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Bills Supporting Missouri's Armed Service Members Signed into Law

Missouri Governor Mike Parson has signed two legislative bills, HB 1495 and SB 912, aimed at enhancing support for Missouri veterans and military members. These bills also mandate that the Missouri Veterans Commission (MVC) evaluate existing practices and propose new measures to prevent veteran suicide.

- **HB 1495** emphasizes tasks the Missouri Veterans Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Mental Health, to expand efforts in line with the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019. The bill mandates a thorough review and subsequent implementation of procedures, programs, and treatment options to combat veteran suicide, with a focus on tailored support and proactive measures. HB 1495 also requires annual reporting on progress and effectiveness, demonstrating Missouri's proactive approach and dedication to ensuring the well-being of those who have served the nation.
- **SB 912** introduces several measures to support military personnel and veterans. It allows active-duty military members and their spouses stationed in Missouri to serve as election judges and clarifies that signing bonuses are considered salary for military income tax deductions in the state. The bill also establishes a new medallion for every military operation during the Afghanistan War, authorizes tuition fee waivers and grants for Missouri National Guard members pursuing undergraduate degrees, and creates the Missouri Veterans and Job Opportunity Grant Program. Additionally, SB 912 includes provisions for a full state tax deduction on military and National Guard enlistment bonuses, simplifies the process for veterans to obtain handicap placards and specialty license plates, and mandates collaboration between the Missouri Veterans Commission and the Department of Mental Health to address veteran suicide. The bill extends benefits to

veterans who served on active duty or in the National Guard from 2001 to 2021, easing procedures for disabled veterans to verify their disability status at the DMV using VA documentation.

"We are proud to be a leading state for veterans, military members, and their families where they can find professional success, affordability, welcoming communities, and, above all, support and respect for their service to our great nation," **Governor Parson** said. "The legislation we are signing today continues our commitment to our nation's heroes that Missouri will remain one of the best places for veterans and service members to live, work, and raise a family."

Governor Parson also signed the following bills into law:

- **HB 2111**, a measure aimed at bolstering government transparency and accountability, grants the State Auditor broader authority to audit any political subdivision where evidence of misconduct, including fraud or waste, exists, without requiring an invitation from local authorities or voter petition. It also ensures the confidentiality of audit records to protect whistleblowers. This legislation fulfills Missouri's commitment to transparent and responsible governance.
- **SB 1111** mandates that prescribed pediatric extended care facilities obtain a license from the Department of Health and Senior Services. These facilities provide medically necessary services to children under six with complex medical needs requiring at least four hours of skilled nursing daily under a physician's order. Services may include nursing, personal care, nutritional and developmental assessments, and various therapies. The Department has the authority to issue, suspend, or revoke licenses, conduct inspections, and establish related rules. Certain facilities with specific caregiver ratios, hospitals, and programs licensed by the Department of Mental Health are exempt from this requirement. Additionally, the bill extends current licensure compliance provisions for child care programs to all licensed programs for school-age children, and exempts programs serving only children in sixth grade or above from certain licensing requirements.
- **SB 802** aims to boost rural economic development through targeted tax incentives. Known as the "Missouri Rural Access to Capital Act," the legislation encourages investment in rural businesses by offering tax credits to investors. These credits, which increase after the initial two years, are capped at \$16 million annually. The bill requires rural funds to apply for eligibility, meet specific investment criteria, and report annually on their economic impact. Additionally, the act includes provisions for tax credit recapture and program exit conditions with a sunset clause taking effect in 2030.
- **SB 1359** is a comprehensive legislative package that encompasses various modifications and enactments concerning financial institutions and insurance regulations in Missouri. This bill introduces significant changes, including extending medical assistance eligibility for individuals receiving breast or cervical cancer screenings, adjusting motor vehicle financial responsibility enforcement program requirements, and establishing the Money Transmission Modernization Act

of 2024 to regulate money transmission activities. It also expands confidentiality provisions for insurance records, outlines procedures for reinsurance contract disposition during insurer conservation or liquidation, increases coverage limits for self-service storage insurance, and introduces specific regulations for Missouri mutual insurance companies. Additionally, the bill repeals certain restrictions on real estate loans, allows lenders to charge consumers for credit report costs under the Missouri Consumer Loan Act, and introduces disclosure requirements for commercial financing transactions. SB 1359 aims to modernize regulations, enhance transparency, and improve oversight across these sectors in Missouri.

