

THE **WATCHDAWG** REPORT

Missouri General Assembly

Let's just say the truth very clearly...the only education bill that will truly and fearlessly save Missouri school children is the one that removes the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) from any influence in our state.

All the legislators know this, and they know what their constituency wants. This game of sort-of-better school choice with SB727 is an insult to the constituency. Regardless of whether your Senator or Representative voted for or against it...what they should have done is come together to sponsor a bill that removes DESE from Missouri. This action would take care of the teacher organizations that reward woke behavior in the classroom and move the control of our schools to local boards, administrators, teachers, and most importantly parents.

The best comprehensive review of SB727 was by the Show Me Institute.

Find it at:

<https://showmeinstitute.org/blog/education/our-thoughts-on-sb-727>

It will be the law soon, so you should probably take the time to read about it. You can find the summary and actual bill language at senate.mo.gov. Click on "Legislation" Click on List of 2024 Second Regular Session Senate Bills and scroll to SB 727.

One interesting result of the bill is that qualification for taxpayer funded school lunch assistance was raised to include more families. Now, a family of four making \$166,000 a year qualifies. It is your money. Please pay attention.

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Camden County Voters

The candidates are out and about, so I guess we better start talking about the 2024 Primary on August 6.

The Sheriff's race seems to be getting a lot of attention.

Here are my vetting questions:

What is your history in Camden County?

Did you come forward to be vetted (including a background check) by the Republican Central Committee?

What is your command experience?

You may be the best police officer ever, but managing the deputies, the jail and other employees in the department is a difficult skill set to develop, and this is not a training exercise.

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Along with SB727, the House Speaker has also signed HB 2287.

Here is a small part of the Bill Summary:

“TEACHER CERTIFICATION (Section 168.021) This bill requires DESE to develop an 18 credit hour; online teacher preparation program related to subjects appropriate for teachers in different content areas determined by the Department. **The Department may contract with an entity skilled in developing online teacher preparation programs or a charitable organization registered in Missouri to develop and maintain the online teacher preparation program.** The entity or charitable organization must be certified to develop and maintain the program by the Department. An individual with a bachelor's degree may complete the online training program and receive a certificate of license to teach. However, the certificate will not be accepted by Missouri public schools, and non-public schools are not required to accept the certificate.”

This is the “education bill” that we did not hear about. These days, anything that involves the government contracting with a non-profit (charitable) NGO organization raises a huge red flag for me. I reference government’s paid-for aid and abetting of illegal immigrants at our southern border by NGOs (Non-Government Organizations such as Catholic Charities, The Red Cross, Jewish Family Council and the Lutherans.) I also do not understand why a teacher would get this weird certification that will not be accepted in public schools. Wouldn’t it be great if the information available at the General Assembly web sites gave us a paragraph or two from the bill sponsor explaining what they are trying to accomplish and why.

A different section of this bill clarifies the definition of “school” relating to weapons offenses to mean public school, charter school and private school. They removed home schools from being available for prosecution if there is a gun on the premises. There is more to understand. Read the Bill Summary at house.mo.gov. Click on Legislation and type in HB2287.

I strongly recommend that you review the Bill Summaries for yourself, and call State Representative Lisa Thomas at 573-751-1119, and State Senator Mike Bernskoetter at 573-751-2076 with your questions and to share your opinions.

I called Senator Bernskoetter’s office to ask about his position on the current version of the IP bill, SJR74. I was following up on the suggestion made to me that his previous No vote was a sacrifice made with 7 others to move the bill out of the filibuster and to the House where the needed language could be restored. The young man who answered the phone made me go through the entire scenario to confirm I was worthy of his attention and in the end told me he did not know the Senator’s position on the current bill. Another smokescreen from arrogant Senator Bernskoetter.

The Bills on the Senate Calendar for Third Reading, aka those that are moving toward a vote are:
[SB 756](#) - [Luetkemeyer](#) - Modifies a property tax credit for certain seniors

This act also provides that the real property tax liability for the eligible taxpayer's initial credit year shall be increased to reflect the real property tax liability attributable to any new construction and improvements made to the taxpayer's homestead in addition to any property tax liability owed to a taxing jurisdiction that has annexed the taxpayer's homestead subsequent to the taxpayer's initial credit year. (So, it is a cap, but they may raise your tax anyway...)

Also, this act requires that a county granting a tax credit shall notify each political subdivision within such county of the total credit amount applicable to such political subdivision by no later than November 30th of each year. (Wonder what office in Camden County is calculating amounts and making this notification? Sunshine report opportunity for the next Watchdawg!)

