



Summer 2022

Active & Retired Missouri State Employees

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2022 Legislative Session – A Victory for ARMSE!

• ARMSE worked again this session to protect pension benefits and medical insurance and to advance pay increases for state employees. Our efforts were victorious – an outcome to celebrate! ARMSE must keep watch on legislative efforts each year to protect what we've earned. Thank you for your help in seeing that this effort has continued! A varied recap of the session follows.

After nearly five months of infighting, stalemates and looming court threats deciding the fate of the congressional redistricting map, the Missouri Senate fulfilled its constitutional obligation and passed a congressional redistricting map.

The House of Representatives and the Senate sent 43-non budget bills to the governor's desk. Since 1981, the fewest number of bills to clear the General Assembly has been 31, which was during the pandemic-shortened session of 2020. While the list of achievements may be short, it still includes major pieces of legislation, including some that have been a GOP priority for years.

Lawmakers also approved the largest budget in the state's history, which was inflated with billions of federal COVID relief funding. The 2023 fiscal budget includes big increases for public schools, modifying the foundation formula to increase charter school funding, nearly \$1 billion to increase payments to medical and personal care providers and a \$500 million plan for tax rebates.

The FY2023 budget includes a \$500 million proposal to boost the MOSERS investment fund and a mileage reimbursement increase for state employees to match the \$.55 a mile allowed by the IRS. There is also a 5.5 percent pay raise for state employees and a minimum salary of \$15 per hour for state employees.

The Governor said he is planning a special session and will work with the legislature to pass permanent tax relief for all Missouri taxpayers. According to the Governor, many working Missourians, including low-income earners, high-income earners, and vulnerable populations, should be included in a relief measure. The Governor has proposed a new tax relief plan for all taxpaying Missourians. He recommends that the top income tax rate should be reduced for everyone and proposed that the first \$16,000 of earned income for single filers and \$32,000 for joint filers should be tax free.

The Governor vetoed a bill to provide state employees pay every two weeks instead of twice a month. ARMSE supports the 2-week pay period and will work to pass this measure. The governor supports the 2-week pay period but was opposed to other items in the bill passed in the session.

Elected officials are expected to spend the next few months campaigning within their respective districts to garner support to return to Jefferson City. All 163 House seats and half of the Senate's 34 seats are up for the August and November elections.

Total number of bills, concurrent resolutions and joint resolutions proposed: 2,252

* Senate: 657

* House: 1,595

Total number of bills passed: 62

* Senate: 18

* House: 44 (19 of these bills are Appropriation Bills)

Total number of bills signed by the Governor to date: 43

* 25 policy bills and 18 appropriation and supplemental appropriation bills

Total number of bills vetoed by the Governor: 4

Key Upcoming Legislative Dates:

- July 1, 2022 – First day of Fiscal Year 2023
- August 28, 2022 – Date most legislation takes effect (unless another date is specified)
- September 14, 2022 – Veto Session

From Board President Roger Schwartz:

Dear ARMSE Members -- Thank you for answering our appeal by helping us through another year with your membership and financial support! We are still hanging on by a thread, and we hope that we'll find enough support again to make it through yet another Legislative Session this coming January.

We are proud to say there was no infringement on our benefits this year – we watched carefully! We are proud to be a part of helping current state employees with salary increases. The stronger state workforce we have, the better it is for Missouri taxpayers. We need to attract qualified employees and keep them on board.

And now we look to begin another year. The group of ARMSE board volunteers that meets in Jefferson City is willing to keep doing this work, but financial support is the key to making this happen. There are two ways to sign up new members: 1) through the ARMSE website at www.armse.org, or 2) sending an email to ARMSE -- office@armse.org.

There's always someone or something challenging what we've rightfully earned and made sacrifices to enjoy. We don't want to lose the option to protect our benefits. Please help us sign up new members – both active and retired state employees. A positive future depends on it – so please, help us help YOU!

Virtual Annual Meeting Ahead

On September 26 at 10 a.m., the board will meet for the annual meeting through a Zoom call. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE in the meeting, send an email message to office@armse.org. Final decisions and results from the discussion will be shared on the website at www.armse.org.

MOSERS Board Election

A vote for Gary Findlay is a vote for an ARMSE board member representing MOSERS retirees on the MOSERS board. Gary is committed to protecting retirement benefits for those in MOSERS. Please consider voting for Gary's next term – the ballot should be out starting August 10. Voting ends September 21.

FYI

-- Join the ARMSE Face Book page – it's a great way to keep up with information and share with other retirees and active state employees. Chapters meet throughout the state. If you're interested in ARMSE chapter participation, information is on the website to help you make the contact: www.armse.org. It's not required for membership. If you're not one for meetings, no problem! And – remember – ARMSE is volunteers! Thank you for what you are doing to help others!

-- If you're interested in tracking all retirement bills and those closely relating to retirement issues when the session starts, a tremendous source of information can be found through the Missouri General Assembly's Joint Committee on Public Employee Retirement or JCPER. The website is: www.jcper.org.

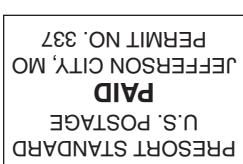
-- Speaking of websites! If you're a MOSERS retiree, don't forget: www.mosers.org. And, if you're a MPERS retiree: www.mpers.org. There is wonderful information at both locations that can answer so many questions, address rumors, explain issues and help with problems. If for some reason, your issue cannot be addressed, contact information is available for reaching the appropriate staff person.

Medical Insurance

The **MoDOT and Patrol medical plan** continues to have strong reserves. The insurance board of directors requested proposals on a Medicare Advantage Plan for 2023. A total of four proposals have been received. A recommendation on the future plan for Medicare members will be presented to the Highways and Transportation Commission during its meeting August 5, 2022. This advantage plan will save members over what their premiums are today and what they are spending for medical care this year.

The **MCHCP Board** reports that for 2023 there will be no premium increases for active employees and dependents. Retirees with 26 years or more of service may see monthly premium increases; however, MCHCP is still analyzing data with its actuary and will soon determine final rates. Plan designs will remain unchanged with the exception of the LiveHealth Online Visit being covered at 100% after a member's deductible has been met for those in the HSA Plan. Those in the PPO Plans will still have LiveHealth Online visits covered at 100% prior to the deductible being met. The Medicare Advantage Plan is moving to Renew Active by UnitedHealthcare, a Medicare fitness program, from the current SilverSneakers Medicare fitness program.

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