



KC Chamber Missouri Legislative Report – January 18, 2019

The second week of the 2019 Missouri legislative session is complete. This week was filled with committee assignments, chair designees, and bill referrals. The House and Senate are finalizing their hearing schedules and committee room assignments. New members are slowly acquainting themselves with Missouri's Capitol and the happenings within. Activity and intensity are certain to increase during the weeks ahead.

State of the State Address

The highlight of the week was Wednesday, during which Governor Mike Parson (R) delivered his first State of the State Address to a Joint Session of the 100th Missouri General Assembly. The Governor's speech focused on two core priorities that included workforce development and infrastructure. Stating his belief that these two items will chart the course of success for future generations of Missourians.

The focus on infrastructure largely comes after November's failed ballot measure to increase gas taxes by ten cents for the state's roads and bridges. Despite this defeat, the Governor reaffirmed his commitment to long-term investments in Missouri's infrastructure. A boldly proposed \$350 million bonding package, including an additional \$50 million for transportation cost share programs to assist cities and counties with local infrastructure needs, was well-received by many legislators but proved alarming to a few. Within the infrastructure platform, the Governor also proposed \$5 million to enhance access to high-speed broadband Internet.

The Governor's workforce agenda begins with departmental reorganization, with a focus on economic development, workforce, and higher education working together to create jobs and provide skilled employees. He announced his desire for a \$22 million scholarship program called Fast Track, which will allow Missourians to receive training in high-demand areas taught at community colleges, technical schools, and universities. Morphing the Missouri Works Program into a new initiative known as Missouri One Start, the Governor recommended an additional \$10 million for new and existing businesses to upgrade their workers' skills.

Within the \$30 billion budget proposed this week, the Governor also included a \$64 million increase for K-12 education, level funding for higher education, a 3% pay raise for all state employees, and larger increases for prison guards. For a review of Governor Parson's complete FY 2020 budget, please refer to the following link: <https://oa.mo.gov/budget-planning/budget-information/2020-budget-information/fiscal-year-2020-executive-budget>