year prison sentence for involuntary manslaughter and armed criminal action. DeValkenaere fatally shot Cameron Lamb, a 26-year-old father of three, on Dec. 3, 2019, as Lamb was parking his truck in a garage behind his house. The trial judge in the case determined DeValkenaere, who was investigating alleged traffic violations, was **illegally present** on Lamb’s property at the time of the shooting and had **no legitimate cause for using deadly force.**

As with the first inklings over the summer about possible clemency for DeValkenaere, Parson’s latest comments sparked a negative reaction from Black community leaders and others in Kansas City, who have urged the governor to stay out of the case and allow justice to prevail.

## **MOSERS BOARD VOTES TO PHASE-OUT INVESTMENTS IN CHINA**

The Missouri State Employees Retirement System Board of Trustees voted 9-2 on Dec. 12 to divest approximately \$190 million in investments in Chinese stocks and securities over the next three years, the [St. Louis Post-Dispatch](#) reported.

State Treasurer Vivek Malek, a Republican and member of the MOSERS board, has been pushing for the system to divest Chinese holdings and campaigning on the issue as he seeks a full term next year in a

owners, the lawsuit claims. Bailey is asking the court to invalidate all assessment increases that exceed 15 percent. The case is State ex rel. Attorney General Andrew Bailey and State Tax Commission v. Jackson County, et al.

crowded Republican primary against veteran GOP officeholders.

MOSERS administers the pensions of most state workers and manages the investments that help fund benefits.

According to the [Missouri Independent](#), state Sen. John Rizzo, D-Independence and one of MOSERS board members opposed to the plan, accused Malek of advocating for divestment solely for political benefit and noted the system's professional investment managers predicted financial losses should the board follow through.

Malek denied being motivated by political concerns and said withdrawing investments from China is a sound decision due to the country's economic problems and growing aggressiveness to U.S. interests.

## District 14 Legislative Survey

*The* MISSOURI HOUSE *of* REPRESENTATIVES

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**2023** LEGISLATIVE SURVEY  
REPRESENTATIVE ASHLEY AUNE

**Residents of the 14th District should have received a legislative survey in their mailbox last month.**

One of the most important aspects of my job is understanding your views on the many issues facing our community and state. Because I'm unable to speak to every constituent personally, this survey is one of the most effective ways for me to learn more about your stances on potential legislation.

[CLICK HERE](#) to save money on a stamp and provide your responses online

## Community Events



## EARLY LITERACY MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

Early Literacy Music and Movement encourages the development of early literacy skills through music, instrument play, and big body movement. This Music and Movement program is a very active session, so make sure to put on your dancing shoes!

- Wednesday, January 3, 2024
- 10:15am - 10:45pm
- [Green Hills Community Storytime Room](#)

### Age Group

3 and up

## Health and Wellness

**OASH** | Office on Women's Health

# Know the Numbers:

**Women, Blood Pressure, and Heart Disease**

High blood pressure affects nearly half of the women in the US, which includes **1 in every 5 women** of reproductive age.

**NWBPAW**  
NATIONAL WOMEN'S BLOOD PRESSURE AWARENESS WEEK

womenshealth.gov/nwbpaw

#NWBPAW

## MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND SENIOR SERVICES

♥ Know the numbers: high blood pressure affects nearly half of the women in the US, which includes 1 in every 5 women of reproductive age. Let's understand your blood pressure numbers!

🔗 <https://bit.ly/3PHeOCt>

Our Wisewoman program can also help women who qualify get access to heart disease and stroke prevention screenings, as well as heart health education. Learn more at [Health.Mo.Gov/wisewoman!](https://www.health.mo.gov/wisewoman/)

## Resources

### CONSTITUENT SERVICES

- [Apply for Medicaid](#)
- [Unclaimed Property](#)
- [IRS Free File: Do your Taxes for Free](#)
- [Missouri Housing Resources](#)
- [Report a Road Concern](#)

### HEALTH SERVICES

- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#)
- [Trans Lifeline](#)
- [The Eldercare Locator](#)
- [Opioid Treatment Program Directory](#)
- [Place Your Order for Free At-Home COVID-19 Tests](#)

### FOOD PANTRIES

- [Northland Assistance Center](#)
- [St. James Lutheran Church](#)

### WEATHER SHELTERS

- [Cooling Centers](#)
- [Crisis Cold Weather Shelters](#)

### PLATTE COUNTY LIBRARIES

- [Green Hills Library Center](#)
- [Parkville](#)
- [Riverside](#)

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