

Update Capitol Report August 24

1 message

Emily Weber <emily.weber@house.mo.gov>
 Reply-To: Emily Weber <emily.weber@house.mo.gov>
 To:

Mon, Aug 24, 2026 at 2:00 PM



It's been a very busy interim with lots of meetings, community events, and engaging with the public!

Here is your updated MOLEG report, but just another reminder to please make sure **you're registered to vote** for the **November 3 election**.

[Register to vote in Missouri](#)

Serving you,



573-751-4485
Emily.Weber@house.mo.gov

Stay engaged. There's still a lot of work to do.

Please reach out to our office if you need any assistance or would like to grab coffee.

An important date to keep on your radar:

- **September 16** is the scheduled veto session.

Capitol Updates

JUDGE BLOCKS PETITION PROTECTIONS, REDISTRICTING FROM BALLOT

A Cole County judge on Aug. 18 upheld Secretary of State Denny Hoskins' refusal to certify two citizens' petitions for the Nov. 3 statewide ballot – one to overturn Missouri's gerrymandered new congressional districts and another to prevent the legislature from interfering with the initiative petition process – based on Hoskins' claim that the measures are unconstitutional.

If Circuit Judge Dan Green's rulings stand on appeal, they effectively would nullify the nearly 120-year-old right of Missouri citizens to propose laws and constitutional changes independently of lawmakers, or force public votes on acts of the legislature, by empowering the secretary of state to unilaterally block petitions he opposes.

Two weeks earlier, 80.3 percent of Missouri voters soundly trounced a proposed constitutional amendment pushed by Republicans that sought to impose an impossibly high bar for ratifying future constitutional amendments proposed by initiative petition. However, Green's rulings would accomplish a similar purpose by making initiative and referendum petitions easy to thwart, rendering them not worth the substantial effort and expense of pursuing.

Pre-election challenges to citizens' petitions traditionally have been limited to determining whether a measure conforms with procedural requirements, including if they have a sufficient number of valid signatures to qualify for the ballot, with challenges to constitutionality occurring only if voters later approved a given measure. Never before had a secretary of state asserted the power to declare measures unconstitutional.

The plaintiffs in each case immediately appealed the rulings. The case involving the referendum petition on the gerrymandered congressional districts the Republican-dominated state legislature passed last year to create another GOP-leaning seat was appealed directly to the Supreme Court since it involves the validity of state laws pertaining to the petition process.

In that case, Green, a Republican, also ruled it is too late to block the new districts from being used for the upcoming general elections since the recent party primaries were conducted using them. Green further said its unconstitutional to hold a referendum on congressional districts approved by the legislature, despite the fact that it was done during the 1920s.

The Respect Missouri Voters petition case was appealed to the Missouri Court of Appeals Western District, although it ultimately is expected to end up at the Supreme Court. That petition seeks to prohibit the legislature from weakening or restricting Missourians' rights to propose new laws or constitutional changes via initiative petition and prevent lawmakers from unilaterally altering laws enacted by initiative petition and instead require 80 percent majorities in both legislative chambers to submit any proposed changes to voters.

Regarding that measure, Hoskins claimed, and Green agreed, it would interfere the legislature's authority in violation of provisions of both the state and federal constitutions guaranteeing states a republican form of government. By that logic, however, the initiative and referendum process itself, which has existed since 1908, would be unconstitutional since its whole purpose is to serve as a check against the legislature.

The Respect Missouri Voters petition case is Claire Harris, et al., v. Denny Hoskins. The redistricting petition case is Richard Von Glahn v. Denny Hoskins.

COST OF STATE'S SCHOOL FUNDING LAW TO INCREASE BY \$300 MILLION

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education anticipates needing an additional \$300 million in next year's budget to provide the minimum level of state funding for local public school districts called for by statute, according to a budget report presented to the State Board of Education on Aug. 18. The department also will require an additional \$26.5 million to fully fund the state's share of districts' student transportation costs.

However, because state revenues are declining, mostly as a consequence of years of tax cuts enacted by the Republican-controlled General Assembly, it is unlikely Gov. Mike Kehoe, who opposed providing K-12 public schools with the statutory funding minimum during his first two years in office, will call for an increase when he presents his budget recommendations for the 2028 fiscal year in January.

The additional \$300 million needed to comply with Missouri's school funding law includes backfilling the \$190 million by which majority Republicans underfunded K-12 education for FY 2027 and a \$110 million increase for FY 2028. And because Republicans used one-time funding gimmicks to cover about \$100 million appropriated for schools in FY 2027, replacing that money could bump the total amount of general revenue DESE actually needs to comply with the funding law to \$400 million.

