

February 22, 2018

A blue banner for a 'Capitol Report'. On the left, a photo of Donna Pfautsch speaking at a microphone is overlaid on a background image of the Missouri State Capitol interior. Text on the banner identifies her as State Representative Donna Pfautsch, District 33, serving parts of Cass, Jackson, and Lafayette Counties. The title 'Capitol Report' is prominently displayed in large white letters. On the right, a list of committees is provided, along with the Missouri House of Representatives seal and her contact information.

**State Representative**  
**Donna Pfautsch**  
District 33  
Serving parts of Cass, Jackson and Lafayette Counties

**COMMITTEES**  
Chair, Consent and House Procedure  
Insurance Policy  
Health and Mental Health Policy  
Innovation and Technology

**MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Friends,

It's been a busy week with crazy weather in Jefferson City. I hope all was safe and warm back home.

### **Scholarships for Young Women**

The Women Legislators of Missouri are encouraging young women set to graduate from high school to apply for a \$500 college scholarship. Each year the group selects one student from each of Missouri's congressional districts to receive the award. This is a great opportunity for any young woman who is interested in continuing her educational career to receive some valuable financial assistance. The Women Legislators of Missouri Caucus created the senior scholarship program to provide financial assistance to students on the basis of leadership, academics and community service. I'm proud to be a past president of this organization.

### **House Gives Initial Approval to Legislation to Criminalize "Revenge Porn" (HB 1558)**

The House of Representatives gave first-round approval to legislation that would make it a felony to disseminate private sexual images without the consent of the person in the image. Often referred to as nonconsensual pornography or "revenge porn," the offense occurs when an individual sends or posts sexually explicit photos or videos of someone without their permission even if they were originally taken with consent.

The legislation approved this week would make it a class D felony. An amendment added to the bill would make it a class E felony for instances where an individual threatens to disseminate private sexual images. Another amendment added during debate on the bill would give victims of revenge porn the ability to seek civil action in addition to criminal charges.

Supporters note that an overwhelming majority of self-produced, sexually-explicit images are stolen, which makes this sort of legislation necessary. They point out that human traffickers sometimes use these types of images and their dissemination as blackmail. If the bill is

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signed into law, Missouri would join 38 other states that have outlawed revenge porn. The bill requires another vote in the House before moving to the Missouri Senate.

### **Lawmakers Pass Bill to Legalize Industrial Hemp (HB 2034)**

The House approved a bill that would legalize the growing of industrial hemp in Missouri. Supporters say the bill would help promote industrial hemp as an agricultural commodity. Missouri was one of the largest producers of industrial hemp in the nation before it became illegal.

Hemp is a variety of the *Cannabis sativa* plant with a low concentration of THC, which is the psychoactive component found in marijuana. It can be used in a wide range of products, including fibers, textiles, paper, construction and insulation materials, cosmetic products, animal feed, food, and beverages. It is used in more than 25,000 products spanning nine markets: agriculture, textiles, recycling, automotive, furniture, food/nutrition/beverages, paper, construction materials and personal care. According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, at least 34 states have passed legislation related to industrial hemp.

### **House Approves Legislation to Help First-Time Home Buyers (HB 1796)**

House members gave approval this week to legislation that would make it easier for Missourians to save money to buy their first home. The bill would establish the First-Time Home Buyer Savings Account Act and authorize a tax deduction for contributions to a savings account dedicated to buying a first home.

The bill would authorize an individual income tax deduction for 50 percent of the contributions to the account. It would have an annual contribution deduction limit of \$1,600 per taxpayer. The bill specifies the maximum contribution limit for all tax years would be \$20,000 and the maximum total amount in the savings account would be \$30,000. The bill would define a first-time home buyer as an individual who has never owned a single-family, owner-occupied primary residence including a condominium or manufactured home, or a divorced individual who has not been listed on a property title for at least three years.

The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration. If passed into law, the act would go into effect January 1, 2019.

### **Raising the Marriage Age to Protect Young People (HB 1630)**

As part of their effort to fight human trafficking in Missouri, lawmakers this week approved legislation that would prohibit marriages for children under the age of 15, and raise the minimum age for marriage with parental consent to 17. Missouri currently has a minimum age of 18 to obtain a marriage license without parental consent. Young people age 15 to 17 can receive a license with parental consent. Individuals of any age also have the option to get married without consent if they successfully petition the court to obtain a license.

