



# LEGISLATIVE REVIEW

Yolanda Young | District 22



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201 W Capitol Ave  
Room 105-A  
Jefferson City, MO

## COMMITTEES

- Agriculture
- Budget
- Ethics
- Subcommittee on Appropriations - Public Safety, Corrections, Transportation, and Revenue
- Joint Committee on Rural Economic Development
- Conference Committee on Budget

Dear Neighbors,

The federal government shutdown has been a major concern for each person I've talked with this month – and there seems to be no immediate plan coming from the national GOP to reopen. This has created numerous consequences and frustration for Jackson County residents and especially for the 3,000 Kansas City federal workers. If federal employees aren't working, they don't get paid. If they are unpaid, they and their families suffer. Additionally, recipients of their services and programs such as SNAP, WIC, and TANF will not have adequate access that they had previously.

Far too many families are already living from paycheck to paycheck, often resulting in significant financial strain and emotional trauma. The absence of a paycheck for federal workers, a lapse of benefits for SNAP recipients at the end of the month, and higher healthcare premiums will just add to the trauma these families are already experiencing. To meet the demand for some of the issues, Missouri Democrats and service organizations are busy planning and working hard to accommodate the increased demands. You can find many of these organizations and the resources they provide by googling the internet or you can call my office for information.

I know that navigating state government can often be overwhelming, but we are here to help. Again, if you need anything or have concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office. Call or email me at [Yolanda.young@house.mov.gov](mailto:Yolanda.young@house.mov.gov), or my legislative assistant, Rita Simpson at [rita.simpson@house.mo.gov](mailto:rita.simpson@house.mo.gov), (573) 751-3129. We will get back to you as soon as possible.

Yours in service,  
Yolanda Young

## CAPITOL NEWS

### Hanaway Sues to Block Referendum on Gerrymandering Bill



Missouri Attorney General Catherine Hanaway is trying to stop Missouri voters from deciding whether aggressively gerrymandered congressional districts Republican lawmakers enacted last month can take effect, filing a lawsuit in federal district court in St. Louis on Oct 15 that argues voters have no say in the matter.

The lawsuit comes as petition organizers say they have already collected about 100,000 of the minimum 107,000 signatures from registered Missouri voters necessary to put House Bill 1, an unprecedented mid-decade redrawing of the state's eight congressional districts, on the November 2026 ballot. The General

Assembly passed HB 1 in September during a special legislative session the governor called on orders of President Donald Trump, who has commanded Republican-controlled states to further gerrymander their congressional delegations in a desperate bid to retain the party's slim majority in the U.S. House of Representatives in the 2026 midterm elections.

Although the Missouri Constitution says voters "reserve the power to approve or reject by referendum any act of the general assembly," Hanaway, a Republican, claims in her lawsuit that under the U.S. Constitution, only state legislatures can determine congressional district boundaries. However, the provision she cites, Article I, Section 4 makes no mention of how congressional districts are to be drawn and instead just says state legislatures shall prescribe the "times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives."

Hanaway also argues that even though the Missouri Constitution says a referendum petition can be used to force a statewide vote on "any act of the general assembly," it somehow doesn't apply to congressional redistricting bills since the state constitution doesn't specifically say it does.

In addition to the lawsuit, Secretary of State Denny Hoskins, also a Republican, declared on Oct. 15 that any signatures collected for the petition prior to that date are invalid because he didn't formally approve it for circulation until that date – 33 days after the petition was filed.

However, the Missouri Supreme Court ruled in 2022 that since there is a tight 90-day window to collect referendum petition signatures and block a law from taking effect until it goes on the ballot, the secretary of state has no authority to delay the signature-gathering process and that laws purporting to empower him to do so are unconstitutional. Petition organizers sued Hoskins over the issue on Sept. 18, and that case remains pending.

Hanaway's lawsuit is Missouri General Assembly, et al., v. Richard Von Glahn and People Not Politicians. The lawsuit against Hoskins is People Not Politicians and Richard Von Glahn v. Missouri Secretary of State Denny Hoskins.

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## Appeals Court says Abortion Restrictions can Remain Blocked



Enforcement of several Missouri laws restricting abortion access will remain indefinitely blocked after the Missouri Court of Appeals Western District on Oct. 14 ruled that a lower court judge acted properly in temporarily enjoining the laws ahead of a trial to determine whether they violate constitutional protections for reproductive rights voters approved nearly a year ago.

