


LEGISLATIVE REPORT



APWA KC Metro Chapter
2024 MO Session Report
Week Three
January 20, 2024

2024 Legislative Session Underway

Activity under the dome continues to build as attention shifts to committee hearings and budget proposals.

Next week on January 24, Governor Mike Parson will deliver his annual State of the State Address to a joint session of the Missouri House of Representatives and Missouri Senate. The State of the State Address is the time when a Governor's priorities for the legislative session are outlined, including highlights of what budget recommendations the Governor is asking the legislature to consider. Once this has been released, the various sub-committees will decide whether additional information is needed from the various departments or if the sub-committee recommendation process may begin. After the sub-committee recommendations have been completed, the full Budget Committee will begin to meet.

Traffic safety discussions begin in the House Committee on Transportation with HB 1524. This bill adds striking a vehicle, trailer or other equipment owned or operated by the Missouri Department of Transportation or contractors, including a truck or trailer-mounted crash attenuator, to what constitutes "endangerment of a highway worker", and raises the fines. The families of slain MoDOT employees provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee and no action was taken.

Related to solid waste disposal permits, the Senate Local Government and Elections Committee convened to discuss SB 769. The bills are identical and prohibits the Department of Natural Resources from issuing a permit for the operation of a solid waste disposal area located in the city of Kansas City without receiving approval from an adjoining municipality, if such area is located within one mile of such municipality, instead of one-half mile as currently provided. The committee took no action on the bills.

Key Upcoming Dates:

- January 24, 2024 – State-of-the- State Address
- March 18-22, 2024 – Legislative Spring Break
- May 17, 2024 – Last day of Legislative Session

Related to water public utilities, the Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee convened to discuss SB 741. Currently, the definition of a large water public utility is using a threshold of more than 8,000 customer connections. Utilities meeting this definition are allowed to use a fair market value assessment of water utility property during acquisitions and the purpose of the current statute is to allow large public water utilities to obtain struggling systems to provide more efficient critical infrastructure operation improvements. However, there is ambiguity on if the 8,000 customer connections count water and wastewater separately or combined. The bill clarifies the statute so that the large public water utility designation would apply to any water, wastewater, or combined with a total of 8,000 customers. Confluence Rivers, Liberty Utilities, MO American Water, MO Energy Development Association, and MO Chamber of Commerce and Industry supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented. The committee took no action on the bill.

The committee then turned its attention towards SB 740, an omnibus utility bill, which includes provisions from SB 741, highlighted above. Additionally, the bill allows trustees of reorganized common sewer districts to receive compensation; modifies provisions relating to the current renewable energy standards by preventing businesses that use over 100 megawatts of renewable power and have entered into contracts with utilities to be 100% green from being charged twice; creates growth project discount rates for gas corporations, by aligning the benefits with electric corporations; authorizes the Public Service Commission to directly contract counsel, financial advisors or other consultants as necessary for the purpose of reviewing financing orders for energy transition costs; exempts certain electrical customers from any securitized utility tariff charge; and changes provisions governing testing of community water system hydrant inspections. Confluence Rivers, the MO Energy Development Association, Liberty Utilities and Summit Utilities, MO Public Utility Alliance, Meta Platforms, Evergy, MO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ameren MO, Renew MO, MO American Water, MO Natural Gas Association, and Spire MO supported the bill. Consumer Council of MO opposed the bill. The committee took no action on the bill.

The House Utilities Committee convened to discuss HB 1995. Currently, the Small Wireless Facility Deployment Act expires January 1, 2025. The bill repeals the expiration date. The MO Municipal League, along with T-Mobile, Verizon, AT&T, City Utilities of Springfield, and MO Chamber of Commerce and Industry supported the bill and highlighted the history of the fee. Witnesses discussed the compromise struck between various stakeholders on why the sunset was previously included and informed committee members that the law is working and there is no reason to continue the sunset. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee.

Please see below for the new bills of interest.

Respectfully,

Travis Lowe, CAE

Filed Bills of Interest: (Below are two links under each category. The first link will show a list of bills filed this week. The second link will take you to your full list of bills and their summaries.)

APWA-General

<https://govwatch.net/report/GLWyGXyqoZ>
<https://govwatch.net/report/ZLr96KRqeE>

APWA-Emergency Responders

<https://govwatch.net/report/VgbwG81b9O>
<https://govwatch.net/report/2abBP0wrwv>

APWA-Water

<https://govwatch.net/report/eJWGIOjrog>
<https://govwatch.net/report/ZebQGPBr6X>

APWA-Transportation

<https://govwatch.net/report/OdbeB4vWVY>

<https://govwatch.net/report/59bxGBkqON>

APWA-Workforce Development

<https://govwatch.net/report/g0W45OjrJz>