The legislation approved by the House would raise the age requirement to 17. Young people under the age of 17 who want to be married would need to obtain a court order that verifies the marriage is advisable and there is no evidence of coercion or abuse of either party entering the marriage. The bill also would strictly prohibit any marriage where either party is under the age of 15, and would ensure no marriage license is issued to any person 21 years of age or older if the other party to the marriage is less than 17 years of age. The bill now heads to the Senate for debate.

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## House Members to Honor Missouri's Vietnam Veterans

In anticipation of the state's annual Vietnam Veterans Day on March 29, House members are encouraging veterans throughout the state to come forward to receive recognition for their service. As part of the annual celebration, Vietnam veterans will be honored at the State Capitol in the House Chamber by the Speaker of the House and the members of the House of Representatives. Each veteran will also receive an official House Resolution in honor of the service they provided to the nation. If you would like to participate, please contact my office at 573-751-9766 or [donna.pfautsch@house.mo.gov](mailto:donna.pfautsch@house.mo.gov).

Vietnam Veterans Day was created by the General Assembly with the passage of HB 1128 in 2012. The day, which is scheduled for March 29, is meant to recognize the courage and patriotism of those who served during the Vietnam Conflict. During the day, Missourians are encouraged to hold events, activities, and remembrances in honor of the veterans who bravely fought, served, and sacrificed during the Vietnam Conflict and returned home to no parades, ceremonies, or public celebrations to welcome them in gratitude for their courageous service given and sacrifices made on behalf of our nation.

## Other Bills Moving to the Senate

**HB 1940** would establish the "Cronkite New Voices Act," which provides that in both public high schools and public institutions of higher education a student journalist has the right to exercise freedom of speech and of the press in school-sponsored media. Supporters say current law permits school administrators to unduly restrict student journalist expression. The bill would grant additional protection to ensure student journalists are free to learn and practice responsible journalism.

**HB 1710** would change the law relating to recognizing licenses to practice occupations or professions issued by other states. The bill would remove barriers to people practicing their professions.

**HB 1598** concerns the validity of pre-need contracts or other arrangements made in advance to provide for the disposition of a body after death. The bill would help consumers by ensuring that existing pre-need contracts are enforced.

**HB 1650** would specify how a health savings account may be created. The bill would allow employers to close HSAs if employees do not take employment with the employer and the HSA has only cents in it. Additionally, supporters say it is important to have exceptions to the no-contest clause because there are times when trustees intentionally do not do what is required of them and they know they are protected if someone tries to challenge the conduct. There are 34 other states that already provide this sort of protection.

**HB 1329** would specify that employees of a soil and water conservation district shall be eligible for membership in the Missouri local government employees' retirement system. The bill would allow employees of soil and water conservation districts to be able to become members of the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System for retirement benefits. The change is designed to help in recruiting and retaining employees.

**HB 2044** would allow a metropolitan planning organization to be considered a political subdivision for purposes of the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System. The bill would allow employees of metropolitan planning organizations to be able to become members of the Missouri Local Government Employees' Retirement System for retirement

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**HB 1371** would require any school district with a state-approved gifted education program to have a process that allows parents or guardians to appeal a determination that their child does not qualify for gifted services. Different districts have varying criteria for qualification for gifted education. Students may move from a district in which they qualify to a district in which they do not. Supporters say an appeals process would help resolve such problems.

**HB 1421** would require each school district to establish a policy on acceleration and districts with gifted education programs to establish appeal procedures. Studies show that acceleration is a highly cost-effective intervention which well document long-term performance or potential for advanced performance; and social and emotional readiness for acceleration.

**HB 1455** would require high schools and public institutions of higher education to provide information related to careers and salaries to students. The bill would provide high school and college students with necessary information for the student to be aware of career opportunities and trends, and the costs and value of obtaining a credential or other skill through higher education.

**HB 1606** would provide a high school equivalency certificate applicant with the opportunity to voluntarily submit his or her contact information for the purposes of evaluating college and career placement rates of certificate applicants. People applying for high school equivalency are overwhelmingly in poverty. This bill would remove cost as a barrier to taking the test the first time.

**HB 1291** would change the classification from second to first of certain counties exempt from the requirement that not less than 25% of a county's special road and bridge tax collected in a municipality within the county must be expended within the municipality for the repair and improvement of existing roads, streets, and bridges. The county classification has changed so it is necessary to amend the statute in order for the exemption to still apply to the affected counties.

