

February 17, 2022

Good afternoon.

This was another short week due the inclement weather. All committee hearings and session were cancelled today. The Senate circus was a little less raucous this week. On Wednesday, the body successfully worked through a few bills. However, the Republican infighting continued.

President Pro Tem Dave Schatz (R - Sullivan) removed Senator Mike Moon (R - Halltown) from most of his committee assignments due to a dress code violation. Last week, he wore overalls, a tie and sports coat onto the senate floor. Apparently, overalls are a no-no. Personally, I thought he looked very put together. Schatz has said Moon's assignments will be restored if he apologizes for wearing overalls. At the time of this report, Moon had yet to say he was sorry.

A brief recap of the week, notes from committee and floor debate are below. It's also a short week next week due to President's Day.

Thanks for your time. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions or concerns.

In Committee This Week

Professional Employer Organizations

The House Pensions Committee convened Wednesday morning to discuss HB 2400, sponsored by Representative Dan Houx (R-Warrensburg). This bill provides that both a client and a registered professional employer organization shall each be deemed an employer for purposes of sponsoring retirement and welfare benefits plans for covered employees. ADP Incorporated offered supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was provided during the hearing.

Missouri Department of Transportation and Highway Patrol Employees' Retirement System

The House Pensions Committee convened Wednesday morning to consider passage of 1984, sponsored by Representative Barry Hovis (R-Whitewater). The bill modifies the Board membership of the Missouri Department of Transportation and Highway Patrol Employees' Retirement System by having the terms of the active employee representatives serving on the Board on August 28, 2022, to continue an additional two years until June 30, 2024 and after such date all terms of elected active employee representatives shall be for four years beginning July 1, 2024 and every four years thereafter. During committee discussion, substitute language was adopted to delay the implementation date in order to not crowd the system. Once modified, the committee passed the bill consent, by an 11-0 vote.

Disclosure of Personal Information

The House Committee on Emerging Issues convened Tuesday afternoon to discuss HB 2120, sponsored by Representative Jered Taylor (R-Republic). The bill creates provisions relating to the disclosure of personal information to public agencies and establishes the "Personal Privacy Protection Act", prohibiting public agencies from disclosing or requiring the disclosure of personal information. People United for Privacy, American Civil Liberties Union, Institute for Free Speech, and Alliance Defending Freedom provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was provided during the hearing.

LAGERS

The Senate Health and Pensions Committee convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss SB 655, sponsored by Senator Sandy Crawford (R- Buffalo). The bill is the Senate companion to HB 1473, sponsored by Representative Patricia Pike (R- Adrian). Currently, political subdivisions located in third class counties and Cape Girardeau County may, by majority vote of the governing body, elect to cover certain employee classes as public safety personnel members in the Local Government Employees' Retirement System (LAGERS). The bill allows political subdivisions located in any county to cover such employee classes. The Ambulance District Association of MO, MO Ambulance Association, and LAGERS provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was provided during the hearing.

Elimination of State Income Tax

The Senate Health and Pensions Committee convened Wednesday afternoon to discuss SB 871, sponsored by Senator Bill Eigel (R- St. Charles). The bill eliminates state income tax on social security benefits, retirement benefits, and military retirement benefits for all taxpayers. No supporting or opposing testimony was provided during the hearing.

Budget Update

The House Budget and Senate Appropriations committees heard from the remaining state agencies this week. Now that each agency has presented its budget recommendations, the House Budget Subcommittees will begin working on respective recommendations to present to the full Budget Committee. Once these recommendations are made, the full Budget Committee will draft amendments and present those to the committee.

Supplemental Budget

The Senate Committee on Appropriations completed their mark-up of emergency supplemental budget bill HB 3014 sponsored by Representative Cody Smith (R - Carthage). Committee Chairman Dan Hegeman (R - Cosby) is in agreement with the House on most of its recommendations including Medicaid spending plans including increased physician, hospital and nursing facilities reimbursements. However, the committee concurred with the Governor regarding the \$15/hour pay increase for all state workers across the thirteen departments.

The "Close the Gap" program that the House passed has been cut from the Senate version of the bill completely as Senators felt a brand-new program had no place in a supplemental budget and should be addressed in the FY2023 budget. Finally, the committee restored the requested \$12 million in Victims of Crime Act funding with the demand that original federal funding currently in the fund be spent first. After final discussions and questions, the committee passed the bill with a 11-2 with Senators Bill Eigel (R-St. Charles) and Denny Hoskins (R-Warrensburg) voting no.

Key Upcoming Dates

- February 21, 2022 – Presidents Day – No Session
- March 1, 2022 – Last day to file House and Senate bills
- March 14-18, 2022– Legislative Spring Break
- April 18, 2022 – Easter Holiday – No Session
- May 6, 2022 – State Budget finalized per Missouri Constitution

- May 13, 2022 – Last day of the 2022 Legislative Session per Missouri Constitution
- July 1, 2022 – First day of Fiscal Year 2023
- July 14, 2022 – Last day for the Governor to Sign or Veto Bills
- August 28, 2022 – Date Most Legislation Takes Effect (unless another date is specified)
- September 14, 2022 – Veto Session

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