



**CAPITOL REPORT**  
**DALE WRIGHT**  
**DISTRICT 116**  
**MISSOURI HOUSE OF**  
**REPRESENTATIVES**



**COMMITTEES**

**April 1, 2022**

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



**View from my office of springtime at the Capitol**

**Missouri House Rejects Senate's Proposed Congressional Map ([HB 2117](#))**

Members of the Missouri House of Representatives have rejected a plan proposed by the Missouri Senate to draw Missouri's new congressional districts. By a vote of 129-26, the House voted down the Senate's map and then by a vote of 131-17 approved a motion requesting the Senate to meet in conference to discuss a compromise bill.

The vote comes more than two months after the House approved its plan for the map and sent the bill to the Senate. The Senate took nine weeks to develop their own map, which it then sent back to the House just days before candidate filing closed. This past Tuesday, the House voted on the Senate-proposed map, but members expressed concerns with the changes made by the Senate.

The version approved by the Senate was exceedingly different than what we in the House sent over. A couple of issues with the Senate's map was that it was not compact and contiguous as required by the Missouri constitution. When we in the House went through the committee process we made sure we minimized communities being dissected. The Senate map had numerous communities that were split in half, or more, that would not serve the citizens well. Because of these unconstitutional problems we determined Missourians would be best served for the House to go to conference with the Senate and try to get the best possible map for the state. Our goal was to respect communities of interest, which the House map does.

After the House approved a motion to have the Senate meet in conference to iron out our differences, the Senate refused the motion and requested that the House accept their version of **HB 2117** and pass it.

As the House contemplated the Senate's "take it or leave it" proposal we knew a "NO" vote did not mean by not adopting the Senate's version it would go directly to court. Our vote was not to go to court but rather to continue the negotiation process, to continue the discussion for the best possible map for the state of Missouri and not simply the best map we could vote out.

The House's action was a vote to continue the process and reach a compromise that will provide the best possible map for the state of Missouri and not serve the special interests of politicians looking for their next job. From the beginning of this process the House has worked in good faith with the Senate to create a map that is compact and contiguous, that preserves communities of interest, and ensures the conservative values of Missouri families will continue to have strong representation in our nation's capital. We will continue to work toward a compromise with our Senate colleagues so that we can pass a map that fairly and accurately reflects our state's values.

Both map versions give six likely seats to Republicans and two likely seats to Democrats. The House will now await the decision from the Senate to see if discussions will continue so the two chambers can reach a compromise.

**The original map approved by the House can be viewed at the following link:**

**<https://house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills221/maps/Map.4875H.02P.pdf>**

**The modified map approved by the Senate can be viewed at the following link:**

**<https://house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills221/maps/Map.4875S.05F.pdf>**

### **House Members Approve Legislation to Protect Life (**HB 2012**)**

House members once again took action to protect the lives of the innocent unborn. The House gave initial approval this week to a measure that contains several provisions to protect the sanctity and dignity of life.

**HB 2012** makes it a felony offense to use or donate fetal tissue from an abortion for any purpose other than to diagnose anomalies, determine paternity, or for law enforcement purposes. The bill also makes it a felony offense to hoard aborted human remains.

An amendment added to the bill during floor discussion would enact the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, which mandates that a child born alive during or after an abortion or attempted abortion will have the same rights, privileges, and immunities as any other person, citizen, and resident of Missouri, including any other live-born child.

Another amendment added to the bill makes it a felony offense to traffic abortion-inducing drugs. The measure would make it a class B felony if a person or entity knowingly imports, exports, distributes, delivers, manufactures, produces, prescribes, administers, or dispenses, or attempts to do so, any medicine, drug, or other means or substance to be used to induce an abortion on another person in violation of state or federal law. The provision makes it clear the woman using the drug cannot be prosecuted for trafficking.

Other provisions added to the bill ensures taxpayer funds do not go to abortion providers or their affiliates and clarifies that federal laws cannot affect the decisions made by the state to prevent funds from going to abortion providers. The bill also contains language to ensure victims of domestic or sexual assault cannot be sued by their perpetrators, or the perpetrator's family members, for violating provisions of the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.

The actions of the House build on measures approved in years past that were designed to reduce the number of abortions in the state. Figures released by the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services show that 151 abortions occurred in Missouri in 2021. That number is down significantly from 2019 when 1,471 abortions took place in the state. As recently as 2010, the state saw more than 6,000

abortion take place within its borders. The bill now requires another positive vote in the House before moving to the Senate.

**Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence (HB 1699)** The House voted to make several changes in state law meant to make victims of domestic violence safer. The bill seeks to plug some of the gaps in current laws that allow abusers to circumvent the system and continue to use the system actually to further abuse their victims.

A key provision of **HB 1699** specifies that a defendant in an abuse case will be considered to have been notified of an order of protection if they are notified in any reasonable way. In effect, this would make clear that orders of protection remain in place until otherwise ordered by a court.

Today when somebody files for an ex parte order and then a hearing is scheduled, the temporary order stays in effect until the hearing. If the abuser chooses not to show up in court and later pleads ignorance, they didn't know what went on in court, there have been some successful defenses to violating the order because of this so-called ignorance.

What this bill does is say that when you get served a temporary order, those provisions are going to remain in effect and they don't expire simply because the hearing is being held. Those protections go on and the individual can't plead ignorance.

Another measure in the bill allows victims in domestic violence cases to testify via video conference. Now domestic cases are often dismissed because victims refuse to testify. It's not because the victim doesn't want to be there. The truth of the matter is in many cases the victim is simply afraid to be in the same room. The victim does not want the abuser to know where they're going to be at a particular time, and so it's important that we give this person some kind of security if we possibly can.

**HB 1699** also specifies that courts cannot make a victim or their family reveal in court the victim's current address or workplace unless necessary. The bill also specifies that when a defendant is ordered to pay the victim's attorney fees, that order covers the entire proceeding; and that a person convicted of domestic assault who is ordered to attend a batterer-intervention program will be responsible for paying for that program. The bill received overwhelming bipartisan support in the House and now moves to the Senate for consideration.

### **Other Bills Sent to the Senate**

**HB 2005** specifies that any electrical corporation that proposes building a transmission line must provide a minimum 50% of its electrical load to Missouri consumers to be considered a public service and to be allowed to condemn property to construct the transmission. The provisions of the bill do not apply to electrical corporations operating under a cooperative business plan. The bill also specifies that in condemnation proceedings, just compensation for agricultural or horticultural land shall be 150% of fair market value, which will be determined by the court. This bill is a response to the land owners who are pleading with the legislature for help. The bill, "ensures utility projects in Missouri actually benefit the state of Missouri. It provides just compensation for land owners when their land is being taken from them and it's being condemned. It also incentivizes negotiations outside the court process.

**HB 1677** provides that beginning on March 1, 2024, and annually thereafter, a pharmacy benefits manager (PBM) utilized by the Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan shall file a report with the Plan for the immediately preceding calendar year regarding rebates, as defined in the bill. The report shall include: the aggregate dollar amount of rebates collected from pharmaceutical manufacturers; the aggregate dollar amount of the rebates that were not passed on to the Plan, and the aggregate dollar amount of all fees and payments received from pharmaceutical manufacturers. The bill will lower costs of prescription drugs for patients and increase transparency for the pricing practices of PBMs. The bill takes significant steps to restore balance in the health care system and ensure Missourians have sustainable access to medications and choice in where they receive pharmacy services.

**HB 1750** specifies that school districts and charter schools must adopt a community engagement policy based on community input that provides residents a method of communicating with the governing board of the school district or charter school. The policy creates a process for items related to educational

matters to be added to the board agenda. Supporters say school boards are too often unresponsive to the concerns of parents and that having an opportunity to directly communicate concerns and have action taken on those concerns is vitally important. This bill is designed to give people the opportunity to express concerns and that there should also be an initiative petition process to change policy not just have it added to an agenda. The bill includes additional provisions related to gifted children, substitute teacher certification, child abuse investigations, and the Extended Learning Opportunities Act.

**HB 2455** requires the Missouri Veterans Commission to review the provisions of the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019, and any related regulations. After review, the Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health, will provide recommendations and make efforts to adopt procedures, programs, treatment options, additional aid, and any other assistance deemed necessary by the Commission to assist in the efforts to prevent veteran suicide. Supporters say the bill brings awareness to the issue of mental health and attempts to bring an end to veteran suicide. Through the report, this bill will provide data on how to prevent veteran suicide.

### Visitors to the Capitol



**I had the pleasure of visiting with Mrs. Patty Wood, Past President of the MO Cattlemen's Association and her granddaughter Sela Follis. Sela was made an Honorary Page for the Day on March 30<sup>th</sup> in the House Chamber.**

My best to all of you!