**HB 1858** would require the Department of Revenue to feature a map of all special taxing districts on its website. Special taxing districts are driving sales tax rates up to almost 12 percent in St. Louis. The bill would allow taxpayers to see where the taxing districts are, where the rates overlap, and what the rates are in a shopping area.

**HB 1608** would specify that legislative research will compare the actual fiscal note of all bills Truly Agreed and Finally Passed by the General Assembly with the final fiscal note provided prior to passage. The bill would provide more accountability by requiring fiscal impact reports post-passage. Pre-passage fiscal notes must be compared against actual outcomes.

**HB 1247** would designate November as Diabetes Awareness Month in Missouri. Prevalence of diabetes in Missouri is above the national average with over 650,000 Missourians having the disease. This bill would bring awareness to the disease and promote lifestyle changes that may help stop or delay onset of diabetes.

**HB 1349** would designate July 7 as Missouri Sliced Bread Day. Supporters say the bill would recognize the first sale of commercially sliced bread, which occurred in Chillicothe on July 7, 1928. By commemorating this historical event each year, it would draw more tourists to northern Missouri and boost the economy.

**HB 1355** would allow retired police officers to return to work when a disaster or emergency has been proclaimed by the governor or there is a national disaster. In times of national emergency or when the governor declares a state emergency, the bill would allow retirees to come back and volunteer at their departments as long as the retirees are up to date with their firearms training.

**HB 1375** would designate June 27 of each year as Post Traumatic Stress Awareness Day in Missouri. The bill would bring awareness to post traumatic stress, which can be caused by many traumatic events.

**HB 1552** would require spouses of members of the active duty component of the Armed Forces to be given first priority in the processing of all professional licensure applications. The bill would help military families that are transferred to Missouri. They are often transferred on short notice. By reducing the time period a spouse of an active duty service member has to wait to receive his or her professional license, the bill would remove barriers to employment.

**HB 1351** would specify that a responsive pleading must be filed in any motion to modify a child support, spousal maintenance, or child custody judgment. Requiring responsive pleadings in motions to modify is necessary because those responsive pleadings help keep people up to date on what is happening with the lawsuit.

**HB 1597** would authorize the next-of-kin of a deceased person to delegate control of the final disposition of the remains. The bill would help when next-of-kin are away, such as being out of the country or in the military. The next-of-kin could delegate a person to handle the decision on how to dispose of the remains. It is important to keep the notice requirement as simple as possible because there are people spread out around the world who might have claims, so it would be difficult to have to notify someone in person.

**HB 1663** would allow school districts to establish comprehensive school counseling programs.

**HB 1676** would require school bus drivers who are 70 or older to complete the CDL Skills Test and the Driving Test on an annual basis. The bill would not modify any safety-related standard. It would remove detailed engineering and mechanical information from a test for bus drivers who are not allowed to do maintenance on school buses.

**HB 1905** would establish a procedure for the removal and disposal of abandoned aircraft on airport property. The bill would allow the removal of an abandoned aircraft in a manner similar to cars.

**HB 1300** would require boat title and registration fees collected annually in excess of one million dollars to be deposited in the Water Patrol Division Fund. The bill would provide increased funding for the Water Patrol Division of the State Highway Patrol. Currently, the General Revenue Fund must supplement the fund if not enough funds are available. The fund is projected to have a deficit in fiscal years 2018, 2019 and 2020.

**HB 1572** would modify provisions relating to driver's licenses for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. The bill would help police officers be aware that they are dealing with a deaf or hard-of-hearing individual at traffic stops.

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**HB 1887** would prohibit a property owners' association from preventing a property owner from placing political signs on his or her property. The bill would enact rules similar to existing First Amendment doctrine by prohibiting a complete ban on political signage by homeowners' associations, but allowing reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions for such signs.

**HB 1366** would authorize school boards to contract with municipalities to transport high school children. The contract would require the presence of an adult supervisor approved by the school board on any municipal vehicle transporting school children. While transporting school children, municipal vehicles would include seating designated solely for school children. The bill would allow school districts to save money on student transportation costs, and make more efficient use of municipal public transit systems.

**HB 1998** would create guidelines for reviewing the comprehensive state energy plan. The bill would ensure the state energy plan is reviewed every two years, and that review is critical to evaluating Missouri's energy resources.

As always it's an honor to serve the 33rd District.

Warmest regards,

Donna