


LEGISLATIVE REPORT



2024 MO Session Report- Week Eleven March 17, 2024

As the sports world prepares for March Madness, Jefferson City is preparing for its own version as the session enters its second half and final eight weeks. Next week, however, marks the annual spring break to allow legislators to catch their breath before returning for the final push.

Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight

The Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight convened to hear testimony from Missouri Department of Transportation Director McKenna. Throughout his presentation, Director McKenna highlighted current challenges the Department faces, its successes, goals, infrastructure improvement plans for Interstate 70, its license plate, highway sign programs, and other programs.

Key Upcoming Dates:

- March 18-22, 2024 - Legislative Spring Break
- May 17, 2024 - Last day of Legislative Session

Director McKenna stated the overall goal of MoDOT is to provide a world class transportation system that's safe, innovative, reliable, and dedicated to a prosperous Missouri. He described safety issues MoDOT workers face such as general highway and roadway accidents, reckless and high-speed driving and highlighted the 139 employees that have lost lives as a result of roadway and construction zone accidents. He also mentioned the increase in traffic fatalities among motorists and motorcyclists. Director McKenna also discussed the workforce issues MoDOT is facing when it comes to its workforce and staffing levels. In its FY25 budget, Director McKenna has requested additional funds to address market pay concerns and staffing shortages. In the last several years, the Department has lost over 15,000 years of experience. The Director said the Department continues to work to address employee pay so it can properly staff critical response positions.

Next, Director McKenna discussed Governor Mike Parson's bridge focus program. In December 2023, MoDOT completed the \$353 million project designed to rehabilitate or replace 250 bridges in the state. In the past decade, the Department has completed more than 4200 projects with a total budget of \$11.1 billion. 94% of those projects were completed on time and 5% of those projects were completed under budget. The presentation was concluded with a listing of current projects underway which include the I-70 Missouri River Bridge at Rockport, a \$240 million construction project, the I-270 project in North Saint Louis County, cross traffic for I-70, Minneola climbing lanes and the \$1.5 billion overall I-70 project.

State Road Fund

The House Transportation Accountability committee convened to consider passage of HJR 127, sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). Upon voter approval, the proposed constitutional amendment would require that the State Road Fund be subject to appropriation by the General Assembly, rather than standing appropriated without legislative action. Additionally, the resolution specifics that the Commission's responsibility is to create the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), which is used to determine which projects need to be completed. During committee discussion, a committee substitute was adopted to include HJR 128, sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The constitutional amendment provides that, upon voter approval, 1% of the revenues collected from the state gas tax would be distributed to counties based on assessed value of agriculture land. Once amended, several committee members expressed concern with the constitutionality of including HJR 128 and, ultimately, the committee failed to pass the resolution by a vote of 2-11.

Sewage Regulations

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee convened to discuss SB 1283, Senator Mike Bernskoetter (R-Jefferson City). The bill is the Senate companion to HB 2083, sponsored by Representative Kurtis Gregory (R-Marshall). Currently, a state standard for the location, size of sewage tanks, and length of lateral lines is based partially on the percolation or permeability rate of the soil, as well as other specified factors. This bill modifies this provision to state that the standard is based partially on soil properties and also establishes the costs associated with testing. The MO Public Health Excellence supported the bill. A private citizen opposed the bill and no action was taken.

Modifying MO Works Program

The Senate Economic Development and Tax Policy Committee met to discuss SB 1301, sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb). The bill seeks to improve the MO Works Program by making changes to the MO Department of Economic Development to provide the Department more flexibility to attract more businesses to the State. Specifically, the bill removes expiration dates, combines the advanced industrial manufacturing (AIM) zone and a targeted industrial manufacturing enhancement (TIME) zone tax incentives with the MO Works Program, and clarifies the total authorized tax credit cannot exceed \$181 million. The MO Department of Economic Development supported the bill and informed committee members that the AIM and TIME zones use the same economic incentives and the bill simply combines the programs into one overall cap. Additional supporting testimony was presented by the MO Economic Development Council, MO Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Port KC, Associated Industries of MO and informed committee members that the MO Works Program is a great economic tool for the state and the proposed changes would benefit the program by providing flexibility. No opposing testimony was presented.

