

NEWS RELEASE

From the Office of
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislative Update

With only four weeks left in the session, the pace here at the capitol is a sprinters speed.

Last week two very important bills were debated on the Floor of the House. On April 9th, by a vote of 80-58, the House of Representatives stripped a private school voucher provision from a bill to raise minimum teacher salaries. The voucher provision of House Bill 2040 would have granted tax breaks to donors of a scholarship fund for children with autism or other special needs to attend private or parochial schools. Opponents to the bill called it an attempt to open the door to taxpayer support of private and parochial schools to the detriment of public school funding.

After stripping the provision from the bill House Majority Leader Steven Tilley (R) declared he would not allow the legislation to be brought up for a vote. House Bill 2040 would have increased the minimum teacher salary from \$24,000 to \$31,000, with increases every three years and for earning a Master's Degree. This bill did have its problems, but there is a great need to increase teacher pay. This increase needs to be for all teachers across the board. We must continue to look for ways to increase teacher's salaries.

The second bill was House Joint Resolution 70. This bill would limit annual growth in general revenue spending to the rate of inflation with a further adjustment for population increases. HJR 70 would affect only general revenue. General Revenue is the money in which lawmakers have the greatest say in deciding how to spend. This proposal would hurt future lawmakers during the budgeting process, likely forcing them to make cuts to the budget in the areas of public services, education and health care. This proposed constitutional amendment is similar to a spending cap constitutional amendment in the state of Colorado. Colorado suspended this provision after it caused a state budget crisis.

HJR 70 passed out of the House on April 10th by a vote of 84-65. If approved by the Senate, the measure would go before Missouri voters on the November ballot.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to represent the good people of the 124th District here at the capitol. If you need assistance or information, please feel free to contact me. My contact information is: Representative Luke Scavuzzo, House Post Office, Jefferson City, MO 65101; my phone number is: 573-751-4072; my e-mail address is: luke.scavuzzo@house.mo.gov.