“Because the circuit court’s preliminary injunctive relief ruling is not clearly against the logic of the circumstances presently before the circuit court and it does not reflect a ruling that is so arbitrary and unreasonable as to shock the sense of justice or otherwise indicate a lack of careful consideration, we find no abuse of the discretion that is bestowed upon trial courts in this preliminary setting,” Judge Mark Pfeiffer wrote for the three-judge panel. “Accordingly, the circuit court’s preliminary injunctive relief ruling is affirmed.”

Jackson County Circuit Judge Jerri Zhang put the laws on hold, finding plaintiffs are likely to prevail on their claims that the laws violate the Missouri Constitution and will suffer immediate harm if the laws remain in effect while the litigation is pending. A trial on the merits of the case currently is scheduled for January.

Planned Parenthood, Missouri's only remaining abortion provider, sued the state late last year, alleging that the new constitutional provisions protecting reproductive rights rendered several existing statutory restrictions unconstitutional. The laws Zhang has blocked include a mandatory 72-hour abortion waiting period and several strict licensing requirements that apply only to abortion clinics.

Missouri Attorney General Catherine Hanaway, a Republican, is expected to appeal the Western District ruling to the state Supreme Court. The case is Comprehensive Health of Planned Parenthood Great Plains v. State of Missouri.

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## **Religious Schools get 98 Percent of Tuition Voucher Funding**

Nearly 98 percent of the first-ever round of direct taxpayer funding for tuition to K-12 private schools is going to religious institutions, the Missouri Independent reported on Oct. 13. Of the 2,329 scholarships the state awarded in August, only 59 went to students in nonreligious schools, according to the online news organization.

The Independent based its report on invoices for scholarships received by the Missouri State Treasurer's Office, which administers the tuition voucher program. The Independent team obtained the invoices through an open records request.

While the Republican-controlled General Assembly first authorized Missouri's private school voucher program in 2021, until this year it had been exclusively funded by private donations indirectly supported by state tax credits. This year, however, lawmakers appropriated \$50 million in taxpayer funds for the program, marking the first time the state has used tax dollars to directly pay for private school tuition. According to the Independent, \$15.6 million of that appropriation had been expended through August.

A lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the direct state funding remains pending in Cole County Circuit Court. In August, however, the judge declined to issue an injunction blocking

the state from disbursing the funds while the case is being litigated. The case is Missouri National Education Association, et al., v. State of Missouri.

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## **Court Rules Streaming Companies not Subject to Local Fee**

The Missouri Court of Appeals Eastern District on Oct. 14 rejected a St. Louis County city's attempt to extract licensing fees from providers of video streaming services, ruling that the 2007 state law under which the city sued doesn't apply to streaming and a 2024 update to the law merely clarified that fact.

At issue is the Video Service Provider Act of 2007, which replaced the traditional franchise process under which cable television providers had to individually negotiate with local municipalities to access public rights of way for their networks. Instead, the act authorized cable companies to obtain a single statewide authorization from the Missouri Public Service Commission in exchange for paying fees to the municipalities in which they operate.

In 2018, Creve Coeur sued several streaming companies on behalf of itself and other similarly situated cities, claiming the companies hadn't been paying the fees required by the VSPA. While the case was pending, the Missouri legislature modified the VSPA in 2024 to clarify that the law's definition of "video service" doesn't include streaming.

After a St. Louis County judge subsequently issued a summary judgment in favor the streaming providers, Creve Coeur appealed, claiming the 2024 amendment to the VSPA violated the Missouri Constitution by imposing a retrospective change to the law and extinguishing debts the companies owed to the city for unpaid fees.

However, the three-judge panel concluded the plain language of the original VSPA didn't apply to streaming services and that the subsequent revision was just a clarification that made no substantive change to the law. Since the VSPA never applied to streaming content, the court said the revision couldn't have "extinguished an indebtedness because there was no indebtedness to extinguish."

The city could still appeal to the Missouri Supreme Court. The case is City of Creve Coeur v. DirecTV, LLC.

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## **Governor Releases Workforce of the Future Challenge Report**



Governor Mike Kehoe, in partnership with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development (DHEWD), released the Governor's Workforce of the Future Challenge Report. The report, issued under Executive Order 25-16, outlines recommendations to modernize Missouri's career and technical education (CTE) system and strengthen the state's workforce pipeline.

The initiative surveyed more than 5,600 Missourians, including parents, students, educators, and employers. Findings showed broad support for CTE and identified key areas for improvement, such as expanding work-based learning, improving career advising, and deepening partnerships between schools and businesses.

