

## **Missouri Political and Legislative Forecast By Heath Clarkston**

### **JEFFERSON CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORUM – MARCH 22**

A candidate forum for the upcoming Jefferson City Council election has been scheduled for March 22<sup>nd</sup> at 1:30 pm at First Mid Bank on Ellis Boulevard. This event is jointly sponsored by the Jefferson City Chamber of Commerce, Home Builders Association and Board of Realtors. John Marsh from Zimmer Radio is scheduled to moderate the forum. Please mark your calendars to attend and more information will be provided closer to the event date.

### **CITY COUNCIL ELECTION SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup>.**

The ballot is set for the five city council seats for the April municipal election. Four of the five wards are contested elections. The final list is as follows:

Ward 1: Jack Deeken (Incumbent) v. Randy Hoselton

Ward 2: Michael Lester (Incumbent)

Ward 3: Amy Brix v. Treaka Young

Ward 4: Randall Wright (Incumbent) v. Chris Lueckel

Ward 5: Mackenzie Job v. Virginia Shetler

### **RURAL WORKFORCE HOUSING BILL DISCUSSED IN HOUSE COMMITTEE**

The House Committee on Rural Community Development convened Monday afternoon to discuss HB 2240, sponsored by Representative Greg Sharpe (R-Ewing). The bill establishes the "Rural Workforce Housing Investment Act," creating a workforce housing grant program in the Department of Economic Development (DED) to foster and support the development of workforce housing in rural communities. Grant maximums shall not exceed \$1 million to any one nonprofit development organization over a two-year period, with no more than \$2 million cumulative for any single grantee through FY 2027. Additionally, the bill contains guidelines for the awarding of grants and establishes the "Rural Workforce Housing Investment Fund". The Northeast Missouri Regional Planning Commission, Tri-County Electric Cooperative, Missouri Economic Development Council, Northeast Missouri Economic Development Council, and the Association of Missouri Electric Cooperatives provided supporting testimony. This bill models legislation from other states that has spurred affordable housing construction in rural areas.

### **MISSOURI SENATE ADVANCES INITIATIVE PETITION CHANGE**

The Senate dedicated over twenty-one hours to debating SJR 74, sponsored by Senator Mary Elizabeth Coleman (R-Arnold). Currently, constitutional amendments must win a simple majority of voters statewide. As originally filed, the resolution, upon voter approval, would require amendments to receive a majority vote in at least five of the state's eight congressional districts. During the bill's progression through the committee process, the bill was amended to prohibit any constitutional amendments that would permit lobbyist gifts, provides exclusive authority to the General Assembly to enact laws enforcing provisions in the Constitution relating to initiative petitions proposing constitutional amendments and prohibiting foreign activity in the initiative petition process. During previous debate, the sponsor offered a floor substitute to further amended the bill to also ban initiative petitions on certain topics, including raising taxes on food, cutting funding for law enforcement, raising taxes on real estate, allowing lobbyist gifts to politicians and cutting money to protect the country's borders. Senate Democrats held the floor in a long filibuster highlighting that voting is already restricted to U.S. citizens and criticized the

proposal. After a total of about 20+ hours, the sponsor offered a new substitute removing all of the previously proposed changes and limiting the resolution to voter thresholds and the resolution now only requires all such proposed constitutional amendments and new constitutions to receive a majority of the votes cast statewide as well as a majority of the votes cast in at least a majority of the Congressional districts, such approved amendments to take effect at the end of 31 days after the election. After brief debate, the Senate provided its first of two necessary approval votes and the substitute was adopted by an 18-12 vote.

#### **PAINT RECYCLING PROGRAM PROPOSED IN HOUSE**

On Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, the House Conservation and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing HB 2152, sponsored by Rep. Jamie Burger (R-Benton), a bill that requires plans for establishing a post-consumer paint collection and recycling program. HB 2152 requires producers of retail paint to establish or join a nonprofit representative organization that must submit a post-consumer paint collection program to the Department of Natural Resources to promote reusing and recycling paint. Details of the recycling program requirements are listed in the bill, and no paint may be resold in Missouri unless the producer of the paint brand or a representative organization is implementing or participating in the program. Testimony in support of the bill was presented by the American Coatings Association, representing paint manufacturers and their suppliers. The association's representative said, "Our whole goal is to help consumers with leftover, unwanted paint, and to collect as much as possible to divert it from landfills." The association is working with some 2,000 retail locations in 10 states, and a similar bill was passed last year in Illinois, she said. Also testifying in support was the Product Stewardship Institute. Information only testimony was offered by MARC Solid Waste Management District and Missouri Product Stewardship Council.

#### **HOUSE PASSES BAN ON LOCAL EVICTION MORATORIUMS**

On Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, the Missouri House met in session to pass HB 2062, sponsored by Rep. Chris Brown (R-Kansas City). HB 2062 would prohibit any county, municipality, or other political subdivision from imposing or enforcing a moratorium on eviction proceedings unless specifically authorized by state law. The bill was third read and passed by a vote of 111-26. The bill now moves to the Senate.