



# Legislative Update

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## CLEAN MISSOURI AND ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

The Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions & Ethics Committee voted to approve HCS/HJRs 48, 46 & 47 (Plocher) on May 7. The joint resolution was reported to the floor on May 8 and will be placed on the Senate calendar. HJR 48 could be brought up for final approval at any time before the session ends on May 17.

HJR 48 would significantly undermine the newly approved redistributing reforms approved by voters in Constitutional Amendment 1, also known as CLEAN Missouri. If approved by voters, the HJR 48 would eliminate the nonpartisan state demographer and move partisan fairness and competitiveness to the lowest priority in the redistricting process. The House also added language that may shift the basis of redistricting away from total population, as is currently the practice in all 50 states. The Association strongly opposes HJR 48.

**ACTION NEEDED - PLEASE CALL, WRITE OR USE THE LINK BELOW** to send an e-mail to urge your State Senator and State Representative to oppose any attempts to undermine the anti-gerrymandering rules in Missouri's constitution. The message can be edited, and your message will have GREATER IMPACT if you add your own comments.

<https://actionnetwork.org/letters/keep-missouri-clean>

## BUDGET APPROVED

The House cancelled the scheduled budget conference on HB 3 (Smith) on May 9. The House then voted to defeat the first conference committee report because the report took the Senate position to remove language on immigrant student tuition. House and Senate conferees eventually signed a second conference report that contains the House language forcing public colleges and universities to charge the higher, international tuition rate for resident students who are not in lawful immigration status.

The final versions of HB 2 (K-12 education budget) and HB 3 (higher education budget) were finally approved later in the evening and prior to the deadline of 6 p.m. on May 10. For K-12 education funding, HB 2 increases basic formula funding by \$61.4M. This is estimated to fully fund the formula next school year. HB 2 increases pupil transportation by \$5M, but state funding for that program will remain around 15% of allowable cost. For higher education funding, HB 3 includes \$143.6M in core aid to community colleges. HB 3 also provides a \$1M core increase for each of the public four-year institutions, except for a \$10M increase for Missouri State University and a \$10M increase for the UM System medicine program.

## **SENATE DEBATES EDUCATION BILL**

The Senate debated SS/SCS/HCS/HB 604 (Henderson) on May 9, but did not bring the bill to a vote. The original HB 604 authorizes appropriations to fund consultants that would help support instructional improvements in a set of schools identified by DESE for improvement. The SS adds the provisions of HB 485 (Dogan) to create modified accreditation standards for special school districts. The SS also includes an addition to the districts for which the Commissioner is required to authorize pupil transportation hardship if listed criteria are met.

Before laying the bill over, the Senate approved several amendments:

SA 1 (Cunningham) to add HB 161 (Knight) limiting school term start date to no earlier than fourteen days prior to Labor Day and to add SB 478 (Holsman) regarding forgiveness for excess inclement weather days during this school year.

SA 2 (Arthur) to add her SB 205 to allow needs-based A+ Schools scholarships to cover dual credit or dual enrollment for qualifying high school students.

SA 3 (Arthur) to add her SB 206 regarding school district bid requirements. The bill raises the threshold for existing construction bidding requirements to apply to projects costing more than \$50,000.

SA 4 (Schupp) to add SB 475 (Cunningham) to require DESE to make a school funding formula adjustment to compensate for loss of school revenues due to the 2018 legislation reducing the financial institutions tax (FIT).

SA 5 (Luetkemeyer) to add HB 462 (Shields) to create a program of teacher externships.

SA 6 (Schupp) to create the Holocaust Education and Awareness Commission.

## **HOUSE PASSES WORKFORCE SCHOLARSHIPS**

The House approved SB 68 (Hough) on May 9. The House approved an amendment that adds the provisions of HCS/HB 225 (Swan) to create a new scholarship program to encourage adults to go back and complete college. The bill refers to the new scholarship as the Fast-Track Workforce Incentive Grant. Recipients must be at least 25 years of age with income under \$80,000 per year for a couple or \$40,000 for an individual. Scholarships last up to four semesters or until the student gets a bachelor's degree or other workplace credential.

The amendment also included a state tax incentive for a large manufacturing entity. This language is designed to create a state tax incentive of up to \$50M for General Motors to invest at least \$750M to create a new manufacturing plant in the state.

