



CAPITOL REPORT
DALE WRIGHT
DISTRICT 116
MISSOURI HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES



COMMITTEES

- *CONSENT & HOUSE PROCEDURES
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March 4, 2022

Dear Friends,

The Missouri House Passed Resolution to Support Ukraine (HR 3658)

Members of the Missouri House approved a resolution to express our support for Ukraine and its people, and to condemn Russia's attack on the sovereign nation.

The resolution calls Russia's invasion "unprovoked and unjustified" and notes it is the "largest invasion of a sovereign nation in Europe since World War II." The resolution also notes the combat is directly responsible for massive civilian casualties, including a Russian mortar attack on a children's hospital that inflicted devastating loss of life.

HR 3658 condemns the attack in the strongest possible terms and strongly endorses swift and severe economic sanctions and stringent export controls on Russia. Additionally, the resolution urges Russia to "immediately cease its violent, illegal, and immoral assault upon 40 Ukraine, end the needless bloodshed, and return to diplomacy and the rules-based 41 international order that has ensured peace and prosperity for so many." The resolution also recommends to the President and Congress to reaffirm the unwavering support of the United States for Ukraine's freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

House Majority Floor Leader Dean Plocher also announced the "Missouri Stands with Ukraine" initiative, **HB 2913**, in response to the Russian invasion of the sovereign nation and unprovoked aggression perpetrated by Vladimir Putin on the people of Ukraine.

HB 2913 targets business transactions with Russia and Russian entities. I along with other state representatives joined with Lt. Governor Mike Kehoe at a news conference and asked all Missouri retailers to consider voluntarily removing Russian-made or Russian-branded products from store shelves, and encouraged Missouri businesses to identify suitable product alternatives through the State's "Buy Missouri" program.

This past week, Governor Parson ordered the Missouri State Capitol dome to shine blue and yellow, the colors of the Ukrainian national flag, beginning at sunset March 1, 2022, until sunrise on Friday, March 4, 2022.



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Strengthening the Second Amendment Rights of Missouri Citizens (HB 1462)

The House gave initial approval to legislation that expands and strengthens the rights of law-abiding gun owners in Missouri.

The bill allows a concealed carry permit holder to lawfully carry firearms on public transportation. It also allows anyone with a permit to carry a firearm while traveling by bus. The bill will not apply to Amtrak property or any partnership in which Amtrak engages.

Added to the bill was Blair's Law which is meant to criminalize what's known as "celebratory gunfire." It's named for Blair Shanahan Lane, who was struck in the neck by a bullet fired from more than a half-mile away.

Another amendment added to the bill removes the prohibition of the carrying firearms in churches and other places of worship by a person with a valid concealed carry permit.

The bill now needs a final vote in the House before heading to the Senate.

House Gives Initial Approval to Workforce Diploma Program (HB 2325)

This past week the House gave preliminary approval to legislation that helps thousands of Missourians who do not have a high school degree. The bill establishes the Workforce Diploma Program under the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The program is designed to assist Missourians in obtaining a high school diploma and developing employability and career technical skills. There are currently more than 445,000 adults in the state who don't have a diploma.

Under the program, the department contracts with providers that administer the program. The bill also had an amendment added requiring students in public and charter schools to complete the

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) before being eligible for a certificate of graduation. Students in Missouri missed out on approximately \$9 million in aid last year because they didn't fill out an application for federal student aid. The provision includes an exemption for a student's enlistment in the Armed Forces.

Finally, another amendment was added that establishes the Extended Learning Opportunities Act that allows students to discover, develop, and apply their talents to areas of interest that could help them realize their full potential and become an asset in the marketplace of today's employment opportunities.

The bill must now receive final approval in the House before moving to the Senate.

House Passed a Bill to Address Substitute Teacher Shortage (HB 2304)

Members of the Missouri House took action to address the substitute teacher shortage that is causing major problems for schools around the state. The House gave first-round approval to legislation to create opportunities to increase the number of substitutes that are available to schools.

Our schools are having a very difficult time acquiring substitute teachers. This bill opens up the lane for substitute teachers to make it as wide as possible.”

HB 2304 will provide a four year certificate for individuals who want to substitute teach. Applicants must complete a background check and also have at least 36 college hours or have completed a 20 hour online training. The bill also requires individuals to have a high school diploma or equivalence. It provides an alternative route to certification for qualified individuals with technical or business expertise or Armed Forces experience and a superintendent sponsorship. The bill requires another vote in the House before moving to the Senate.

VISITORS TO THE CAPITOL



I had the opportunity and the pleasure of visiting with Members of the MO Farm Bureau
Frank Wideman and Brian Koenig



Visiting with the various groups who come to the Capitol to discuss their concerns, their need for funding or to express their support or opposition to legislation that is being debated on the House Floor.

I had the privilege of meeting with Janet Akers-Montgomery of Farmington and Student Joe Oller during their Advocacy Day for Radiologic Technologists.

Pictured on the right is Director Theresa Keohn, Betty Gibson, Jessica Weber and Mikayla Thieme all associated with SE Missouri Department of Mental Health.

As your Representative, I am always available to meet with you either in person or by phone or email.



Thank you to all of you for making the trip to Jefferson City!

My best to all of you!