Priority recommendations include:

- Strengthen work-based learning and employer engagement through expanded apprenticeships, innovation grants, and resources for non-traditional students.
- Enhance early career exploration and advising by hiring additional advisors, improving tools like Missouri Connections, and starting career counseling earlier in schools.
- Increase public awareness of CTE opportunities through a statewide communication and marketing effort highlighting student success and high-demand career paths.

The Governor's Office will review these recommendations to guide future efforts to expand CTE access and align education with workforce needs

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## **Governor Announces Recommended Updates to Missouri's Parole Process**

Governor Kehoe released recommended updates to Missouri's parole rules following a comprehensive review under Executive Order 25-07. The Department of Corrections and the

Missouri Parole Board assembled a stakeholder working group—including representatives from law enforcement, corrections, the judiciary, and the public—to evaluate current rules and suggest improvements.

Key recommendations include:

- Removing outdated regulations and updating minimum parole eligibility requirements.
- Allowing up to two delegates to provide information on rehabilitation and release readiness during hearings.
- Clarifying procedural rights for alleged violators, including access to attorneys and mitigation witnesses.
- Implementing a new grid procedure permitting parole release without a hearing for certain non-violent offenses, while cases involving violent or weapon-related crimes would continue to require a hearing.

The updates aim to increase clarity, transparency, and accountability in parole decision-making while balancing public safety with offender reintegration.

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## **Governor Announces Nearly \$10 Million in Grants for Missouri Blue Shield Communities**

Governor Kehoe announced nearly \$10 million in grants awarded to Missouri communities recognized under the Blue Shield Program, which promotes public safety through comprehensive crime reduction and law enforcement support plans. A total of 201 counties, cities, and towns earned Blue Shield designation, making them eligible for funding.

Grants support law enforcement training, equipment, and technology, including body cameras, ballistic vests, mobile data terminals, license plate readers, radios, and patrol vehicles. Eligible communities included 60 counties, 137 cities, and four towns.

The Blue Shield Program, established under Executive Order 25-03 as part of the Safer Missouri initiative, recognizes communities demonstrating strong public safety commitment through resolutions, funding, community policing, recruitment and retention programs, and regional partnerships. DPS monitors participating communities annually, with future application opportunities in 2026.

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## **DCI Reminds Missourians of Medicare Open Enrollment Oct. 15 – Dec. 7**

DCI reminded Medicare-eligible Missourians to review their plan options during the annual open enrollment period from October 15 through December 7. Individuals may change Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage or Medicare Advantage plans during this period. Free assistance is available through Missouri's State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP), which helps residents compare plans, determine eligibility for subsidies, and make informed decisions without sales pressure. Residents can access SHIP assistance by calling 1-800-390-3330 or visiting [missouriship.org](https://missouriship.org).

DCI cautions consumers to protect against scams that target seniors during open enrollment, including unsolicited calls, ads, or requests for personal information.

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## **DCI Warns Against Termination of Coverage for Storm-Damaged Homes**

The Missouri Department of Commerce and Insurance (DCI) issued a bulletin directing insurers not to cancel or non-renew policies for homeowners still completing repairs from the spring 2025 storms. The directive follows reports of a few insurers terminating coverage for affected residents.

DCI Director Angela Nelson emphasized that the department prioritizes consumer protection. Since January 2025, DCI's Consumer Affairs Division has handled over 16,000 calls and 18,000 emails, successfully recovering more than \$28 million for Missouri consumers.

Missourians with insurance issues can contact DCI's Consumer Hotline at 800-726-7390 or visit [insurance.mo.gov](https://insurance.mo.gov). DCI oversees insurance, banking, utilities, and professional licensing to protect consumers and enforce compliance.

## September 2025 General Revenue Report

Net general revenue collections for September 2025 totaled \$1.13 billion, down 9.2 percent from \$1.24 billion in September 2024. Fiscal year-to-date collections for FY 2026 are \$3.00 billion, a 0.6 percent decrease from the prior year.

Year-to-date collections by tax type:

- Individual Income Tax: Up 3.3% to \$1.93 billion; down 5.0% for the month.
- Pass-Through Entity Tax: Down 31.6% to \$59.0 million; down 35% for the month.
- Sales and Use Tax: Up 1.3% to \$857.1 million; up 2.3% for the month.
- Corporate Income and Franchise Taxes: Down 30.9% to \$159.5 million; down 36.8% for the month.
- All Other Collections: Down 8.7% to \$222.3 million; down 13.6% for the month.
- Refunds: Down 11.2% to \$228.4 million; down 18.4% for the month.

