

March 1, 2018



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

Capitol Report

COMMITTEES
Chair, Consent and House Procedure
Insurance Policy
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Friends,

Construction started this week on the Missouri Capitol restoration project, which set the stage for a very busy week both inside and outside the building. The \$28.6 million construction project is funded by bonds approved in 2014. After more than 100 years of wear and tear, the exterior façade and substructure of the historic Capitol have suffered significant deterioration. This project will extend the life of the building as well as improve the overall appearance, structural stability and water shedding capacity of the building so it can continue to be enjoyed by generations to come.

We have now reached the deadline for filing new bills, more than 2,000 of which have been filed in the House alone. We continue to research, debate, and communicate with each other to determine which pieces of legislation should move forward and which ones need more attention.

House Speaker Forms Investigative Committee (HR 5565)

The Missouri House created a committee that will investigate the charge on which Gov. Eric Greitens has been indicted. This week the members of the House gave unanimous, bipartisan support to a resolution that outlines the investigative process and the powers the committee to conduct the investigation.

The Special Committee on Oversight will begin its work immediately. As the committee investigates, the Speaker made it clear the House will continue its work as normal

As Chairman Jay Barnes said, “This committee’s task is going to be to investigate facts. We’re going to do so in a way that is fair, thorough, and timely, and we’re going to do it without any preordained results. We are going to be asking questions of witnesses on both sides and hope to have a process with full involvement from everyone involved in this matter.”

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House Sends Pro-Life Bill to Senate (HB 1383)

The Missouri House has voted to require the notification of both parents when a minor in Missouri seeks to have an abortion. The House gave final approval to the bill this week and sent it to the Senate.

The legislation would require that a parent or guardian giving consent for a minor to have an abortion notify any other custodial parent or guardian in writing before the minor gives her consent. It would not apply in an emergency or for custodial parents or guardians that have been found guilty of certain crimes, are listed on the sex offender registry, are the subject of an order of protection, have had parental rights terminated, or for whom the whereabouts are not known.

Missouri law now requires that a minor seeking an abortion and one parent or guardian of that minor give written consent before the procedure can be performed.

House Moves to Continue Support for Pregnancy Resource Centers and Maternity Homes (HBs 1288, 1377 & 2050)

House members gave their approval this week to legislation that would continue and expand support for pregnancy resource centers and maternity homes in Missouri. The bill would extend the sunset for tax credits that help encourage investment in these programs that benefit many of Missouri's most vulnerable citizens.

Under current law, the tax credit for donations to maternity homes is set to expire June 30, 2020. The tax credit for donations to pregnancy resource centers expires December 31, 2019. The legislation approved by the House would extend the sunset for both credits to 2024.

The bill will increase the maximum amount of each credit that is available annually. Currently there are \$2.5 million in credits available each year for pregnancy resource centers, and \$2.5 million in credits each year for maternity homes. The bill approved by the House would increase the cap on each credit to \$3.5 million annually. Each credit requires a minimum contribution of \$100, of which 50 percent is tax-credit-eligible. Donors can claim up to a \$50,000 credit per tax year.

Pregnancy resource centers offer an alternative to abortion by providing free assistance to women with crisis or unplanned pregnancies to assist them in carrying their pregnancies to term. Maternity homes provide shelter for homeless, pregnant women and their children. Both provide additional services including counseling, parenting skills, education, and job assistance.

The bill also extends the Champion for Children Tax Credit for child advocacy centers until 2025. Additionally, it reauthorizes the Donated Food Tax Credit until 2026 and expands the credit to include food or cash donated to local soup kitchens or homeless shelters.

The bill now moves to the Senate for consideration.

House Sends "Revenge Porn" Bill to Senate (HB 1558)

The Missouri House gave overwhelming bipartisan support to legislation that would criminalize what is often called "revenge porn," which involves sharing or threatening to share private sexual images of a person without that person's consent. Such sharing often happens by the uploading of those images to the Internet.

