



MCC Legislative Toolbox

The Missouri Catholic Conference seeks to inform, educate, and mobilize citizens on the major issues confronting our state and nation. You can learn about the MCC's legislative priorities at www.mocatholic.org and also access the legislative toolbox, a set of guides and graphics that can help you understand how the legislature functions and how you can get involved. You can take a look inside the toolbox here.

MISSOURI LEGISLATIVE

CALENDAR Stay up to date on important legislative dates with this helpful calendar.

STATE AND FEDERAL

LEGISLATIVE LINKS Find your state and federal legislators by using these directories, and also learn more about the legislative processes in Missouri and at the federal level.

LEGISLATIVE GLOSSARY

You're not the only one who gets lost in legislative jargon—this glossary will help you learn legislative terms.

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

It's probably been a few years since you've seen Schoolhouse Rock, so we've provided a graphic that explains the path a bill must take to become a law in Missouri.

COMMUNICATING WITH YOUR

LEGISLATOR Want to send a letter or meet in person with your legislator? Find out how in this guide.



The 2nd regular session of the 101st General Assembly convened on Wednesday, January 5th in Jefferson City. As session began, the Omicron variant began a wave of new COVID-19 cases throughout the state of Missouri, resulting in more positive tests, school closures, and overwhelmed hospitals. Fortunately as of this writing, the wave appears to have crested, and it looks like we may be on the downslope of the latest peak.

Governor Parson has proposed a budget that is approximately 30% greater for FY 2023 than the budget for FY 2022. His recommended budget includes proposed spending on increased pay for government workers, investments in the state's computer systems, as well as infrastructure such as broadband internet. The increased spending proposals included in his budget are the result of federal dollars sent to the state from COVID relief bills passed by Congress over the last two years.

Meanwhile, legislators are

grappling with the issue of redistricting following the 2020 census. Every 10 years, congressional and state maps must be redrawn to create new legislative districts at the state and federal level based upon shifts in population. The Missouri House passed a congressional map which would likely result in six Republicans and two Democrats representing Missouri in the U.S. House. Bitter divisions among Republicans in the Missouri Senate, however, has led to a battle over the House-passed map. It is uncertain whether a compromise can be reached, or how the division will be resolved. The division in the Senate does not bode well for other legislation that must be passed. Please keep Missouri lawmakers in your prayers as they work through these issues. For a brief update on legislation the MCC is working on this session, please check out our first legislative roundtable podcast of 2022 available at mocatholic.org, Spotify, and Apple and Google podcasts.



In faithfulness to the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) seeks through education and advocacy to create a culture that respects the sanctity and dignity of all human life, especially the most vulnerable among us. In the light of the moral teaching of the Catholic Church, the MCC and the Missouri bishops call government officials, legislators and all citizens to a respectful discourse about the challenges facing our state and nation. This agenda does not reflect all of the MCC's concerns, but those calling for action at this time.

.....



Protect Human Life

Recognizing the right to life is the foundation for all other human rights, the MCC will defend against violent attacks on human life, such as abortion, euthanasia, experiments involving the destruction of human embryos or the use of aborted fetal remains, and the death penalty. The MCC will support a culture of life that provides alternatives to abortion for mothers who choose life for their children, and alternatives to the death penalty, such as incarceration that protects the public. *"It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop."* (Saint John Paul II, *Gospel of Life*, par. 101)

Welcome and Accompany Immigrants and Refugees

The MCC will bear witness to the God-given human dignity of all immigrants and refugees, including the undocumented and those displaced by war, persecution, and natural disasters, reminding lawmakers of the right of people to migrate to other countries. The MCC will urge Congress to enact the DREAM Act, immigration reform, and provision and funding for refugee resettlement. *"Every stranger who knocks at our door is an opportunity for an encounter with Jesus Christ, who identifies with the welcomed and rejected strangers of every age."* (Pope Francis, 2017 Message for World Day of Migrants and Refugees)



Advance Social and Economic Justice for All

Pope Francis calls for all people to hear the cry of the poor and to reform "unjust social structures" that deny basic necessities and opportunities for social and economic advancement. The MCC will support adequate funding for Medicaid and mental health services, protection of social programs that benefit the poor, care for creation and the environment, and stronger consumer protections, including payday lending reform. The MCC will also support healing of racial and cultural divisions while working to build vibrant communities that serve the common good. *"Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on."* (Catechism, par. 1908)