The report reflects a snapshot in time; figures may fluctuate due to economic and fiscal factors.

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## Missourians are About to Lose Food Assistance due to Shutdown

An estimated 667,000 Missourians are slated to lose their food assistance benefits starting in November due to the ongoing shutdown of the Republican-controlled federal government. While the Missouri Department of Social Services will continue to accept new applications for the program, no benefits will be distributed while the shutdown continues.

The federal government has been shut down since Oct. 1 due the failure of the Republican-controlled Congress to enact a budget resolution necessary to fund federal agencies after spending authority for the previous federal fiscal year expired.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, commonly known as food stamps, provides assistance to low-income families to ensure they have basic access to food. About 42 million people nationwide rely on SNAP, about 40 percent of whom are children, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which oversees the program.

While SNAP is entirely funded by the federal government, each individual state is responsible for distributing benefits to its residents. Missouri receives approximately \$130 million a month for SNAP, or about \$1.5 billion annually.

Responding to questions from reporters on Oct. 20, Gov. Mike Kehoe, a Republican, cast doubt on the possibility the state could temporarily backfill the missing federal funds for SNAP until the shutdown ends, according to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. Kehoe said that in addition to the lack of unencumbered state funds that could be redirected to SNAP, state budget law doesn't contain a mechanism for spending state, rather than federal, money on the program. For more information go to <https://mydss.mo.gov/mogov-search/results?search=snap>

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## **Dispute Over Chickens Invalidates Omnibus Land use Bill**

A lawsuit over raising chickens on residential property has resulted in a Cole County judge declaring a wide-ranging omnibus bill passed in 2024 to be unconstitutional. The legislation's many now-invalidated provisions include a ban on local governments imposing eviction moratoriums, requiring license fees and property taxes for businesses to be suspended during government-ordered shutdowns and authorizing Missouri counties to establish land banks for abandoned property.

A homeowner's association at the Lake of the Ozarks filed the lawsuit last year challenging a provision of House Bill 2062 that declared restrictive covenants prohibiting property owners from having up to six chickens on their property to be legally unenforceable. The association alleged the bill violated state constitutional requirements that legislation not be changed from its original purpose and be limited to a single-subject that is clearly reflected in the bill's title.

While HB 2062 originally was a one-sentence bill to prohibit local governments from imposing eviction moratoriums, by the time it won final passage it had ballooned into a 75-page omnibus measure with about a dozen different provisions loosely pertaining to "the use of real property."

Circuit Judge Brian Stumpe, a Republican, on Oct. 20 ruled in favor of the homeowner's association on all counts, including an additional claim that the bill violated the contracts

clauses of both the state and federal constitutions by invalidating restrictive covenants prohibiting the keeping of chickens. Stumpe struck down HB 2062 in its entirety.

The Missouri Attorney General's Office, which is responsible for defending the constitutionality of state laws, is expected to appeal to the state Court of Appeals Western District. The case is Four Seasons Lakeside's Property Owners Association Inc. v. State of Missouri, et al.

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## **Dismissal of Lawsuit Against Former House Speaker Upheld**

The Missouri Court of Appeals Western District on Oct. 21 upheld a lower court's dismissal of a whistleblower lawsuit against former House Speaker Dean Plocher on the grounds that the plaintiff couldn't demonstrate that the speaker had supervisory authority over her.

The ruling, however, is significant for establishing in appellate precedent that the chief clerk of the Missouri House of Representatives, the chamber's top administrator, is not subject to control or removal by the speaker, its elected leader.

The lawsuit, filed in 2024 by then-House Chief Clerk Dana Miller, claimed Plocher, a Republican, retaliated against her after she publicly raised concerns about a nearly \$400,000, no-bid annual contract for constituent management software that Plocher had been pushing for, allegedly at the behest of a political supporter. Miller said the software was cost-prohibitive and duplicative of a system the House had already developed internally. Ultimately, the House did not enter into the contract.

Plocher's actions in the matter, along with other allegations, resulted in a month-long investigation by the House Ethics Committee, which dismissed the case in May 2024 without issuing any findings. However, a draft report that was made public a month earlier, though not adopted by the committee, accused Plocher's office of obstructing the investigation.

Miller retired in January after her last term as clerk ended. The clerk is elected every two years by majority vote of the 163-member House. Plocher's term as speaker ended at the same time.

Because Plocher lacked the individual authority to remove Miller, the three-judge appellate panel said the lower-court judge appropriately dismissed the case since Missouri's whistleblower statute only applies when a "supervisor or appointing authority of any public employer" retaliates against an employee for exposing alleged malfeasance or misconduct.

