



**STATE REPRESENTATIVE  
KEITH ELLIOTT  
153<sup>RD</sup>  
DISTRICT**



**Committees**  
**Agriculture Committee**  
**Corrections and Public Institutions**

**CAPITOL REPORT**  
**May 30, 2025**

**QUICK LINKS:**  
[www.state.mo.us](http://www.state.mo.us)  
[www.house.mo.gov](http://www.house.mo.gov)  
[www.modot.org](http://www.modot.org)

When I was first elected, I wanted to focus on protecting American agriculture and food transparency. With this focus I filed a bill, House Concurrent Resolution 9 (HCR 9), which urges the federal government to reinstate mandatory country-of-origin labeling (COOL). My bill, HCR 9, was rolled into a House Committee Substitute alongside a similar measure, HCR 15. The combined resolution passed out of committee with a unanimous 15-0 vote and advanced to the House floor.

“This resolution petitions our federal government to protect the labeling, which we have worked so hard to make the greatest label in the world—and not pass it out as a 'free admission ticket' to all our competitors,” Rep. Elliott, R-Doniphan, said.

This legislation underscores the importance of labeling standards to ensure the transparency that consumers deserve. It sends a strong message from Missouri lawmakers: protecting the integrity of American agriculture must be a national priority.

“When you talk to the boots-on-the-ground folks in this industry, they ask a simple question: ‘Who wouldn’t support legislation that protects American cattlemen?’” said Rep. Elliott. “Well, it turns out the enemies are a lot closer to home than you might think. That’s why I urge every citizen: Know how your legislators are voting and know what the organizations you belong to are supporting. It WILL probably surprise you.”

The House Committee Substitute for HCR 9 and HCR 15 was passed out of the Special Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and went to the full House of Representatives where, unfortunately, session ended before the bill could go any further. This resolution reaffirms Missouri’s commitment to its farmers, ranchers, producers,

And consumers—and calls on Washington to do the same and because of this, in January, 2026, when session reconvenes, I *will* once again file this legislation.

Following a devastating series of tornadoes that claimed the lives of six citizens and caused widespread property damage, State Representative Keith Elliott is spearheading efforts to secure funding to address the critical lack of adequate radar storm coverage in the region encompassing Wayne, Carter, and Ripley Counties. “I am committed to fixing this inadequate system in the hopes of preventing further deaths and devastation,” stated Elliott, R-Doniphan. “Currently, I am working with a senator and several legislators to get the funding needed to ensure the safety of our citizens.” The need for improved radar coverage became apparent after recent storms exposed vulnerabilities in the district’s early warning systems. Representative Elliott noted that while funding for a radar tower was previously included in the state budget, it was ultimately vetoed by the prior administration. Elliott, R-Doniphan, added, “I will remain undeterred in my collaboration to ensure the proper lifesaving infrastructure becomes a reality. The residents of our communities deserve to feel safe and prepared under potential threats of future storms.” Representative Elliott emphasized the urgency of the situation and his determination to prevent future tragedies. His office is actively engaging with fellow lawmakers to deliver peace of mind to the residents of District 153.

### **Missouri Bids Farewell to Governor Kit Bond**

This past week, Missourians from across the state gathered to honor the life and legacy of former U.S. Senator and Governor Christopher “Kit” Bond, who passed away on May 13, 2025, at the age of 86.

With flags lowered across the state and tributes pouring in from all corners of Missouri and beyond, the passing of Kit Bond marks the end of a significant chapter in the state’s political history. His legacy endures in the institutions he strengthened, the lives he touched, and the example he set for generations of public servants to come.

