

THE
WATCHDAWG
REPORT

Missouri General Assembly

During the legislative session, there are always a few bills that raise red flags with Conservatives and get attention and analysis from their inception. This is a very good thing. Important examples are bills associated with schools, water supply, and changes to the Missouri Constitution.

However, while we are all occupied with the discussions about the bills that get the attention of the experts (and thank God for them), any number of laws are passed that we do not look at and discuss. People want to trust their Legislators and just go about their lives without having to take the time to watch over their work. If you still think that's sufficient effort on the part of citizens, please wake up.

The house.mo.gov and senate.mo.gov web pages give you all the information you need to know about what your legislators are really doing (and not doing). You are the boss, and these are the employee's progress reports. Take the time to learn how to use these websites to manage your government. They are not difficult. Just like anything else it takes a bit of practice. You will be amazed at what you will learn once you start poking around.

There are quite a variety of bills that have moved from the State House to the State Senate in the current session. These are the bills that have been perfected in the House and have been sent to the Senate for consideration. I recommend you look through the list for yourself. Read the "Bill Summary" of those that interest you.



Camden County Voters

Have you filed for your Camden County real estate tax credit yet? All applications must be in before the end of June 2024.

To qualify to cap your 2024 Real Estate taxes to match the 2023 tax amount:

- your Camden County property must be your primary residence
- you must be 62 or older
- your Real Estate (Property) tax must be paid up to date.

Go to the Assessor's office at 50 Roofner St, Camdenton MO with your photo ID and your most recent paid receipt for Real Estate Tax. They will help you with the form and notarize it for you.

When I filed, I had to also show my marriage certificate because the property deed was in my previous name. The Assessor's office was helpful in resolving the issue. This is a new process for everyone.

If you need a ride to the Assessor's office to file, let me know at 660-238-6514 (leave a message) or email me at contact@watchdawgreport.com. We will help you with a ride.

To read Missouri General Assembly Bill Summaries for yourself:

Open the House website at house.mo.gov.

Click on the button that says “Legislation”

At the bottom of the menu on the left, click on “Bills Third Read in the House.” Scroll through the list and note the bill topics that are of interest to you. Beware that all descriptions may not fully explain the entire bill.

Click on the Bill number, and at the top of the page the highlighted tab tells you where the bill is in the process. I focus on those that have the “Sent to Senate” tab highlighted showing the bill has been perfected in the House and sent to the Senate. Once you determine the bill is at the “Sent to Senate” stage, look on the right side of the page for the link to the Bill Summary, and choose the “Perfected” version. Click on the link to see the complete Bill Summary.

For example, I looked at HB2385 and learned that the percentage of value for personal property assessment may go from 33 1/3% to 31%. We may eliminate Corporate Income Tax over the next three years under HB2274. My Spidey senses rose up over HB2628 which seems a well-intentioned effort to suppress fake media offerings...but the slippery slope of freedom of speech violations and government intervention should always be considered.

Bills originating in the Senate are the most likely to be passed by the General Assembly. To see bills in progress in the Senate, go to senate.mo.gov. Click on “Legislation.” The fifth bulleted item on the left is, “Bill Status Reports.” Click on that to go to the page with the heading “Bills Currently at a Specific Status.” The column on the left represents the stages a bill goes through once originated in the Senate. The column on the right is the most valuable, as it will show bills that have been perfected by the Senate and are moving through the House process. The reports listed top to bottom show the progression of the bill through the approval process. If you start at the bottom, and check each to see what bills are the furthest along you will know which bills are most likely in the hands of your legislators for a vote. For example, if you click on the link to “House Bills Senate Third Read and Passed.” you will see HB2634 listed. This is the bill that prevents public funding going to abortion providers. There is a note from 4/17/2024 stating the bill is on the “House Bills with Senate Amendments” calendar. The next report above is “Senate Bills Third Read by House.” There are no bills listed in this report. Above that, is “Senate Bills on House Third Reading Calendar.”

This report shows:

SB 727 - **Koenig** - Creates and modifies provisions relating to elementary and secondary education

4/17/2024 - H Informal Calendar Senate Bills for Third Reading

SB 895 - **Trent** - Modifies provisions relating to landlord-tenant actions, including eviction proceeding moratoriums and filings for transfers of real property with outstanding collectible judgments

4/17/2024 - H Calendar Senate Bills for Third Reading

SCR 23 - Schroer - Disapproves and suspends the final order of rulemaking for the proposed amendment to 5 CSR 20-100.230 regarding the Virtual Instruction Program

4/17/2024 - H Calendar Senate Concurrent Resolutions for Third Reading

SJR 74 - Coleman - Modifies provisions relating to constitutional amendments

4/17/2024 - H Calendar Senate Joint Resolutions for Third Reading

The next report up is “Senate Bills on House Consent Calendar” with one fairly useless bill about naming a highway.