Known as the foundation formula, the funding law sets forth a series of calculations for determining how much state money each of Missouri's 518 public schools districts is supposed to get in a given year. Historically, however, the state has underfunded the formula more often than it has fully funded it.

When Kehoe, a Republican, presented his first proposed budget after taking office in 2025, he recommended underfunding K-12 schools by \$300 million. However, lawmakers refused to follow the governor's position and fully funded the formula for FY 2026 anyway.

In offering his proposed FY 2027 state budget earlier this year, Kehoe called for keeping formula funding frozen at the FY 2026 level, which was \$190 million less than the amount called for by law. Despite Democratic efforts to increase school funding, majority Republicans in the legislature this time followed the governor's recommendation.

RETIREMENT OF STATE BUDGET DIRECTOR PROMPTS JOB SHUFFLE

The pending retirement of the Missouri's longest serving state budget director is triggering a job shuffle in state government, with the director of the state Department of Corrections leaving his post to take on the task of overseeing the budget and the deputy director at corrections replacing him in that agency's top leadership spot.

Dan Haug is set to retire Oct. 1 after 31 years in state government, including the last 11 as budget director. Gov. Jay Nixon, a Democrat, appointed Haug to the post in 2015 and he stayed on during the administrations of the next three governors, all Republicans.

Current Gov. Mike Kehoe announced Aug. 17 that Department of Corrections Director Trevor Foley will take over as budget director once Haug retires. Foley had worked in budget roles both for the corrections department and state Senate for more than 20 years before becoming corrections director in December 2023.

Deputy Corrections Director Valarie Moseley will in turn take charge of the state's prison system. While she can begin serving as director immediately upon Foley's transition to the state Division of Budget and Planning, she will face Senate confirmation in January to remain in the job permanently.

Resources



2026 Honey Harvest! A free community event to learn about the bees on the Union Cemetery grounds. Small jars of honey will also be available for purchase. Free guided history tours will be offered as well.



August 30th



10:00 am - 2:00 pm



Union Cemetery Park
227 E 28th Terr KCMO 64108



FLAG REQUESTS

Do you have a special day coming up, an anniversary, graduation, or retirement? Contact our office and you can request a flag to be flown at the Capitol on a specific day or a courtesy resolution that we will have printed and given to you.

PHONE

573-751-4485

EMAIL

emily.weber@house.mo.gov

Suicide Crisis Lifeline

988

SUICIDE
& CRISIS
LIFELINE

The [Lifeline](#) provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States.

Unclaimed Property



The Treasurer's Office is responsible for returning Unclaimed Property to Missourians. Each year financial institutions, businesses, government agencies, and other organizations turn over millions of dollars in cash and the contents of safe deposit boxes to the Treasurer's Office. The Office currently holds more than \$1 billion in unclaimed assets. 1 in 10 Missourians has Unclaimed Property and the average return is \$300. The Treasurer's Office never charges to return Unclaimed Property.

Use [this link](#) to see if you have any unclaimed property of your own.

District 24 Exclusives

Kansas City Public Library

Doorway to knowledge for everyone in the community

Show Me KC Schools

Find resources for Kansas City's schools

Community Blood Center

Be a lifesaver and donate life

District 24 Help Desk

Uzazi Village

Dedicated to decreasing maternal and infant health inequity among Black and Brown communities

State Assistance for Housing Relief

For homeowners, renters, and landlords

KC Tenants

For those experiencing housing issues

YMCA

Youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility

Cultivate KC events

Upcoming events and volunteer opportunities

Bridging the Gap Events

Check them out for upcoming events

Missouri Department of Conservation events

Outdoor fun in Missouri

Looking for a furever friend?

Thousands of pets are waiting patiently for a family to call their own or just a temporary foster home!

KC's Farmers Market Passport

A free, interactive guide that connects shoppers to fresh and healthy foods through KC's network of urban agriculture

Hope Faith

KC's homeless assistance campus

Bishop Sullivan Center

Helping those who need assistance in food, jobs, and aid

Save, Inc.

Providing permanent, transitional and emergency housing assistance

KC Care Clinic

Offers services to our city's under and/or non-insured citizens

Rose Brooks

Protecting adults, children, and their pets

Pet Resource Center of Kansas City

Keeping pets and people together

Principals Connect

Mobilizing community support for urban school principals



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