## **SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS**

The House added many amendments to SB 147 (Sater) regarding motor vehicles. In particular, the House adopted HA 12 (Mayhew) to require state safety standards to allow school buses to display school logos, mottos or mascots. HA 12 was also amended to limit the skills tests requirements on school districts when acting as third-party testers of school bus drivers. The Senate refused to adopt the House amendments, and the bill is now in conference.

## **MINING ROYALTY FUNDS**

The House approved SB 202 (Romine) on May 8. The bill provides that fifty percent of mining royalties from federal lands in the state shall be distributed to the public schools of the county. The original bill provided for distribution based upon school attendance. The House adopted HA 3 (Dinkins) to distribute half of the school funds based on attendance and half based on the amount of federal lands in the district. The Senate refused to adopt the House amendments, and the bill is now in conference.

## **HOUSE PASSES SCHOOL RETIREMENT BILL**

The House gave final approval to SB 17 (Romine) on May 6 after adopting several House amendments. The Senate refused to adopt the House amendments, and the bill is now in conference.

SB 17 is similar to HB 77 (Black) and restores the 550-hour limit for PSRS retirees employed as community college teachers. HB 77 has already been passed by the legislature and signed into law on April 16, 2019. The House added the provisions of HB 563 (Wiemann) to clarify that certain state entities may participate in MOSERS, the provisions of HB 723 (Pike) regarding PSRS pension pop-up after divorce and an additional provision regarding pensions for public safety officers.

## **JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

The committee met on May 6 and elected Rep. Dean Dohrman as Chair and Sen. Gary Romine as Co-Chair. The committee heard a report from the Department of Higher Education regarding designation of educational programs in response to high industry need based on the proposed new Fast Track scholarship program. The committee also heard a report from DESE regarding administration and implementation of Missouri computer science learning standards.

The committee also discussed possible interim projects, including options for greater flexibility in core course requirements for four-year degree programs in STEM fields and studies on the role of parental involvement in educational success, including the effects of high expectations, school involvement and career advisement from parents.

## **EDUCATION TASK FORCE**

The House gave final approval to HCS/HB 744 (Riggs) on May 6. The bill creates the 21st Century Missouri Education Task Force. The mission of the task force is to study Missouri's public education system, standardized testing, effective teaching strategies, workforce development efforts, and the sufficiency of current funding for K-12 and higher education and plan for sufficient future funding. The Task Force will make recommendations to the legislature. The Association supports the bill.

## **BACKGROUND CHECK BILL PASSES**

The House voted to accept the Senate position on SS/HB 694 (Anderson) on May 6. The bill revises employer access to the federal and state background check resources known as the RAP Back program. The bill is now Truly Agreed and Finally Passed (TAFP) and will be reprinted in final form and sent to Governor Parson for his signature.

## SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The committee met on May 7 to hear two bills:

HB 112 (Sommer) to require a district to establish a gifted education program if three percent or more are identified as gifted. The Association believes that gifted and talented students need a challenging curriculum and a program that identifies and supports their unique needs. The Association supports the bill.

HCS/HB 456 (Neely) regarding a high school diploma endorsement in the subjects of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The HCS creates an advisory committee that is tasked with making recommendations for standards for such a STEM diploma endorsement.

The committee voted to approve three bills on May 7:

HCS/HB 281 & HB 570 (Kelley) to allow school districts to implement alternative methods of instruction to avoid make-up days. The Association supports the bill.

SCS/HCS#2/HB 462 (Shields) to create certified teacher externships. The SCS clarifies the role of school administrators and board members in approving and supervising the externships. The Association supports the bill.

SCS/HCS/HB 739 (Miller) to modify provisions relating to preventing sexual misconduct in schools. The bill requires school districts to check with prior school employers regarding employee conduct. The bill contains language to ensure that any determination of an employee violation of board policy referenced in the bill would be made after the opportunity for a due process hearing. The bill also requires districts to perform background checks on school volunteers who have contact with students. The bill also expands the application of the child abuse law to apply to abuse of students by school personnel, contractors and volunteers even if occurring outside of regular school hours or off school grounds if the relationship began in the school setting. The SCS revises the language requiring an employing district to contact the preceding school employer for relevant information regarding the employee.

### Legislative Update 2019

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