



## Governmental Services Group

The Missouri General Assembly continues at a steady pace as a packed hearing schedule is giving way to additional floor time. On Thursday, the Senate continued its streak of being operational, with Senator Hough's SB 10 being passed out of the Senate and headed to the Missouri House. Despite grumbling from Senate Democrats upset at the removal of sunsets related to gender-affirming care within the bill, and the Freedom Caucus concern over the proliferation of new tax credits, the bill passed 22-10.

The bill contains the elimination on sunsets for numerous major pieces of legislation passed in previous years. Some notable provisions of the bill include: an elimination of the sunset for the Federal Reimbursement Allowance, an elimination of the sunset for the Entertainment Industry Jobs Act (certain tax credits for the entertainment field), and an elimination of the sunset for the film tax credits to boost the film industry statewide.

On Wednesday, there was a heated hearing on the Senate side where Senate Economic Development heard SB 57. The bill exempts eligible food from all sales tax. The bill drew some rare bipartisan support for the sponsor, Sen. Mary Elizabeth Coleman as well and concern from municipalities that it would massively reduce local budgets, forcing cuts in police and other vital services with no method of replacing revenue. Sen. Coleman has been pushing the bill for several years and would like it to be included in part of a larger tax package.

Missouri is one of 12 states that have a state sales tax on food purchases, and of the states that do not, six allow local sales taxes that cover food sold in grocery stores. Food accounts for about 20% of the goods subject to sales tax. The remaining state sales tax on food has three components — 1% dedicated to public schools, 0.125% for the Department of Conservation and 0.1% for state parks and soil conservation.

This proposal comes as the state is considering multiple approaches to cutting state income tax, which would be a major hit to the state without some sort of replacement, possibly in the form of a statewide sales tax. This, among other controversial bills such as rolling back provisions of Amendment 3 or Proposition A could be the catalyst for the Senate finally breaking down, but two weeks before the legislative spring break legislation continues to move, albeit at the pace of state government. We will continue to keep you informed of the latest from Jefferson City.

## Healthcare Provisions

**HB 398 (Peters)** This bill modifies provisions relating to health care.

**EXPEDITED PARTNER THERAPY** The bill adds Trichomoniasis to the list of sexually transmitted diseases that if an individual is diagnosed with, a physician is allowed to treat the individual's sex partners without an intervening medical evaluation or professional prevention counseling. The bill also adds any other sexually transmitted infection designated as appropriate for expedited partner therapy by the Department of Health and Senior Services or recommended for expedited partner therapy in the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. The bill expands the use of expedited partner therapy in such cases from physicians to health care professionals licensed under chapters 334 or 3335 authorized to prescribe medications.

**SPECIALTY HOSPITALS** This bill exempts "specialty hospitals", as defined in the bill, from certain provisions of law relating to forensic examinations for victims of sexual assault, provided that the specialty hospital has a policy for transfer of a victim to an appropriate hospital with an emergency department.

**BLOOD TESTS FOR PREGNANT WOMEN** The bill modifies provisions governing blood tests and maternal screening for pregnant women. Currently, pregnant women are asked to take a blood test at the time of the first prenatal examination, or no later than 20 days after the first prenatal examination, to screen for syphilis and hepatitis B, as well as any other treatable diseases and metabolic disorders as are prescribed by the Department of Health and Senior Services.

This bill requires an additional blood sample to be taken, with the woman's consent, at 28 weeks of pregnancy, and expands the list of diseases for screening to include hepatitis C and HIV. The bill also repeals a provision outlining the procedure for a later sample of a woman's blood in any area of the state designated as a syphilis outbreak area, and provides that if a woman tests positive for syphilis, hepatitis B or C, or HIV, or a combination thereof, the physician or person providing care must administer treatment in accordance with the most recent accepted medical practice to treat such diseases. The bill repeals a reference to the Missouri Genetic Disease Advisory Committee, granting the Department the sole authority to make rules pertaining to these tests, provided that the tests are of the types approved or accepted by the US Food and Drug Administration. The bill also repeals a requirement that approved standard tests for these diseases must be made in a Department- approved laboratory.

**SELF-ADMINISTERED HORMONAL CONTRACEPTIVES COVERAGE** Beginning January 1, 2025, this bill requires any health benefit plan in Missouri to reimburse a health care provider or dispensing entity for the dispensing of a supply of self-administered hormonal contraceptives intended to last up to one year. The bill prohibits the coverage from being subject to any greater deductible or co- payment than other similar health care services provided by the health benefit plan.

MAMMOGRAPHY The bill repeals provisions relating to required notice provided to patients upon their completion of a mammogram.

**Those testifying in support of the bill:** City of St. Louis Department to Health, MO Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Missouri State Medical Assoc, MO Assoc of Social Workers, Mo Assoc of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons, Reach Healthcare Foundation, BJC St Louis Children's Hospital, St. Louis County, Missouri Jobs with Justice, Health Forward Foundation, League of Women Voters of Missouri, St. Louis Integrated Health Network, Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence, Associated Students University of Missouri, several physicians and individuals.

