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## CAPITOL REPORT

February 13, 2024



Hello All,

**HOW ABOUT THOSE CHIEFS!?!?! It's been such an exciting few days as we continue celebrating ANOTHER Super Bowl win here in Kansas City! If you're interested in attending the parade and/or rally, [here's all the info you'll need](#). I'll see you there!**

**Last week I was thrilled to present [HB2402](#) to the Emerging Issues Committee.** This bill allows a judge to finalize a divorce or grant a legal separation even if one partner is pregnant. The hearing went really well—the bill had zero opposition in person or online. I look forward to continue working on this legislation, and getting it to the Governor's desk for a signature.

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

Take Care,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ashley'.

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

# Legislative Update

## SENATE BLOCKS RAPE, INCEST EXCEPTIONS TO STATE'S ABORTION BAN

The Republican-controlled Missouri Senate on Feb. 7 rejected Democratic efforts to create exceptions for cases of rape or incest to the state's strict law banning abortion. However, the chamber failed to advance the underlying bill that seeks to prohibit Planned Parenthood clinics in the state from participating in Missouri's Medicaid program.

Because abortion is illegal in Missouri in nearly all instances, the local Planned Parenthood clinics do not perform them and instead **provide a variety of other women's health services** for which they are entitled to receive Medicaid reimbursements. However, since Planned Parenthood locations in other states do provide abortions, Republican lawmakers have unsuccessfully sought for years to keep any state funding from going to the organization.

[Senate Bill 1168](#) would prohibit health care providers from receiving Medicaid reimbursements if they are affiliated with an out-of-state abortion provider. Democrats attempted to add amendments to the bill to allow abortions in Missouri in cases of rape or incest, but majority Republicans voted them down. After several hours of debate, the Senate couldn't overcome a Democratic filibuster and set aside the bill without taking a final vote. **However, it could return to the measure later.**

## HOUSE APPROVES THREE NEW CHILD CARE TAX CREDIT PROGRAMS

The Missouri House of Representatives on Feb. 6 voted 113-39 to send legislation to the Senate creating three new tax credit programs to help reduce Missourians child care costs. While support for the bill was bipartisan, **only Republicans voted against**

## HOUSE PANEL APPROVES EFFORT TO OVERRIDE COURT RULINGS ON FEES

The House Pensions Committee on Feb. 6 voted 8-0 in favor of a proposed constitutional amendment that seeks to circumvent Missouri Supreme Court precedent holding that surcharges imposed on court cases violate the open courts provision of the state constitution unless the revenue is used for judicial operations. The measure can now advance to the full House of Representatives for debate.

[House Joint Resolution 92](#) would ask voters to amend the open courts provision to authorize court surcharges raising revenue for salaries and benefits for current and retired county sheriffs and prosecuting attorneys. While state Supreme Court precedent has prohibited levying court fees for non-judicial purposes for about 40 years, HJR 92 was specifically prompted by a 2021 decision striking down a \$3 surcharge on traffic offenses to provide funding for the Missouri Sheriff's Retirement System.

## CHIEF JUSTICE SEEKS BETTER MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR DEFENDANTS

Missouri Supreme Court Chief Justice Mary Rhodes Russell on Feb. 7 asked state lawmakers to **increase state funding for mental health programs for defendants jailed** while awaiting trial. Russell made her comments during the 50<sup>th</sup> annual [State of the Judiciary Address](#) before a joint session of the General Assembly.

Russell also discussed the benefit of pretrial diversion programs for defendants who aren't jailed but require assistance with mental health issues. In addition, she asked for increased legislative support for improving mental health services and security in

the bill.

juvenile detention centers.

One program would allow taxpayers to claim a credit equal to 75 percent of a verified contribution to a child care provider. Another would grant employers who pay for child care for their employees a credit equal to up to 30 percent of its employer withholding tax. The final program would allow child care providers to claim tax credits on their employer withholding tax and offset up to 30 percent of their capital improvement costs with credits. The legislation is [House Bill 1488](#).

## Missourians For Constitutional Freedom



### MISSOURI COALITION LAUNCHES PETITION TO RESTORE REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

Missourians for Constitutional Freedom is a statewide coalition working to restore the right to reproductive health care in the state. In order to do so, the coalition needs to collect 172,000 valid signatures by May 5, 2024. To help donate, volunteer and sign the petition, [click here](#).

Since the 2022 trigger ban, **Missouri does not allow for abortions, including in cases of rape and incest.** As a consequence, women with pregnancy complications are being turned away or having their care delayed because physicians fear legal prosecution. Republicans have vowed to make it harder for Missourians to amend the constitution through the initiative petition process. In recent elections, Missouri voters have used the process to pass minimum wage increase, Medicaid expansion, and marijuana legalization, which all have been opposed by the Republican Party.

## Community Events



### SONGS OF THE BLACK PIONEERS

Hear original songs from storyteller Brother John. His performance will explore the remarkable contributions of African American pioneers such as astronaut Dr. Mae Jemison, champion bicycle racer Marshall "Major" Thomas, and more.

- Saturday, February 24, 2024
- 10:30 am - 11:30 am
- Green Hills Community Room 1 and 2

[Click here to register](#)



# Health and Wellness

Lead can be found throughout a child's environment.



Homes built before 1978 (when lead-based paints were banned) probably contain lead-based paint.



When the paint peels and cracks, it makes lead dust. Children can be poisoned when they swallow or breathe in lead dust.



Certain water pipes may contain lead.



Lead can be found in some products such as toys and toy jewelry.



Lead is sometimes in candies imported from other countries or traditional home remedies.



Certain jobs and hobbies involve working with lead-based products, like stain glass work, and may cause parents to bring lead into the home.

## PLATTE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Children can be exposed to lead where they live, learn and play. No safe blood lead level (BLL) in children has been identified and even low levels of lead in blood are associated with developmental delays, difficulty learning and behavioral issues.

The effects of lead poisoning can be permanent and disabling. Children under six can be tested for lead by calling us at 816.858.2412.

# 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 DISTRIBUTION

- [Northland Assistance Center](#)
- [St. James Lutheran Church](#)
- [Platte County Health Department](#)

## WEATHER SHELTERS

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

## PLATTE COUNTY LIBRARIES

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