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The week Capitol regulars anticipate each year has arrived. As of adjournment today, the 2019 legislative spring break commences. Missouri's elected officials, staff, and lobbyists will enjoy a much-deserved break from one another and legislative activity for the entire week of March 18th.

Buck O'Neil
The House General Laws Committee convened Monday afternoon to discuss HCR 34, sponsored by Representative Louis Riggs (R-Hannibal). The resolution urges the Baseball Hall of Fame to induct John Jordan "Buck" O'Neil who played for the Kansas City Monarchs and led the effort to establish the Negro Leagues Museum. Representative Barbara Washington from Kansas City provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was presented.

Film tax credit
The House Economic Development Committee convened Monday evening to consider passage of HB 923, sponsored by Representative Kathy Swan (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill authorizes a tax credit for qualified film projects and caps the program at $4.5 million. Within minutes, the committee passed the bill by a vote of 12-1.

Family and medical leave
The House Economic Development Committee convened Monday evening to discuss HCR 40, sponsored by Representative Chris Dinkins (R-Potosi). The resolution urges the US Congress to adopt a Paid Family and Medical Leave law. During bill presentation, the sponsor indicated that leave is critical to growing stronger families and retaining a productive workforce. Some committee members voiced concerns with potential adversarial impacts paid leave would have on small businesses. The Women's Foundation supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

Sales tax cap
The Senate Government Reform Committee met Tuesday morning to consider SB 149, sponsored by Senator Andrew Koenig (R-Manchester). The bill places a cap of 7.275% on the combined rate of local sales taxes. Missouri currently has over 2400 taxing jurisdictions but no statewide policies. During bill presentation, the sponsor indicated that he isn't tied to the exact cap percentage but is attempting to create consistency. Associated Industries of MO supported the bill. The MO Municipal League, City of Kansas City, and Municipal League of Metro STL opposed the proposal.

The House dedicated floor time Tuesday afternoon to debate HB 374, sponsored by Representative Phil Christofanelli (R-St. Peters). The bill, as originally filed, creates a statewide cap preventing political subdivisions from adopting sales tax rates higher than 14%. This cap includes the combination of all state and local sales taxes. During the bill's progression through the committee process, substitute language was adopted to remove cap language and replace it with provisions requiring sales tax ballots to include accumulative data of all local taxes to inform voters of actual tax burdens within their municipalities. During floor debate, Representative Jim Neely (R-Cameron) further amended the bill by reducing sales tax on feminine hygiene products and diapers. Representative Jon Carpenter (D-Kansas City) amended the bill requiring the sales tax rate being charged at time of purchase to be included on receipts. Once modified, the House provided its first of two necessary approval votes. The House revisited the issue Thursday morning and, by a vote of 108-43, recommitted the bill to the House Rules Committee.

Early childhood
The House Elementary and Secondary Education Committee convened Tuesday morning to discuss HB 594, sponsored by Representative Kathy Swan (R-Cape Girardeau). The bill expands the eligibility of children between the age of three and five to qualify for a district's or charter school's calculation of average daily attendance if they attend an early childhood education program under contract with a school. The Southside Early Development Center in St. Louis, Aligned, and Kids Win MO provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was presented.

The Senate Education Committee met Tuesday afternoon to consider Senate companion legislation, SB 407, sponsored by Senator Wayne Wallingford (R-Cape Girardeau). Aligned supported the bill. Like its House counterpart, no opposing testimony was recorded.

New business tax credits
The Senate Economic Development Committee met Tuesday morning to consider SB 355, sponsored by Senator Mike Cierpiot (R-Lee's Summit). The bill modifies provisions relating to the New Business Facility Tax Credit by updating the definition regarding who may receive the credit. The sponsor's objective is to modernize statutes to include web-based facilities. Burns & McDonnell, MO Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of MO, Cerner, and City of St. Louis supported the bill. No opposing testimony was presented.

A+ program
The Senate Education Committee convened Tuesday afternoon to consider passage of SB 205, sponsored by Senator Lauren Arthur (D-Kansas City). The bill modifies provisions relating to the A+ Schools Program by expanding the program to dual enrollment high school students. During bill presentation, the sponsor indicated her intent to enable high school students the ability to earn college credits while in high school to make college more affordable. Though, recognizing issues with expanding the A+ program without sufficient funding, the sponsor proposed substitute language that prioritizes funding for the current A+ program, as it exists today. Should the A+ program receive full funding, this expansion would then become effective. Once amended, the committee passed the bill by a vote of 7-0.