- **SB 1453** designates a portion of Highway 63 in Rolla as the "Dr. Dan Brown Memorial Highway." This decision honors the remarkable life and service of Dr. Dan Brown, a beloved public servant and pillar of the community. A former legislator for the state of Missouri, Dr. Brown's legacy is deeply rooted in his dedication to his constituents and his unwavering commitment to public service. Throughout his esteemed career, he demonstrated exemplary leadership and compassion, making enduring contributions to the state of Missouri.
- **HB 1909** focuses on reforming county committee meeting requirements by eliminating the mandatory obligation for county committees to hold meetings within the county seat before primary elections. Additionally, HB 1909 removes the stipulation that the St. Louis city committee chair must designate the meeting location on the same day as the county committee. These changes will provide greater flexibility for committees to choose meeting venues that best serve their constituents' needs and enhance administrative efficiency while modernizing and improving accessibility in local government.
- **SB 748** deals with the Federal Reimbursement Allowance (FRA), which would renew taxes on hospitals, pharmacies, nursing homes and ambulance services that are essential to Missouri's Medicaid program. These taxes amount to around \$1.4 billion, which then attracts an additional \$2.8 billion in federal matching funds. Typically, Missouri covers about 35 percent of its Medicaid costs, with the federal government covering the remainder. Since their inception in 1991, these taxes have been renewed 17 times. After much debate and a record-long filibuster in the Missouri Senate, legislators voted to approve the measure, which now includes a sunset clause that would take effect in five years on September 30, 2029.
- **SB 1296** authorizes the conveyance of state property located in the City of Kirksville; the City of Hannibal, Marion County; the City of Springfield, Greene County; the City of Rich Hill, Bates County; the City of Jefferson, Cole County; the City of Joplin, Jasper County; the City of Monett, Barry County; the City of Lebanon, Laclede County; the City of St. Louis.
- **SB 751** became law despite not receiving Governor Parson's signature; it was enacted because it was not returned for a veto or approval. In his letter, Governor Parson expressed concerns that the

bill expanded a flawed federal program but allowed it to become law nonetheless. The law addresses the distribution of 340B drugs, mandating that entities cannot restrict the acquisition or delivery of these drugs to pharmacies contracted by covered entities. Violations are deemed unlawful merchandising practices, with each affected package of 340B drugs representing a separate violation. The Board of Pharmacy is empowered to investigate these violations and impose disciplinary measures. The law ensures compliance with federal regulations, stipulating that its provisions cannot be less restrictive or conflict with existing federal or state laws, and acknowledges that federal requirements for limited distribution are not considered violations.

These laws will take effect on August 28, 2024.

Governor Parson to Embark on Trade Mission to United Kingdom, Belgium to Promote Missouri

Governor Mike Parson and First Lady Teresa Parson will lead a Trade Mission to the United Kingdom and Belgium from July 22-26, aimed at promoting Missouri as a top business destination. The trip is intended to strengthen trade relationships and attract new investments, reflecting Missouri's significant trade ties with these nations. In 2023, Missouri exported \$307 million worth of goods to the U.K. and \$330 million to Belgium.

During the mission, Governor Parson will engage with government officials, diplomats, and business leaders in London and Brussels. Key activities include visiting the Farnborough International Airshow, meeting with major companies like Boeing and Anheuser-Busch InBev, and participating in a reception with the British Ambassador to the U.S.

August Primary Just Around the Corner

Missouri's primary elections are coming up on Tuesday, August 6th. Polls will be open from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., and you can vote absentee without needing an excuse until August 5th.

Remember, Missouri law requires voters to show a valid photo ID with an expiration date issued by the federal government or the state. Acceptable IDs include a Missouri driver's or nondriver's license, a passport, or a military ID. If you don't have a valid ID, you can still vote using a provisional ballot. A bipartisan committee will review these ballots to ensure they match your voter registration signature. You can locate your polling place on the Secretary of State's website.

In addition to voting for presidential primary candidates, U.S. Congressional candidates, and state and local officials, Missouri voters will also decide on two potential amendments to the state constitution:

1. **Amendment 1** proposes exempting child care facilities from property taxes statewide to help address the state's child care shortage. The amendment would add child care facilities — and other

properties used to care for children outside their homes — to the list of properties exempt from tax, including government property, nonprofit cemeteries and homes owned by people with total service-connected disabilities. Properties that have a portion used for childcare be authorized by an assessing authority to receive the exemption. The amendment passed the Missouri Senate 33-0 in March 2023 and the Missouri House 91-27 in May 2023.

2. **Amendment 4** would increase the minimum funding required for the Kansas City, Missouri, Police Department, requiring Kansas City to spend at least one-quarter of its general revenue on policing. This follows a previous successful vote in November 2022 that was overturned by the Missouri Supreme Court. The amendment aims to address concerns over police funding and public safety measures in Kansas City.

These amendments are important decisions that will shape Missouri's future, so be sure to vote and have your voice heard on August 6th!



The native ‘honey bee’ has been our state insect since 1985.

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