



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MISSOURI

Legislative Update May 1, 2018

Missouri Tax Policy Update

From the Missouri Budget Project:

The [House Ways and Means Committee](#) took up [Senate Bill 674](#) which would make severe cuts in the corporate tax rate, cutting it from 6.25% to 3.5%. It appears that the bill's fiscal note fails to adjust the increased revenue from apportionment changes to account for the steep drop in the corporate tax rate. **MBP estimates that the bill would reduce state revenue by \$66 million.** The House could amend the bill to include language from its tax package, [House Bill 2540](#). **An Executive Session of the House Ways and Means Committee is scheduled for Thursday, May 3 at 8:00 a.m. in HR 7.**

On the Senate side, [House Bill 2540](#) had a hearing in the [Senate Ways and Means Committee](#) on Tuesday, May 1st. It is very possible that this bill will be amended to include the components of [Senate Bill 617](#).

Both House Bill 2540 and Senate Bill 617 contain tax changes that the Missouri Budget Project supports, including creation of a state earned income tax credit.

However, the measures “double-down” on cuts to state income tax that currently far outweigh the beneficial components in the bills. Further, House Bill 2540 also includes the very concerning provision of eliminating the circuit breaker property tax credit for seniors and Missourians with disabilities who rent their homes.

Senate Passes Budget Bills

The full Senate passed the budget bills, with no amendments from the versions passed by the Senate Committee. A conference committee has not yet been named, and both chambers must pass the final budget by Friday, May 11th.

HB 2523

Open Records Law

The proposal would essentially give the attorney general's office subpoena power when investigating open records violations. While Missouri has strict laws mandating that a government's actions and records be available to the public, typically the only way to hold violators accountable is to take them to court. Even then, a guilty agency might not be penalized. If the bill becomes law, a state agency or department that knowingly violated the state's Sunshine law could be fined up to \$10,000, in addition to potentially having to cover attorneys' fees. Accidental violators could be fined up to \$1,000, plus fees.

HB2523 was passed by the House on April 29 and has been referred to the Senate Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee.

The proposal has received support from the American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri, the Missouri Press Association, the Missouri Broadcasters Association and the Missouri Sunshine Coalition.

[Click here for a link to Missouri General Assembly and Legislation](#)

U.S. House Ag Committee Farm Bill Would Cost Missouri and Harm Families

[Click here for information from the Missouri Budget Project](#) to see their information which illustrates how punitive harsher work requirements in the Committee's farm bill could take food off the tables of 131,000 Missourians and their families – all while costing the state millions of dollars.

The Committee's recommendations for the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps) fail to account for the realities of Missourians who utilize SNAP and would do little to help families become economically independent.