## **Appropriations Bills for Fiscal Year 2026**

---

### **Total Amount: Approximately \$52.5 billion**

- **HB 2:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- **HB 3:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Higher Education & Workforce Development
- **HB 4:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Revenue and the Department of Transportation
- **HB 5:** Appropriates state funding for the Office of Administration
- **HB 6:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Conservation
- **HB 7:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Economic Development, the Department of Commerce & Insurance and the Department of Labor & Industrial Relations
- **HB 8:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Public Safety and the Department of National Guard

- **HB 9:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Corrections
- **HB 10:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Health & Senior Services
- **HB 11:** Appropriates state funding for the Department of Social Services
- **HB 12:** Appropriates state funding for Elected Officials, the Judiciary, the Office of Public Defender and the General Assembly
- **HB 13:** Appropriates state funding for statewide leasing
- **HB 14:** Appropriates supplemental funds agencies through June 30, 2025
- **HB 17:** Reappropriations
- **HB 18:** Appropriates state funding for capital maintenance & repairs
- **HB 20:** American Recovery Plan Act Appropriations

## **House Bills Truly Agreed and Finally Passed**

### **HB 121: Expanding Safe Haven Protections for Infants**

This bill would strengthen the state’s Safe Haven laws by extending the age limit for legally relinquishing an infant at a newborn safety incubator from 45 days to 90 days. This change gives struggling parents more time to make a safe, responsible decision without fear of prosecution. To support the expansion and installation of these life-saving devices, the bill also creates the “Safe Place for Newborns Fund,” enabling the state to match up to \$10,000 per incubator from General Revenue. In addition, it also contains provisions to lower the costs of adoptions. By increasing both access and funding, HB 121 ensures more newborns can be safely surrendered and protected, while offering overwhelmed parents a compassionate option.

---

### **HBs 145 & 59: Protecting Personal and Sensitive Information**

This updates the Sunshine Law to allow certain records to be closed to protect personal and sensitive information, provides for provisions related to judicial privacy, and modifies payments for Sunshine requests. The bill permits closure of records containing identifiable information of minors, utility customer data, and park reservation details, unless released or requested by the individual. It also allows the Department of Conservation to close records showing property boundaries and ownership where sensitive species or natural communities are located.

---

### **HB 147: Reforming Missouri's Public Retirement Systems and Investment Standards**

This bill would modernize public retirement systems, enhance investment oversight, and strengthen fiduciary standards. The bill updates pension rules for police, firefighters, and LAGERS, raises the private pension tax exemption, and prohibits investments in restricted foreign entities, including some linked to China. It ensures fiduciaries focus solely on financial returns—not political or social agendas—while improving flexibility, accountability, and long-term security in Missouri’s retirement funds.

### **HB 169: New Rules for Cotton Trailers**

This would increase the maximum speed for cotton trailers from 40 miles per hour to 70 miles per hour, and also removes the restriction that these trailers must be used exclusively for transporting cotton. The bill clarifies that

cotton trailers will not be in violation of load security provisions if certain conditions are met, and no part of the load becomes dislodged. Modern advancements in cotton harvesting and transportation have made the process safer, and farmers now often need to use the interstate to transport cotton. This bill reflects those improvements and aims to streamline transportation laws for cotton.

---

#### **HB 199: Public Contracts, Local Governance, and Tax Policy**

This comprehensive bill reforms a wide range of laws governing public contracts, local government operations, taxation, and public safety. The bill exempts certain public properties from legal claims, modifies bonding requirements for public works, and removes the expiration date for alternative construction methods. It also revises county financial reporting deadlines, expands sales tax authority for public safety and tourism, provides a streamlined process for resolving nuisance actions, and updates rules for planning boards, assessors, and jail reimbursements. Additionally, it includes new eligibility standards for school board candidates and allows more flexibility for local governments to manage development and infrastructure projects.

---

#### **HB 225: Expanding Law Enforcement Mutual Aid and Operational Flexibility**

HB 225 enhances law enforcement coordination by allowing Missouri police agencies to request assistance from other jurisdictions, including those in other states, and establishes procedures for arrests made outside an officer's home jurisdiction. It also expands traffic law exemptions for emergency vehicles, permitting police to operate without lights and sirens when gathering speeding evidence, responding to crimes in progress where alerts could compromise the situation, or conducting surveillance—giving officers more flexibility while ensuring public safety.

---

#### **HB 262: Expanding Access to Innovative Treatment for Veterans with TBI and PTSD**

This bill, known as the "Veterans Traumatic Brain Injury Treatment and Recovery Act," creates a state fund to reimburse facilities that provide hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT) to veterans diagnosed with traumatic brain injury (TBI) or posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The bill also supports research into alternative treatments for these conditions and requires the Missouri Veterans Commission to issue annual reports on the effectiveness of HBOT. This legislation marks a significant step in expanding access to innovative, non-pharmaceutical therapies for Missouri veterans.

