



CAPITOL REPORT

Dale Wright

**District 116
Missouri House of
Representatives**



COMMITTEES

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

April 15, 2022

Dear Friends,



Dear Constituents,

As the Easter weekend arrives, business here in the State Capitol has been long and steady. We have continued to work late night hours perfecting and passing bills from the House to send over to the Senate, and with 16 days left in session it is my hope that the Senate starts to move some bills and allow us in the end to have a very productive session. Finalizing the budget is still the top priority, and it will take up a significant amount of the time we have remaining.

Missouri House Approves Legislation to Create Parents' Bill of Rights (HB 1858)

Members of the Missouri House of Representatives approved legislation this past week that gives parents a greater say in the education of their children by giving first round approval to **HB 1858**, which creates the Parents' Bill of Rights Act of 2022.

The bill is meant to address the concerns of parents who want to know what is being taught to their children in the classroom at school. Some feel they are left with no recourse when school boards are not being responsive to their questions. In select situations parents are being ignored and not listened to. This bill is meant to empower parents so they can be engaged in their children's education. 11 states currently have similar laws outlining parental rights.

HB 1858 provides a list of rights that parents may require school districts to follow. Some of the parental rights outlined in the bill include the right to review curricula, books, and instructional materials; the right to visit school during school hours with restrictions; and the right to have sufficient accountability and transparency regarding school boards.

The bill also prohibits school districts from requiring nondisclosure agreements for a parent's review of curricula or individualized education program meetings. It restricts schools from collecting biometric data or other sensitive personal information about a minor child without obtaining parental consent. Additionally, it requires school board meetings dealing with curricula or general safety to take place in public and allow for public comments.

An amendment added during debate of the bill specifies that no school or school employee can compel a teacher or student to personally adopt or affirm ideas in violation of Title IV or Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964. This includes ideas such as individuals of any race, ethnicity, color, or national origin are inherently superior or inferior; or that individuals, by virtue of their race, ethnicity, color, or national origin, bear collective guilt and are inherently responsible for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, ethnicity, color, or national origin.

The bill guarantees that teachers and students will not be compelled to believe certain theories or ideas. Controversial subjects can be taught but students can't be forced to agree. People should not be forced to have collective guilt but they should also not have collective amnesia.

The bill also allows parents to file a civil lawsuit against a school district or school that violates the Parents' Bill of Rights.

Other provisions in the bill requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop an online database that provides access to every school district's curriculum and professional development materials. It requires the salaries of public school employees to be included in the state accountability portal. And it requires school boards to provide a time for an open forum at the beginning of each board meeting. Finally, it allows parents to bring civil action against school districts that violate the policy. The bill requires another vote in the House before moving to the Senate.

The House Announced Plans to Provide Economic Relief to Missourians (HB 3021)

Members of House discussed helping working Missourians afford the ever-increasing cost of living. **HB 3021** creates a one-time economic recovery tax credit for Missouri residents who paid personal income tax in the state in 2021.

The bill appropriates \$1 billion from the state's General Revenue Fund to provide a one-time economic recovery non-refundable tax credit. Under the plan, anyone filing an individual Missouri personal income tax return would receive up to a \$500 credit. Married couples filing jointly would receive up to a \$1,000 credit. The credit is limited to individuals who were a Missouri resident for the entire tax year.

As families struggle to make ends meet during this time of rising inflation this bill will help our citizens get back some of their hard-earned tax dollars. The state is fortunate this year to have a record surplus that we can use to provide direct economic relief to working Missourians.

The majority of House members do not support spending every available dollar to increase the size of government but instead we believe individual Missourians are the best decision makers on how to spend their own tax dollars. The bill received a public hearing in the House Budget Committee.

Bills Sent to the Senate

HB 1637 is a wide-ranging piece of legislation designed to prevent crime in Missouri. The intent of the bill is to clarify the law when a person commits the offense of mail theft by purposefully taking mail from another person's mailbox or premises without the consent of the addressee and with intent to deprive the addressee of the mail. The offense of mail theft would be a class A misdemeanor for a first offense and a class E felony for a second or subsequent offense. The bill ensures clarity and consistency in application of the law after Law enforcement pointed out inconsistencies and issues with current law unfortunately causes lots of these cases to go unprosecuted.