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The legislation would make such sharing of images a felony punishable by up to seven years in prison and would make threatening to share them a felony carrying up to four years in prison. The bill covers photographs, videos, digital recordings, and other depictions. In addition to creating the crime of “nonconsensual dissemination of private sexual images,” the bill would allow victims to file civil suits against those accused of the crime. If the bill is signed into law, Missouri would join 38 other states that have outlawed revenge porn. The bill now moves to the Missouri Senate for discussion.

Other Bills Moving to the Senate

HB 1268 would allow the Missouri Dental Board to issue dental faculty permits to individuals who are employed by accredited dental schools, colleges, or programs in Missouri. The bill would allow qualified dental instructors to teach dentistry without having to go through the extensive and difficult procedure necessary to get a license to practice dentistry.

HB 1809 would add Franklin County in eastern Missouri to the compact between Missouri and Illinois creating the Bi-State Development Agency and the Bi-State Metropolitan Development District. The bill would allow greater economic development opportunities for Franklin County.

HB 1464 would authorize telephone companies to elect to have their tangible personal property assessed in accordance with a depreciation schedule. The bill would create a level playing field for the tax treatment of telecommunications companies, some of which were regulated under older, utility-based standards that should not apply to deregulated markets.

HB 1873 would specify that the court may require any person found guilty of chasing, pursuing, taking, transporting, killing, processing, or disposing of certain wildlife in violation of the Missouri Conservation Commission's rules and regulations to make restitution to the state.

HB 1428 would allow the county commission of non-charter counties to appoint persons to vacated county elected offices. The bill would help to avoid situations where a vacancy causes a county office to shut down.

HB 1896 would adopt the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact in order to regulate the day-to-day practice of telepsychology by psychologists across state boundaries. The bill would increase public access to these services, which would help underserved or geographically isolated populations.

HB 1607 would extend from December 31, 2018, to December 31, 2023, the \$.50 fee that is collected on the retail sale of a lead-acid battery as well as the fees for any hazardous waste generated. The fee was established in 2005 to allow citizens to help fund the Hazardous Waste Program.

HB 1928 would establish guidelines for the future regulation of occupations and professions within the State of Missouri. The bill is to ensure that all future professional regulations be based on fact and only imposed when necessary to protect the general welfare.

HB 1945 would change the laws regarding the confiscation of animals. The bill would require a speedy disposition hearing to determine if an owner is liable for animal abuse or neglect and will save money. Often animal owners forfeit their rights to the animals because they cannot pay the bond or the costs associated with the legal challenge.

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Legislators Participate in Annual STEM Day

Students and education supporters once again made the trip to the State Capitol to observe the state's annual STEM Day. The day is meant to emphasize the important role STEM education (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) plays in the state's economy and the opportunities it provides to students. Many of the students in attendance were introduced on the House floor in recognition of their advocacy for STEM education.

Hosted each year by the Missouri Chamber Foundation's Mathematics and Science Coalition, the day is highlighted by various hands-on technology displays and booths that showcase the various school and student science projects and activities. The event also featured an F-18 flight simulator and saw students compete for the Capitol Cup in the First Lego League Robotics Challenge.



What a treat it was to host some of Harrisonville McEowen Elementary School's gifted students at the Capitol. It was an honor to introduce them on the House Floor and have them made Honorary Pages for the Day. From left to right: Quincy Carter with mom Alexa; Keller Johnson with mom Natalie; Benjamin Wooten with mom Paula; and Audrey Coffey with mom Laura.

We hosted several other groups this week, including representative with the Missouri Department of Corrections, the Missouri Humanities Council, the Missouri Recovery Network, the Missouri State Chiropractors, the Missouri

Community Action Agency, the National Association of Social Workers, the University of Missouri System, the Missouri Math and Science Coalition for Oral Health, Gifted Education groups, Missouri CASA, the Missouri Bar Association, the Missouri Grocers Association, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association, and the Missouri Farm Bureau.

As a reminder, you can always go to house.mo.gov to check the status of any bill. Please don't hesitate to contact me by phone or email to share your thoughts and opinions.

Warm regards,

Donna