Eminent Domain for Solar and Wind

The Senate Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy, and the Environment Committee met to discuss SB 1262, sponsored by Senator Jason Bean (R-Holcomb). The bill prohibits the use of eminent domain by electrical corporations for the construction or erection of any plant, tower, panel, or facility used for wind and solar farms that are owned by public utilities. The MO Farm Bureau, MO Corn Growers Association, MO Soybean Association, and several private citizens supported the bill and expressed concern about property rights and informed committee members that the state is seeing a huge influx of commercial wind and solar projects. Sierra Club opposed the bill. Ameren provided informational testimony and informed committee members that Ameren does not use eminent domain for their wind or solar projects but would like an exemption for their grid connector lines. No action was taken on the bill.

Hydrant Inspections

The Senate Emerging Issues Committee convened to discuss SB 982, sponsored by Senator Rusty Black (R-Chillicothe). The bill repeals the annual testing requirement of hydrants and instead would allow for scheduled testing every five years. Missouri Public Utility Alliance provided supporting testimony stating this would allow larger cities to utilize the five-year option instead of just the smaller municipalities. No opposing testimony was presented to the committee and no action was taken on the bill.

Broadband Internet Expansion Grants

The House dedicated floor time Wednesday morning to debate HB 2142, sponsored by Representative Ben Baker (R-Neosho). Currently, a taxpayer may deduct from state income tax 100% of any federal grant money received for the purpose of providing or expanding access to broadband internet to areas of the state that lack access. This bill expands the deduction to include state or local grant money and limits the deduction only to money dispersed for this express purpose. After a brief debate, the House provided the first of two necessary approval votes.

Installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

The Senate Economic Development and Tax Policy Committee met to discuss HB 1511, sponsored by Representative Jim Murphy (R-St. Louis). The bill requires political subdivisions that require the installation of electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at certain businesses to pay the costs associated with the installation, maintenance, and operation of such stations. Additionally, the bill caps any political subdivision from requiring more than five EV stations per parking lot. A pastor from Jefferson County, the Missouri Petroleum Convenience Store Association, and Associated Industries of MO supported the bill and informed committee members that the installation of EV should be left up to customer demand and decided at a local level. No opposing testimony was presented and no action was taken on the bill.

Streetlights

The House Utilities Committee met to consider passage of HB 2828, sponsored by Representative Phil Amato (R-Arnold). The bill allows cities and counties to create a Neighborhood Improvement District (NID) and assess residents for the sole purpose of installing streetlights. The bill also creates the Neighborhood Safety and Crime Prevention Street Lighting Fund in the Department of Economic Development to provide matching grant funds to the cities and counties for streetlights. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 12-0 vote.

Red Light Camera Enforcement

The House Transportation Accountability Committee convened Thursday morning to discuss HB 2849, sponsored by Representative Don Mayhew (R-Crocker). The bill prohibits any political

subdivision from issuing a notice or violation in any intersection within their jurisdiction from the use of automated red light enforcement systems. The MO Municipal League, and Vera Mobility provided opposing testimony. No supporting testimony was provided to the committee. No action was taken on the bill.

Filed Bills of Interest:

APWA-General

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

APWA-Emergency Responders

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

APWA-Water

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

APWA-Transportation

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

APWA-Workforce Development

<https://govwatch.net/report/EeqO4OpbDX>

Upcoming Hearings of Interest:

03/25/2024 2:00 PM [House-Rules-Administrative Oversight Committee Hearing](#), HR 4

Executive Session (6):

[HB2571](#) Rep. Peggy McGaugh (R) Modifies provisions relating to financial statements of certain local governments

03/25/2024 3:30 PM [House-Rules-Legislative Oversight Committee Hearing](#), HR 4

Executive Session (8):

[HB2072](#) Rep. Don Mayhew (R) Modifies provisions relating to the motor fuel tax exemption

03/26/2024 8:00 AM [House-Local Government Committee Hearing](#), HR 7

Public Hearing (2):

[HB2409](#) Rep. Bill Falkner (R) Modifies provisions governing the "Task Force on the Future of Right-of-Way Management and Taxation"

[HB2862](#) Rep. Bill Falkner (R) Establishes the "Uniform Easement Relocation Act"

03/27/2024 12:00 PM [House-Transportation Infrastructure Committee Hearing](#), HR 7

Presentation by the Missouri Department of Transportation Director regarding the present and future road projects in the State.

Chamber Floor Calendars

House

Senate