As you check each report moving up the page, you will see that the next one with information listed is “Senate Bills Reported Do Pass in the House”

SB 1298 - Bean - Modifies provisions relating to cotton trailers

4/11/2024 - Reported Do Pass H Agriculture Policy

SCR 22 - Carter - Modifies the statewide mission of Missouri Southern State University

4/16/2024 - Reported Do Pass H Higher Education

SJR 71 - Black - Provides for the levying of certain costs and fees to support the salaries and benefits of sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, and circuit attorneys

4/15/2024 - Reported Do Pass H Rules - Administrative Oversight

If you move on up to “Senate Bills in House Committees’ you will see a long list of bills, including SB1363 which makes it law that if the county sheriff is unable to serve the county coroner takes over as sheriff...isn’t that interesting. We have an appointed Medical Examiner here, so maybe it falls to the next in line of command in the Sheriff’s office...I hope so!

Here is an example of action to take based on the report about HB2634, the bill that prevents public funding going to abortion . From the report, we know the bill that is currently on the floor at the State House of Representatives. The Bill Summary for HB2634 says: “As specified in this bill, no public funds shall be expended to any abortion facility, or affiliate thereof, including for MO HealthNet reimbursement.” Excellent! But how would we know if we did not check on the website to carefully monitor the work being done? There is more to read about this bill that cannot be fit into a newsletter. Please check it out, then send a note in favor of the bill to Rep. Lisa Thomas and Sen. Mike Bernskoetter. Their contact information is available on the house.mo.gov and senate.mo.gov websites

Imagine a world where our legislators are focused on what we care about. That happens when citizens take the time to be involved and actively guide them. You do not have to be a large campaign donor to be recognized...but you do have to put forth time and effort to be the squeaky wheel. It is a grand idea for the squeaky wheels to join together and become a giant, noisy wheel of power. One of the worst things COVID did was make us afraid to gather. That was the intention, I think.

We know we have to pay more attention than ever before, and that means monitoring the work by the legislators...including the ones from other districts. Use your research to formulate communication with your Representative or Senator. Send a copy to like-minded friends who may also want to send the message to their legislator or show support for your communication. You must consistently communicate with your Representative and Senator at both the state and national levels if you expect them to ever listen to you. Please take the time required to be involved, because leaving them to their own devices is how we got to the mess we have today. Face Book Posts do not help. Emails and phone calls to your legislators do. If you subscribe to the free Watchdawg Report email, you already receive information and guidance on communications with our Legislators at the State and National level. Thank you for your action!

HB2385 is an example of one that deserves a positive message to your Legislators. The Bill Summary is short. It reads: "Currently, no county or city can regulate the amount of rent for certain residential or commercial rental property. This bill specifies that no county or city shall enact, maintain, or enforce any ordinance or resolution that prohibits landlords from refusing to lease or rent certain residential or commercial property to a person because the person's source of income includes aid from a federal housing assistance program. The bill specifies that no city or county may enact an ordinance that: (1) Prohibits landlords from using income-qualifying methods to determine whether to rent or lease a property to a prospective tenant; (2) Prohibits landlords from requesting tenant criminal records; (3) Limits the amount of security deposit required from a tenant; or (4) Requires tenants to automatically receive the right of first refusal." This bill preserves and protects property owner rights. That is a good thing in my opinion. Here is another opportunity to send your legislators a note in favor of a bill you support.

Wouldn't it be amazing if we had a "Book Club" that instead of discussing the latest novel we reviewed and discussed pending legislation to better understand how it may affect our lives? Maybe include discussion of current Conservative books and podcasts. I learned at the Republican Caucus that there are very bright people in this county that are paying attention to preserving freedom. I wish we could facilitate the types of discussion that occurred at the March 2nd Republican caucus on a regular basis. Is anyone interested in hosting America First Conservative "Book Club" meetings or discussion groups in your area? Perhaps at your favorite local restaurant?

Local Petitions

PLEASE DO NOT sign any of the petitions that are being circulated through the area. Those charming youngsters are paid to gather signatures that will lead to altering the Missouri Constitution to our detriment. **DECLINE TO SIGN** to preserve our Constitution and tell your Representative and Senator to pass SJR 74 with the original language requiring a concurrent majority (equal power for rural communities) to enable an amendment to the Missouri Constitution.

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