Some of the other provisions added to the bill creates a violent offender registry, establishes offenses related to teller machines, creates the offense of unlawfully gaining entry to a motor vehicle, creates the offense of unlawfully discharging a firearm, and takes steps to prevent abuse and neglect in nursing homes.

HB 1757 establishes the "State Building Usage Task Force". The duties of the Task Force will be to evaluate the conditions of all state government-owned and leased real properties, as well as the current funding received for maintaining each real property. Real properties owned and leased by public schools are excluded from the Task Force's evaluations. The bill will help identify vacant and underutilized buildings and encourage the sale or transfer of such properties.

HB 1860 changes the average unemployment rate requirements for insured worker to receive unemployment compensation benefits. At an unemployment rate of 3% or less, individuals could receive 8 weeks of benefits. Individuals could receive a maximum of 20 weeks of benefits if the unemployment rate is higher than 9%. Unemployment benefits decrease as jobs become more plentiful and benefit lengths are reduced when job opportunities remain high.

HB 2623 modifies provisions relating to required background checks of individuals employed by or associated with licensed residential care facilities, child placing agencies, or residential care facilities. Under current law, all owners, officers, managers, contractors, employees, and other support staff of licensed or certified medical marijuana facilities must submit fingerprints to the State Highway Patrol for state and federal criminal background checks. The Department of Health and Senior Services may require fingerprint submissions of owners, officers, managers, contractors, employees, and other support staff for licensure authorizing that person to own or work at a medical marijuana facility. The bill limits those individuals that must submit to such fingerprinting to employees, contractors, owners, and volunteers.

HB 1705 specifies that the State Highway Patrol must maintain on its website a registry for violent offenders who are on probation or parole for the offense of first or second degree murder in Missouri or for an equivalent offense in any other state. The bill adds to the Sex Offender Registry, a registry for people on parole for second degree murder. The people would come off the Registry once their parole is over. It does not mix the data. It is a separate column that can be

searched separately. The purpose is to allow the public to know who is on parole for second degree murder because there are times where that information would be very useful.

HB 2376 determines that the residency of children in state custody for the purpose of determining state and local funding shall be determined by the location of where the child resides. If a child resides in a residential treatment facility and is unable to attend the resident public school due to safety or behavioral concerns, and the residential facility provides the education for the child, the facility is entitled to at least 80% of all state money paid to the resident district on a per-pupil basis along with any addition funding provided through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Supporters say the bill helps foster children that for certain reasons cannot attend classes at a public school to receive educational services at their residential care facility. The bill also includes provisions dealing with gifted children, early learning quality assistance, neighborhood youth development programs, and child care facilities.

Visitors to the Capitol



FFA Chapter from Ste. Genevieve School District participating on the Advocacy Day at the Capitol for Future Farmers of America

FFA Advisor Hannah Fritsche-Donze

FFA Members - Dakotah Meadows, Etta Heller, Jillian Gegg and Kole Kramer

I enjoyed meeting and visiting with our future leaders in Agriculture!



**Outstanding Southeast Students representing their High Schools for the annual Sophomore Pilgrimage from students all across Missouri.
Isabelle DeWall from Farmington High School
Bryant Schwent from Ste. Genevieve High School
Hannah Staab from Valle Catholic High School
Our next future generation of Leaders!**



2022 Sophomore Pilgrimage to the Capitol on Monday, April 11.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs of Missouri sponsors the students selected by their teachers to represent their schools. Pictured above are the 33 students representing the districts from Southeast Missouri. Students from Southeast Missouri arrived Monday evening at the Capitol to visit with their Representative. On Tuesday, the 300+ students from all across the state were given tours of the Capitol, Governor's Mansion and the Supreme Court Building.

Congratulations on being selected to represent your school!

Wishing you and your families a Blessed and Happy Easter!