



CAPITOL REPORT
DALE WRIGHT
DISTRICT 116
MISSOURI HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES



COMMITTEES

January 14, 2022

*CONSENT & HOUSE PROCEDURES
*CORRECTIONS AND
PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS
*HEALTH & MENTAL HEALTH
*PENSIONS

Dear Friends,

Missouri House Committee Approves Congressional Redistricting Map (HB 2117)

As required by our state constitution, legislation that establishes new boundaries for Missouri's eight congressional districts is one step closer to consideration on the House floor. The Missouri House Special Committee on Redistricting gave its stamp of approval to **HB 2117** Wednesday, January 12 during a public hearing in the State Capitol.

The map approved by the committee was created with input from legislators representing their constituents, public testimony from citizens across the state of Missouri, and 2020 census data.

The map created in **HB 2117** contains compact and contiguous districts as required by our constitution while also keeping communities of interest and like-mindedness together. The Census data provided a clear picture of Missouri's population. That information along with testimony obtained in committee was used to create a map that accurately reflects our state and our congressional districts.

The bipartisan process used in the committee allowed members from both parties to have input on the new district boundaries. The committee met a final time this past Wednesday to consider an alternate map proposed by the minority leader of the House, however, the committee chose not to use that map.

State Representatives and Missourians from all parts of the state made their voices heard on this bill before it moved forward. The bill fairly and accurately represents our districts and should receive strong support on the House floor when it comes to us on Tuesday, January 18. It must first receive approval from the House Rules committee before moving to the full House floor for discussion.

The current version of the map can be viewed at the following link:
<https://house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills221/maps/Map.4875H.02C.pdf>

House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee Considers Bills Designed to Ensure Appropriate Curriculum in Schools (HB 1995 and HB 1474)

The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee held a public hearing this past week to consider pieces of legislation designed to give parents more control over what their children learn as well as prevent inappropriate curriculum from being taught to them in our schools.

Committee members took testimony on **HB 1995**, which establishes a Parents' Bill of Rights for Student Well-Being. The legislation requires school districts to adopt a policy to promote parental involvement, including procedures for objection to instructional materials. The bill requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop specific forms that school districts must use for parents to opt their children out of instructional material and for parents to be notified in advance whenever a

teacher intends to teach a divisive or controversial topic. The bill sends a very clear message that the state of Missouri will always take the side of parents.

The bill also establishes the Missouri Education Transparency and Accountability Portal to give access to each school district's curriculum and source and professional development materials.

During the hearing, the committee also heard testimony on **HB 1474**. This bill also creates a Parents' Bill of Rights but has additional language that specifically prohibits the instruction of Critical Race Theory in public and charter schools.

The bill prohibits public school districts, charter schools, and their personnel from teaching, using, or providing such curriculum or from teaching, affirming, or promoting any of the claims, views, or opinions found in the 1619 Project, which is a collection of essays on race. The bill does not allow curriculum that identifies people or groups of people, entities, or institutions in the United States as inherently, immutably, or systemically sexist, racist, biased, privileged, or oppressed.

The bill is the result of legions of parents being concerned that their children aren't being taught a full, accurate picture of our nation's history.

The bill in no way tries to stop students from thinking for themselves, however, it is intended to prevent educators and institutions from flooding our children with certain trains of thought by teaching them theirs is the only way to think about these situations." The committee completed the public hearing on both bills but has yet to bring them up for a vote.

Finding the Best Environment for Children in Need (HB 1563)

Members of the House Emerging Issues Committee heard testimony this past week on legislation that requires the state to put much more effort into placing children in state custody with family members before placing them with strangers. The state must do more to find family members who would be a good fit for each child.

The purpose of the bill is to find the best match for every child in a home that provides that child with the safest and healthiest place to live. The overriding issue is what is going to be best for the child by keeping children and families together rather than separating families.

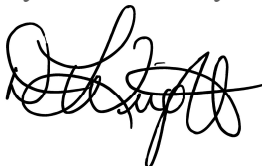
House Bill 1563 requires the Missouri Children's Division to make "diligent searches" for biological parents when a child enters state custody. In the case of an emergency placement, the division will search for grandparents. If that is not possible the division would then look for other relatives for placement within 30 days.

The Central Missouri Foster Care and Adoption Association helped find family members for 34 children in state care in the last two quarters of the last fiscal year. The program is called 30 Days to Family. They're typically able to find at least 80 relatives or more. Their average last year was 115 relatives found within 30 days!

The committee has completed the public hearing on the bill but has yet to put it to a vote.

State of the State Address - Next week also marks the annual State of the State address from Governor Mike Parson. He is scheduled to deliver his remarks on Wednesday, January 19, 2022 at 3 p.m. in the House Chambers. Each year, the Governor's office streams the speech live on the governor's website, governor.mo.gov, or you may also watch live from our own House feed on house.mo.gov.

My best to all of you!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. L. ...', written in a cursive style.