



CAPITOL REPORT

DALE WRIGHT

DISTRICT 116

MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 17, 2022



COMMITTEES

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



Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Collier of Farmington attending the Daughters of the American Revolution Event held at the State Capitol on March 15th. Mrs. Collier was presented with a certificate for her participation in the President General's Project Rise and Shine for America

Congratulations Mrs. Collier!

Dear Friends,

The Missouri House Sends “No Patient Left Alone Act” to Senate (HB 2116)

Before starting our annual Spring Break, House members approved legislation that eases restrictions on visitors in hospitals and nursing homes, which was experienced by families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Representatives who backed the proposal cited instances of Missourians going for days or more and even dying without loved ones being allowed to see them.

Called the “No Patient Left Alone Act,” **HB 2116** was the combination of four pieces of legislation. The bill will require healthcare providers to allow a patient to list up to four people that could come visit them while they’re in a hospital and nursing homes.

The plan drew an impassioned speech from Representative Dean Plocher, our Majority Floor Leader, who spoke about his late father-in-law’s stay in a hospital that lasted more than 20 days before he passed away. During that time he was not allowed visitors. He said what happened to his father-in-law in the days before his death was not unique.

Health care facilities are allowed to set rules for visitation. This bill helps all Missourians and all of our loved ones. It is necessary and gives rights to those receiving care to have a visitor and an advocate by their side.

Supporters worked with health care industry representatives in creating a bill that would answer their concerns while not jeopardizing safety in health care facilities.

The bill specifies that a patient’s list of visitors would include a spouse, or parents or guardians in the case of a child. Facilities could still deny access to patients under specified circumstances including at the request of the patient or law enforcement; when a person has signs and symptoms of a transmissible infection; or when the attending physician believes the presence of visitors would be detrimental to the patient. The bill’s provisions do not grant visitors access to restricted areas like operating rooms or behavioral health units.

The bill is now in the Senate.

The House Approved a Measure to Create Prison Nurseries (HB 1897**)**

The Missouri House gave overwhelming bipartisan approval to a proposal to let women in prison have their babies with them. **HB 1897** would let incarcerated women in Missouri live with their infants for up to 18 months if they meet certain criteria.

Such programs in other states have been beneficial to mothers, children, and those states. Recidivism among participants has been minimal. Children have benefitted from bonding with their mothers and are less likely to enter foster care. States have saved money due to reduced recidivism and need for foster care, among other factors.

We all want to make Missouri a better place for our children. This bill makes Missouri a better place for our kids and had overwhelming bipartisan support as well as tremendous support in the communities which are most effected throughout the state.

If **HB 1897** becomes law the Department of Corrections will administer the nursery program and determine which women would be eligible to participate. Potential participants would be screened for mental health issues and could have no record of violent offenses or child abuse.

The House Moves to Keep Vehicle Property Tax Rates Low (HB 2694**)**

The House has given initial approval to a plan to lessen increases Missourians will see in their property taxes due to rising vehicle values.

The values of vehicles in the National Auto Dealers Association price guide have increased significantly. Existing state law requires assessors to use this guide to assess the values of Missourians’ cars.

As assessed values increase our constituents could see their personal property taxes increase on vehicles that are a year older and have more miles on them. This bill gives assessors the ability, in statute, to address it.

The State Tax Commission testified in favor of the bill when it was in House committee. State statute requires assessors to base vehicle values on NADA prices from each October. Some reports show vehicle sales prices year over year have increased as much as 40-percent. Assessors use average trade-in values and not sales values but those still cause significant increases for taxpayers.

Instead of being restricted to using October's NADA values, **HB 2694** allows assessors to use the trade-in value for a given vehicle from that edition or either of the last two years' October NADA guides.

Assessors will be expected to meet the guidelines they're required to meet and help the taxpayer. **HB 2694** allows assessors to make similar determinations of the assessed value of recreational vehicles and agricultural equipment, using values from the past two years, as those vehicles have seen similar increases in value. The House has perfected the bill. Another favorable vote will send it to the Senate.



My best to all of you,

Handwritten signature in black ink.