Collateral source
The House Judiciary Committee convened Tuesday evening to discuss HB 121, sponsored by Representative Bruce DeGroot (R-Chesterfield). The bill modifies provisions relating to the collateral source rule and provides that parties may introduce evidence of actual costs, rather

than the value, of medical care rendered. As expected, numerous business organizations, medical providers, and insurance entities appeared before the committee to support the bill. The Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys and Americans for Patient Access testified in opposition to the bill.

Venue shopping
The House Judiciary Committee then turned its attention towards SB 7, sponsored by Senator Ed Emery (R-Lamar). The bill modifies provisions of civil procedure regarding joinder and venue. Like nearly all tort reform bills, business and insurance entities joined to support the bill, leaving the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys to oppose.

Silica claims
Representative Jeff Shawan (R-Poplar Bluff) appeared before the House Judiciary Committee Tuesday evening to present HB 709. The bill establishes the Silica Claims Priorities Act. The MO Chamber of Commerce, Associated Industries of MO, and Capital Sand Company provided supporting testimony. The Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys opposed the bill.

Unemployment compensation
The House Special Committee on Small Business met in executive session Wednesday morning to consider passage of HB 375, sponsored by Representative Phil Christofanelli (R-St. Peters). The bill provides that any employer required to make contributions under unemployment compensation laws shall pay an annual unemployment automation adjustment equal to .015% of its total taxable wages for the twelve-month period ending the preceding June 30th. The Division of Employment Security is permitted to lower this rate under certain circumstances. Funds generated will be used to modernize the Department of Labor's computer programs used to calculate rates. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a unanimous 7-0 vote.

Extended-release opioids
The Senate Health and Pensions Committee met Wednesday morning to consider SB 275, sponsored by Senator David Sater (R-Cassville). The bill limits prescription of long-acting or extended-release opioids by dentists. According to the bill sponsor, dentists prescribe 12% of all opioids and his objective is to minimize opioid addictions and death by limiting duration and dosage of prescriptions. The MO Dental Board supported the bill. No opposing testimony was recorded.

Stadium funding
The House dedicated floor time Wednesday morning to consider passage of HB 677, sponsored by Representative Jon Patterson (R-Lee's Summit). The bill modifies provisions relating to certain tourism infrastructure facilities by the continuation of a $3 million appropriation for the Jackson County Sports Complex and a new $6 million appropriation for the Enterprise Center. After brief discussion, the House provided its first of two necessary approval votes.

Fuel tax
The Senate Transportation, Infrastructure and Public Safety Committee convened Thursday morning to discuss SB 430, sponsored by Senator Doug Libla (R-Poplar Bluff). The bill increases the motor fuel tax from $0.17 per gallon to $0.23 per gallon, using a gradual two-cent per gallon increase over a three-year period. The MO Department of Transportation, MO Transportation Development Council, Associated Industries of MO, MO Petroleum Marketers

and Convenient Stores Association, Greater KC Chamber of Commerce, Construction Employers Coalition, MO Concrete Association, South City Chamber of Commerce, MO Soybean Association, MO Farm Bureau, MO Limestone Association, MO Society of Professional Engineers, MO Chamber of Commerce, Associated General Contractors of MO, Empower MO, and MO Municipal League provided supporting testimony. No opposing testimony was presented.

Port Authority
The House Transportation Committee met in executive session Thursday morning to consider passage of HB 1061, sponsored by Representative Jon Patterson (R-Lee's Summit). The bill exempts sales and leases of real or personal property made by or to any port authority involving the use of such tax-exempt bonds from taxation. After no discussion, the committee passed the bill by a 10-0 vote.

Next week
As mentioned earlier in this report, the annual legislative spring break commenced upon adjournment today! Accordingly, no bill movement or action will occur until the legislature convenes on March 25th. Given there is nothing to report, you will not receive a report next Thursday but reporting will begin again March 28th. Enjoy a break from the activity and us!

Bill listing
As always, an updated bill listing is attached for your review.

Prepared by:

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