

# **LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup> OF MISSOURI

8706 Manchester Rd., Suite 104, St. Louis, MO 63144  
314-961-6869 ★ league@lwvmissouri.org ★ www.lwvmissouri.org

## **LWV Legislative Bulletin** April 22, 2019

*LWV members are encouraged to personally communicate, as individual voters (not as LWV members), with their legislators on the various legislative bills. Previous issues of the Legislative Bulletin can be found at this link: <https://lwvmissouri.org/legislative-bulletin/>*

### **BUDGET, TAX & REVENUE**

State Revenue: Revenue collections still lagging.

### **TAX BILLS**

“Wayfair Fix” and Disagreements on State Tax Policy:

Senators have been having heated debates on the floor centered around disagreements on state tax policy, while a deal on the “Wayfair Fix” eludes Senators (so far). *See action info, below, on this.*

[House Bill 548](#): The bill received initial approval by the House last week and is on the calendar for Third Reading in the Senate. This bill is a real mess, is on the Senate calendar for 3<sup>rd</sup> reading but is probably not moving because of disagreements in the Senate. *See action info, below, on this.*

Both House Bill 548 and Senate Bill 46/50 include the “Wayfair Fix”, which would level the playing field for Missouri’s bricks and mortar retailers and bring in much needed revenue to support the services our communities need to thrive. However, both bills currently have counteracting provisions that would more than negate any benefit from the Wayfair Fix.

**We need advocates contacting their lawmakers with the following message.**

- **Please oppose Senate Bill 46/50 and House Bill 548 and instead pass a “clean” Wayfair Fix. Ask that they oppose HB 548 and instead support a clean version of the “Wayfair Fix”** (See the Missouri Budget Project’s quick summary of the Wayfair Fix here: <http://www.mobudget.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Wayfair-Fact-Sheet-April-2019.pdf>)
- Overall, Missouri’s current budget situation, already volatile, is likely to worsen as the changes included in Senate Bill 509 are implemented over the next several years.
- **Any additional changes to tax policy should help us meet current needs and not stop us from correcting issues when they arise.**

- Increases in state General Revenue should be used to address current budget needs and invested in the services in our local communities that help families, communities and the economy thrive.
- This is particularly important as lawmakers are considering paying for highway and bridge repairs from general revenue and we need to ensure that we can pay these additional costs.
- Our current budget situation is volatile, at best, and any changes in tax policy should help us meet current needs and not stop us from correcting issues when they arise. **House Bill 548 would make the volatility more severe.** Increases in General Revenue should be used to address current budget needs and not irresponsibly wasted on *new loopholes or giveaways*.

**Find your legislators at this link:** <https://www.senate.mo.gov/LegisLookup/Default.aspx>

## STATE BUDGET

[State Budget - Senate Appropriations](#): The Senate Appropriations Committee finished its committee work last week. The budget bills will be on the floor of the Senate this week. Several line items will be different than the House positions and will require a conference committee.

The Senate Appropriations Committee completed action on language and flexibility for HB 2, the K-12 education budget, and HB 3, the higher education budget on April 17. For K-12 education funding, the committee closed out the K-12 school funding formula at the House position of \$61.4M to fully fund the formula and increased pupil transportation by \$10M. For higher education funding, the committee took the House position of \$143.6M in core aid to community colleges. The committee also recommended a \$1M core increase for each of the public four-year institutions, except for a \$10M increase for Missouri State University and a \$10M increase for the UM System medicine program.

## INITIATIVE PETITION AND AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION

The Senate debated SS/SJR 1 (Sater) on April 17 but did not bring the bill to a vote. The joint resolution pertains to signature requirements for initiative petitions. SJR 1 more than doubles the signature requirements by mandating that petitions to amend the Constitution be signed by 15% of the legal voters in each of all eight Congressional districts (rather than the current requirement of 8% each from six of the eight districts) and also requires a two-thirds majority for a petition measure to be adopted, except for a petition to repeal prior initiative petitions such as Amendment 1. ***This measure would make it harder and more costly for citizens to bring forward relevant policies through the initiative process.***

The House gave first round approval to HCB 10 (Shaul) on April 17. The HCB bill includes several provisions regarding initiative petitions. The HCB imposes a minimum \$350 refundable filing fee for an initiative petition plus \$25 per page over ten pages. The HCB also includes the provisions of HB 496 (McGaugh) to require the Secretary of State to establish the format for initiative petition signature pages and provide the forms in electronic format. The HCB does not contain a fee per signature requirement. House amendments added language regarding selection of local election judges and requiring that the word count of the language to be listed on a ballot measure.

## **TITLE IX DUE PROCESS**

The Senate debated SS/SCS/SB 259 (Romine) on April 16 for nearly seven hours but did not bring the bill to a vote. The bill implements a new procedure for due process proceedings in higher education institutions for complaints made under Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments, which protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs. SB 259 revises Title IX procedures at higher education institutions. There is concern about the potential impact that related regulations put forward by Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos from the U.S. Dept. of Education would have on schools and the learning environment for all students.

## **CONCEALED WEAPONS ON CAMPUS**

The Senate Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety Committee will hear HB 575 (Dohrman) on April 18. The bill would allow campuses to designate campus protection officers allowed to carry weapons on campus. The bill also includes the provisions of HB 258 (Taylor). This language would take away local control of college and university governing boards to regulate concealed weapons on campus and allow any person, including students and staff, with a concealed carry permit to carry concealed weapons on campus.

*LWVMO position on Gun Control: Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.*

## **ENVIRONMENTAL BILLS**

The following information has been forwarded from some of our local LWV members.

HB 777: sponsored by Jeff Pogue.

This bill has advanced to second reading on 2/4/19. It was endorsed by the Missouri House on April 18. It requires the Department of Natural Resources to sell certain lands acquired through environmental settlement funds. "The Department of Natural Resources and all other state departments . . . shall sell at public auction any and all property interest to land situated in a county . . . without a township form of government and with more than ten thousand but fewer than twelve thousand inhabitants." If no purchaser, the property shall revert to ownership of the county. Also, the Department "shall not purchase any property interest in a county of . . . (same as above)."

This bill would clear the way for the selling of Eleven Point State Park in Oregon, Missouri (southern Missouri). Gov. Jay Nixon announced the creation of the 4,200 acre park in 2016. There is a lawsuit claiming easement along the Eleven Point River that limits the land for agricultural use.

HB1062, sponsored by Jim Hansen, Chris Dinkins, and others.

This bill has been given initial approval on April 16. The bill would block the Grain Belt Express from using eminent domain to string high power lines across Missouri. The Grain Belt Express is a project that would provide energy from Kansas wind farms across Kansas, Missouri, and Illinois, to Indiana and the eastern power grid. Missouri has been the main state to block this, based on opposition from farmers and local communities. Regulators and the Missouri Supreme Court has given approval to proceed. When this happened, legislators have stepped up to stop the project.