---

#### **HBs 296 & 438: School Bus Endorsement, Background Checks, and Substitute Teachers**

HB 296 extends the current waiver allowing retired members of the Public School Retirement System and the Public Education Employee Retirement Systems ("PSRS/PEERS") to work as substitute teachers without limitation from June 30, 2025, to June 30, 2030. It also expands background check requirements to include all drivers of school-owned vehicles—not just school bus drivers—and applies these requirements to charter schools as well as public school districts. Additionally, it raises the age threshold for special school bus driver license rules from 70 to 75 and changes the required license renewals and exams from annual to biennial for drivers aged 75 and older.

---

#### **HB 419: Supporting Military Families, Public Safety Workers, and Missouri Students**

HB 419 expands in-state tuition and education benefits for military families and first responders, modernizes Missouri's health professional loan repayment program to include a broader range of licensed providers, updates university missions and degree authorities, and removes barriers for veterans and active-duty students in education and business.

---

#### **HB 495 - Public Safety and Crime Reform**

HB 495 is a broad public safety bill that addresses crime, policing, and penalties across Missouri. A key provision creates a new Board of Police Commissioners to oversee the St. Louis Police Department, shifting control to a mix of local citizens and the mayor. The bill also increases penalties for stunt driving, rioting, and child endangerment involving fentanyl, while expanding efforts to combat organized retail theft, sex trafficking, and firearm violence in schools. Additional measures require law enforcement to report offenders' immigration status and mandate ignition interlock devices for intoxicated drivers. Supporters argue the bill enhances public safety and police oversight, while critics warn it could limit local control and disproportionately affect marginalized communities.

---

#### **HBs 516, 290 & 778: Expanding Access and Accountability in Radioactive Waste Investigations**

HBs 516, 290 & 778 expands the state's ability to investigate radioactive waste concerns by allowing not only local governments but also community groups and individuals to request investigations. The bill removes the \$150,000 cap on spending from the Radioactive Waste Investigation Fund, permits the fund to accept private contributions, and clarifies that it is to be used solely for investigation—not cleanup—efforts. It authorizes soil, dust, and water testing, allows the Department of Natural Resources to seek a warrant for access to government property if contamination is suspected, and maintains the requirement for consent to enter private property. The Department must also seek reimbursement from the federal government for any radioactive waste cleanup costs.

---

#### **HB 567: Employee Compensation and Paid Sick Leave**

HBs 567, 546, 758, and 958 is a major labor reform package that repeals paid sick leave mandates and ends automatic minimum wage adjustments tied to inflation. Effective December 31, 2024, future changes to the minimum wage will require legislative approval rather than occurring annually. The bill also extends wage law standards to public employers and immediately eliminates paid sick leave requirements, including anti-retaliation protections and recordkeeping rules, through an emergency clause. These changes mark a significant shift in Missouri's approach to workplace regulations and labor policy.

---

#### **HBs 594 & 508: Major Tax Relief and Investments**

This legislation provides comprehensive tax reform by establishing a full state income tax deduction for all capital gains reported on federal tax returns starting in the 2025 tax year, effectively eliminating state taxes on profits from the sale of homes, farms, retirement accounts, stocks, and other investments. It also removes state sales tax on essential personal items like diapers and feminine hygiene products and expands property tax relief for seniors by linking income thresholds to inflation. The bill invests in public safety by supporting local emergency services and first responders, removes sales tax on broadband equipment to aid rural connectivity, and allocates funding for targeted community projects, such as a community center in Independence.

---

#### **HBs 595 & 343: Protecting Landlord Rights**

This legislation restricts local governments from enacting ordinances that mandate landlord acceptance of tenants based on housing assistance program participation, such as Section 8, or from limiting the use of standard applicant screening criteria like credit and criminal history. It prohibits local caps on security deposits and bans mandated tenant purchase rights. However, it permits cities and counties to continue prohibiting discrimination against recipients of veterans' benefits, preserving local discretion on that narrow issue, with the overall aim of limiting regulatory burdens on property owners.

