



Governmental Services Group

Even with the shortened week from the snowstorm, the current legislative session in Jefferson City has reached a critical juncture. This was particularly showcased by an escalating interbranch conflict between the General Assembly and the Missouri Supreme Court. Following a unanimous judicial ruling that invalidated Senate Bill 22—a key measure regarding ballot summary authority—Republican leadership took the unprecedented step of canceling the annual State of the Judiciary address. This maneuver underscores a significant institutional rift, as lawmakers now signal an intent to pursue comprehensive judicial reform aimed at redefining the scope of court oversight and preserving legislative intent. This is expected to be an ongoing discussion throughout the rest of session.

Amidst this political friction, the session progressed on several high-priority policy fronts involving state revenue, healthcare, and regulatory reform. Fiscal discussions were headlined by the House Special Committee on Property Tax Reform, which considered legislation to eliminate personal property taxes on motor vehicles and a constitutional amendment providing property tax exemptions for disabled veterans. Simultaneously, a House committee heard testimony on the legalization of video gaming machines as a potential revenue stream for education, while the Senate focused on healthcare access via bills to cap insulin out-of-pocket costs at \$35. These debates occurred alongside efforts to reform the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) and address broader legislative oversight, highlighting the General Assembly's attempt to navigate a diverse array of regulatory and social mandates despite the week's institutional tensions.

The session has also been dominated by a debate over a fundamental overhaul of Missouri's tax structure. Governor Mike Kehoe and House Speaker Jon Patterson are spearheading a proposal to phase out the individual income tax by 2031, replacing the lost revenue—estimated at \$9 billion annually—by expanding the sales tax base. This would expand the sales tax to cover things that aren't currently taxed, like digital subscriptions and certain services. This proposal, if approved by the legislature, would be sent to voters as a constitutional amendment. While proponents argue that eliminating income taxes will modernize the economy and attract new residents, critics warn that shifting the burden to sales taxes would disproportionately impact low-income families and seniors on fixed incomes.

We will continue to keep you informed of the latest in Jefferson City as they return for business on Monday.

Healthcare

HB 2372, sponsored by Representative Peters, modifies several provisions relating to healthcare. The bill contains language modifying the following provisions: 340B drugs, hospital workplace violence signage, insurance coverage of anesthesia Services, doula services, telehealth services, dental services for prisons alternatives to opioids drugs, community paramedic services, Hospital investments and service areas, sale limits on over-the-counter drugs, and administration of certain vaccines. Link to bill summary:

<https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills261/sumpdf/HB2372I.pdf>

This bill had a hearing in the House Health and Mental Health Committee this week.

In support of the bill was College of Emergency Physicians, Missouri Ambulance Association, Missouri Speech Hearing and Language Association, Missouri Associated of Anesthesiologists, American College of OBGYNs, Missouri Health Care Association, Missouri State Medical Association, Mercy Healthcare Systems, Missouri Occupation Therapy Association, Golden Valley Memorial Healthcare, BJC Healthcare, Missouri Nurses Association, MO Pharmacy Association

In opposition to the bill was the Missouri Insurance Coalition and Americas Health Insurance.

Telehealth

HB 2974, sponsored by Representative Stinnett, specifies that a health care provider who has received his or her licenses to practice in Missouri via our license reciprocity law can provide telehealth services.

This bill had a public hearing in the House Professional Registration Committee this week.

Testifying in support was Mercy Healthcare Systems, Division of Professional Registration, Missouri Academy of Physicians Assistants, SSM Health, Missouri Hospital Association, Burrell Behavioral Healthcare, United WE, BJC Healthcare, Missouri Nurses Association, and Missouri Athletic Trainers Association.

There was no opposition to the bill.

Public Health Services

Hb 1783, sponsored by Representative Voss, authorizes the Department of Health and Senior Services to contract with a designated Missouri affiliate of a national public health association or institute, or a similar or successor entity, in order to assist in carrying out its duties to promote the health and well-being of Missouri residents. Such contracts can include efforts to assist in the delivery of health services throughout the State and the administration of grant funds and related programs. The Department and the designated affiliate must provide a report to the General Assembly, as specified in the bill.

This bill had a hearing in the House Health and Mental Health Policy Committee this week.

In support of the bill was the MOCPHE, Missouri Public Health Association, and Reach Healthcare Foundation.

There was no opposition to the bill.

Alternatives to Opioid Drugs

This week HB 1680, HB 1966, HB 2296, and HB 2692, which create provisions relating to insurance coverage of alternatives to opioid drugs, were up for executive session in the House Health Mental Health Committee. All four bills, HB 2642, HB 1680, HB 1966, and HB 2296, were voted out of the Committee DO PASS.

HB 1680: <https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills261/sumpdf/HB1680I.pdf>

HB 1966: <https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills261/sumpdf/HB1966I.pdf>

HB 2296: <https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills261/sumpdf/HB2296I.pdf>

HB 2642: <https://documents.house.mo.gov/billtracking/bills261/sumpdf/HB2642I.pdf>