[SB 802](#) - [Trent](#) - Modifies provisions relating to business investment incentives.

This is government interfering in business by picking winners and losers with our tax dollars...again

[SB 834](#) - [Crawford](#) - Enacts provisions relating to reinsurance and examinations of insurance companies (I tried to read it. I have a headache. Could someone smarter than me please advise?)

[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. (This is a good bill that I hope becomes law. It protects landlords from eviction moratoriums that, in my opinion, violate their personal rights.)

[SB 912](#) - [Brown \(26\)](#) - Modifies provisions relating to veterans

This bill orders the Missouri Veterans Commission to read and act on a bill approved in 2019 related to the prevention of veteran suicide. Apparently, enforcement was not in place.

[SB 1298](#) - [Bean](#) - Modifies provisions relating to cotton trailers

All states in our Union are falling apart, but some big cotton farmer lobbyist needed this, I guess. This act increases the maximum speed at which cotton trailers may travel from 40mph to 65mph and repeals a requirement that cotton trailers be used exclusively for transporting cotton. (There is more...too ridiculously unimportant to take more space.)

[SB 1359](#) - [Trent](#) - Modifies provisions relating to financial institutions

First it says this: Under this act, people who receive breast or cervical cancer screenings within the scope of Title XV of the Public Health Services Act, and who otherwise meet eligibility requirements is eligible for medical assistance regardless of whether the screening is by a provider that receives funds under that title. THEN it says this: Licensure of Money Transmitters. Clear violation of the single topic bill law and should be rejected for that reason.

[SB 1363](#) - [Crawford](#) - Modifies provisions relating to county officials

This bill is a mess of a million things regarding county government. I cannot find what she is really after. There is a lot about salaries for county officials. Please read it for yourself.

[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. (The bill disapproves and suspends certain DESE influence, so is probably good)

[SJR 71](#) - [Black](#) - This proposed constitutional amendment, if approved by the voters, provides that the administration of justice shall include the levying of costs and fees to support salaries and benefits for sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, and circuit attorneys. (I don't think so Skippy...these are county issues that have nothing to do with the state.)

The Sheriff has law enforcement authority throughout their county, including its cities, villages and townships. I would love to see Buford Pusser from “Walking Tall” roll in with his baseball bat to clean up human and drug trafficking at our lake resorts and short term rentals. That stance requires courage that is not apparent in our current Sheriff, our Sheriff’s candidates, or in elected office holders (County Commission and City Aldermen) who would have to create that mandate as directed by the people. We tend to just ignore it, take the sales tax money and stuff our heads in the sand. The young women and men being trafficked appear to be ignored by local law enforcement. I have never seen a “John” arrested, have you? Drug related shootings will continue until morale improves.

James Gohagan is running unopposed for District One Commissioner. No one else fielded a candidate in that district, so they seem to like him. He is a patriot who genuinely cares about his constituents. He needs to work on his interpersonal skills within the county offices.

District Two Candidates are coming out to be vetted by the voters. I wish someone had started door knocking in February so I could give them points for that.

I like Daniel Dugan a lot. I think his quiet nature matched with his business and financial management skills would be a good fit with Ike and James who are more extroverted and clearly big picture guys. Daniel checks the boxes with support for our freedom agenda, plus has financial report analysis skills and real life construction management experience that would certainly help Road and Bridge. He is out with campaign flyers knocking on doors and getting to know the voters.

James Rericha is probably the most well-known candidate, and friend to existing commissioners. He is a very nice and very intelligent man. I will be watching the intensity in his campaign to see how much he wants the job. I would prefer there to be a professional, as opposed to personal relationship between Commissioners. It removes the appearance or reality of “good ole boy” management by adding a degree of separation and enhances professionalism.

District Two Commissioner Candidates Deryl Osborn, Bill Walker and Steve Dougan are unknown to me. Hopefully, they will include meet-and-greets during their campaigns, so I get a chance to speak with them to know them better. When I do, you will be the first to know.

I was very disappointed to see that there was not a candidate’s flyer at the Reagan Days event upon which any candidate identified themselves as an “America First” candidate. I realize this election year that “Conservative” means nothing...look at our Legislators who claim to be Conservative. “America First” identifies the sane, grounded, hard right leaning fiscal and social Conservative that I am looking for. Most America First Conservatives support President Trump and the MAGA movement. I have not heard any candidate or local group advocate for Trump. That puzzles me. What are they afraid of?

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