**Those testifying in opposition to the bill:** No one testified in opposition.

**Testimony for informational purposes only:** One individual testified for information purposes.

## **Blood Tests for Pregnant Women**

**HB 803 (Stinnett)** This bill modifies provisions governing blood tests and maternal screening for pregnant women.

Currently, pregnant women are asked to take a blood test at the time of the first prenatal examination, or no later than 20 days after the first prenatal examination, to screen for syphilis and hepatitis B, as well as any other treatable diseases and metabolic disorders as are prescribed by the Department of Health and Senior Services.

This bill requires an additional blood sample to be taken, with the woman's consent, at 28 weeks of pregnancy, and expands the list of diseases for screening to include hepatitis C and HIV. The bill also repeals a provision outlining the procedure for a later sample of a woman's blood in any area of the state designated as a syphilis outbreak area, and provides that if a woman tests positive for syphilis, hepatitis B or C, or HIV, or a combination thereof, the physician or person providing care must administer treatment in accordance with the most recent accepted medical practice to treat such diseases.

The bill additionally repeals a reference to the Missouri Genetic Disease Advisory Committee, granting the Department the sole authority to make rules pertaining to such tests, provided that the tests are of the types approved or accepted by the US Food and Drug Administration. The bill also repeals a requirement that approved and standard tests for these diseases must be made in a Department- approved laboratory.

**Those testifying in support of the bill:** MO Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, BJC-St Louis Children's Hospital, St. Louis County, and Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence.

**Those testifying in opposition to the bill:** Twelve individuals testified against the bill.

## **Tobacco Product Regulations**

**SB 231 (Brown)** Under this act, the state's laws shall preempt any local laws, ordinances, orders, rules, or regulations enacted by a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of the state regulating the sale of tobacco products, alternative nicotine products, or vapor products. Additionally, no political subdivision shall deny a qualified applicant for a tobacco products license, an alternative nicotine products license, or a vapor products license if the new license is for the same business or location that had a license within the previous 24 months, as described in the act.

**Those testifying in support of the bill:** Missouri Petroleum Retailers, Mo Retailers Association, Missouri Grocers Association, Silverman - vape association, Cigar Association of America, Maverik Convenience Stores, Hub, Inc., National Association of Tobacco Outlets, and Missouri Wholesale Distributors.

**Those testifying in opposition to the bill:** City of Kansas City, American Cancer Society, and American Heart Association.

## **Tax Credits for Products**

**SB 95 (Lewis)** This act modifies provisions relating to tax incentives for certain hygiene products.

**DIAPER BANK TAX CREDIT:** Current law authorizes a tax credit for contributions made to diaper banks. This act modifies the definition of "diaper bank" to require such entities to be a member of a national network organization serving all fifty states through which certification demonstrates nonprofit best practices, data-driven program design, and equitable distribution. The tax credit sunsets on December 31, 2024. This act extends the sunset until December 31, 2031.

**HYGIENE PRODUCTS SALES TAX EXEMPTION:** This act authorizes a state sales tax exemption for the sale of diapers, incontinence products, and feminine hygiene products, as such terms are defined in the act.

**Those testifying in favor of the bill:** Happy Bottoms (diaper bank), St. Louis Area Diaper Bank, Diaper Bank of the Ozarks, Southeast Diaper Bank, JCMG, American Academy of Osteopaths and Gynecologists, Kids Win Missouri, MO State Medical Association, Missouri Association of Osteopathic Physicians & Surgeons, and MO Catholic Conference.

**Those testifying in opposition to the bill:** There was no opposition to the bill.

## **Bills voted out of committee this week:**

### **Provisions Relating to Healthcare**

**SB 317** (Black) was voted out of the Senate Seniors, Families, and Health this week as a substitute. his act modifies several provisions relating to health care, including: (1) hospital investments and service areas; (2) emergency services; (3) sexually transmitted infections; (4) telehealth services; (5) forensic examinations of victims of sexual offenses; (6) limits on the sale of over-the-counter drugs; (7) inspections of certain long-term care facilities; (8) MO HealthNet coverage of hearing-related devices; (9) prenatal tests for certain diseases; (10) the practice of dentistry in correctional centers; (11) the administration of certain vaccines; and (12) mammograms.

The link to SCS SB 317: <https://www.senate.mo.gov/25info/pdf-bill/SCSfromResearch/SB317.pdf>

### **Confiscation of Animals**

**HB 489** (Schoiack) was voted out of the House Agriculture committee DO PASS this week as a substitute.

The link to HCS HB 489:  
<https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills251/hlrbillspdf/1185H.03C.pdf>

### **Second Amendment Preservation Act**

**SB 23** (Brattin) was voted DO PASS out of Senate Transportation, Infrastructure, and Public Safety as a substitute this week.

The bill text can be found here: <https://www.senate.mo.gov/25info/pdf-bill/SCSfromResearch/SB23.pdf>