---

#### **HB 596: Strengthening Transparency in Real Estate Brokerage Services**



This legislation requires real estate brokers acting as single agents for buyers or tenants to enter into a written agency agreement before performing any brokerage services. Under current law, such agreements can be made after services have already begun. This change ensures greater transparency and protects consumers by clearly defining the broker-client relationship from the start of any real estate transaction.

---

### **HB 737 & 486: Protecting Kids' Rights and Prioritizing Their Needs**

HB 737 & 486 is a sweeping reform of Missouri's child welfare system, designed to improve protections and outcomes for children in state custody. It prohibits the state from taking federal benefits meant for foster children—such as Social Security or Veterans Affairs payments—and ensures those funds are used for the child's personal needs or future. The bill also redefines child neglect to protect reasonable parental decisions, requires consideration of a child's religious background in foster placements, and strengthens legal rights and services for youth and families. Additional provisions include expanded tax credits for youth programs, new protections for high-needs children, mandated legal counsel for older foster youth, a ban on child marriage under 18, and the creation of a new alert system for missing African American youth.

---

### **HB 754: Enhancing Bank Flexibility, Customer Protections, and Public Fund Safeguards**

This bill modernizes Missouri's banking regulations by allowing financial institutions to issue new stock classes, conduct virtual board meetings, and eliminate outdated public reporting requirements. It introduces a "trusted contact" option for aging customers to prevent financial exploitation and provides legal protection to institutions acting in good faith. A new pooled securities method is established for safeguarding public funds, enhancing the security of government deposits. The bill also permits certain transaction fees for credit card payments by debt collectors and repeals dormant account rules, aiming to streamline financial operations and improve consumer protections.

---

### **HBs 974, 57, 1032 & 1141: Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing Insurance**

HBs 974, 57, 1032 & 1141 creates a regulatory framework for insurance coverage in peer-to-peer car sharing programs. Known as the "Peer-to-Peer Car Sharing Program Insurance Act," the bill establishes minimum liability coverage requirements for car sharing platforms and sets rules for how coverage disputes are handled. It allows traditional auto insurers to exclude coverage for vehicles used in car sharing and mandates that programs notify vehicle owners about potential conflicts with lienholder agreements. The bill also imposes recordkeeping duties on sharing platforms and clarifies that shared vehicle owners and programs are exempt from vicarious liability. Additional provisions address responsibilities related to vehicle recalls, program agreements, and driver verification. The Department of Commerce and Insurance is authorized to issue rules for implementation. The law takes effect January 1, 2026.

---

### **HJR 73: Reproductive Health and Gender Procedures**

HJR 73 is a proposed constitutional amendment that would repeal Missouri's Right to Reproductive Freedom Initiative and reinstate previously unenforceable abortion restrictions. It allows abortion only in cases of medical emergencies, fetal anomalies, and rape or incest (up to 12 weeks), and prohibits abortions based solely on disability diagnoses. The measure also bans fetal organ harvesting, restricts public funding for abortion, and sets informed consent and parental consent requirements. It centralizes legal challenges to reproductive laws in Cole County and prohibits gender transition procedures and related medications for minors, while preserving access to care for miscarriages and other medical emergencies. While safeguarding care for miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies, the amendment affirms the legislature's power to enforce or expand these rules. The measure now heads to voters and, if approved, will embed these policies in Missouri's Constitution.

---

***Keith Elliott***

State Representative  
Serving the People of the 153<sup>rd</sup> District

**Ezekiel 33:7 NLT “Now, son of man, I am making you a watchman for the people of Israel. Therefore, listen to what I say and warn them for me.”**

Please contact me at:  
201 West Capitol Avenue, Room 115 B  
Jefferson City, MO 65101-6806  
Phone: 573-751-1066  
Email: [Keith.Elliott@house.mo.gov](mailto:Keith.Elliott@house.mo.gov)

If you would like to unsubscribe to this Capitol Report,  
please contact: [Denise.Leigh@house.mo.gov](mailto:Denise.Leigh@house.mo.gov).