Writing for the appellate panel, Judge Lisa White Harwick said that while Plocher had threatened to “choke” Miller’s authority and expressed a belief that she worked for him, his belief did not make it reality.

“Under House rules, Miller was an officer of the House who answered only to a majority vote of the full House,” White wrote. “Thus, while Plocher may have expressed a desire to supervise, control and remove Miller as Chief Clerk, he had no authority to do so. Indeed, Plocher had no more authority over Miller than any other House member had over her. The most Plocher could do was seek a full House vote to remove her as Chief Clerk, and no vote to remove Miller ever occurred.”

The case in which Miller could appeal to the Missouri Supreme Court, is *Dana Miller v. Missouri House of Representatives, et al.*



Pictured here with me is Kim Reese (left) and Gregg Hollins (right), leaders of the Missouri Council of the Blind (MCB). I spoke to their members and other attendees at the MCB 2025 Annual Convention.



This month, I joined with Kansas City residents, leaders, and KCPD in a Peace Walk to raise awareness about how working together is key to reducing crime in our neighborhoods

Programming in support of Ivanhoe's "Safety & Resilience" initiative that promotes healthy habits, encourages social cohesion, and reduces risk of violence.



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Harvest days are subject to produce availability and only while supplies last.

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*Are you a person  
experiencing homelessness  
or facing financial hardship?  
Are you struggling to meet  
basic needs and access  
essential resources? Are you  
having difficulty obtaining  
clothing or maintaining its  
cleanliness?*

*Wash Wednesday is  
designed to support you!*



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## Kansas City Area Food Pantries



Food pantries and food banks play a key role in addressing food insecurity in the state of Missouri. Food insecurity is described by the United States Department of Agriculture as “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”

According to reports from the University of Missouri, almost 780,000 Missourians are food insecure while an additional 356,000 are experiencing hunger or very low food insecurity. Reports from Feeding Missouri states that there are 6 major food banks in our state that distributes over 120 million pounds of food every year through over 1,500 community feeding programs located all across the state. As mentioned, food banks and pantries play a major role in reducing immediate hunger and food insecurity – but they alone cannot solve the ever-increasing problem of hunger. This will take a collaborative effort of individuals, private, nonprofit, and public sectors. In my view, there needs to be major policy responses that address the root causes of food insecurity.

If you know someone who needs food assistance, [PLEASE CLICK THE ICON ABOVE](#) to explore potential resources and share the information with them.



### Need Health Insurance?

Our Medicaid Enrollment Specialists can help you. You may qualify for:

- Medicaid Insurance for your child
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**Mental Health FIRST AID**

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR MENTAL WELLBEING

## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

### WHY YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents ages 12-18.

**10.2%**

of youth will be diagnosed with a substance use disorder in their lifetime.

Source: Youth Mental Health First Aid\*\*

**1 IN 5**

teens and young adults live with a mental health condition.

Source: National Alliance on Mental Illness\*

**50%**

of all mental illnesses begin by age 14, and 75% by the mid-20s.

Source: Archives of General Psychiatry\*\*\*

### WHO SHOULD KNOW MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

- Teachers.
- School Staff.
- Coaches.
- Camp Counselors.
- Youth Group Leaders.
- Parents.
- Adults who Work with Youth.

### WHAT MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COVERS

- Common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges in this age group, including anxiety, depression, eating disorders and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD).
- Common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- How to interact with a child or adolescent in crisis.
- How to connect the youth with help.
- Expanded content on trauma, substance use, self-care and the impact of social media and bullying.

### THREE WAYS TO LEARN

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  - » A video conference.
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- A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- G**ive reassurance and information.
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.

#### Sources

\* National Alliance on Mental Illness. (n.d.). Kids. <https://www.nami.org/Youth-Juveniles/Kids-Teens-and-Young-Adults/Kids>

\*\* Mental Health First Aid. (2020). Mental Health First Aid USA for adults assisting children and youth. National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

\*\*\* Kessler, R., Berglund, P., Demler, O., Jin, R., Merikangas, K.R., Walters, E.E. (2005, June). Lifetime prevalence and age-at-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 62(6), 593-602. doi: 10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.593

To find a course or contact a Mental Health First Aid Instructor in your area, visit [MHFA.org](http://MHFA.org) or email [Hello@MentalHealthFirstAid.org](mailto:Hello@MentalHealthFirstAid.org).