Uphold and Strengthen Marriage and Family

Family is the basic cell of human society and the foundation of civilized life. Presently, the institutions of marriage and family are threatened by a culture that no longer values authentic marriage and stable families. The MCC will support legislation and funding for programs that encourage two-parent families and provide assistance to single parents and their children; promote responsible parenthood; assist victims of domestic violence; and, help families who are poor or have children with health problems or disabilities. *“The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family.”* (Catechism, par. 2210)



Defend Religious Liberty



The Catholic Church at the Second Vatican Council proclaimed that the freedom to exercise one's religious faith without threat of coercion is grounded in the dignity of the human person and that no person should be forced to act in a manner “contrary to his conscience,” (*Dignitas Humanae*, par. 3). The MCC will oppose unjust discrimination against people of faith, including the targeting or registering of any particular faith, and will support religious liberty protections in all human rights laws. *“[T]he right to religious freedom has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person as this dignity is known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.”* (Declaration on Religious Freedom, par. 2)

Support Educational Opportunities

All parents have the right, and should have opportunities to receive assistance when necessary, to choose the schooling most beneficial for their children and which stands in accord with their moral and religious convictions. The MCC will support educational opportunities for all children in all school settings, be they public, private, or religious. The MCC will support financial assistance so families can meet their children's educational needs, and repeal of Constitutional provisions, such as Missouri's Blaine Amendments, that discriminate against children who attend private and religious schools. *“As those first responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to choose a school for them which corresponds to their own convictions.”* (Catechism, par. 2229)



Reform Criminal Justice



The Catholic Church supports a criminal justice system in which the offender is held accountable, the victim receives support, and the community assists the offender in successfully re-entering society. The MCC will support meaningful reforms, such as allowing greater judicial discretion in criminal sentencing, along with reasonable possibilities for parole, and ensuring offenders have realistic opportunities for employment upon their release. *“We believe that both victims and offender[s] are children of God. Despite their very different claims on society, their lives and dignity should be protected and respected. We seek justice, not vengeance.”* (U.S. Bishops, A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice)

Promote Civility and Faith in the Democratic Process

Saint John Paul II said that Democracy needs wisdom and virtue if it is to flourish. Pope Francis told Congress that the chief aim of politics is the common good. The MCC will encourage civility and bipartisan cooperation among elected officials, strong ethical standards for those in public office, respect for the rule of law, and measures that allow citizens to more fully participate in their government. *“[R]esponsible authority also means authority exercised with those virtues that make it possible to put power into practice as service (patience, modesty, moderation, charity, efforts to share), an authority exercised by persons who are able to accept the common good, and not prestige or the gaining of personal advantages, as the true goal of their work.”* (Compendium, par. 410)





PO Box 1022
Jefferson City, MO 65102-1022

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Questions? Contact us!

mocatholic@mocatholic.org

(573) 635-7239



mocatholic.org



Get involved! Join the Missouri
Catholic Advocacy Network.

Board of Directors
Most Rev. Mitchell T. Rozanski
General Chairman
Archbishop of St. Louis

Most Rev. James Johnston
Vice Chairman
Bishop of
Kansas City/St. Joseph

Most Rev. W. Shawn McKnight
Executive Chairman
Bishop of Jefferson City

Most Rev. Edward Rice
Bishop of
Springfield/Cape Girardeau

Most Rev. Mark Rivituso
Auxiliary Bishop of St. Louis

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Jefferson City, MO
Permit #42

Latest MCC *Messenger* Focused on the Death Penalty

Few issues are as morally challenging for Catholics as the death penalty. Since capital punishment was re-instated in 1976, the United States has executed 1,536 individuals. Missouri, with 91 executions, is in the top five states resorting to capital punishment. While support for the death penalty has steadily decreased over the years, the majority of Americans favor it. But what does the Catholic Church teach about capital punishment? That is the focus of this *Messenger*, available at mocatholic.org. A new episode of MCC from the Capitol, our podcast, will accompany this *Messenger*, featuring interviews with exonerated death row prisoner Joe Amrine and one of the members of the jury that convicted him, Deacon Larry Hildebrand, who share their incredible stories of faith and forgiveness. This edition is published on our website at mocatholic.org and appeared in February editions of your diocesan papers. We encourage you to read it and/or listen to the podcast to learn more about the death penalty from a Catholic perspective.



**The Missouri Catholic Advocacy Network
Text MOCAN to 50457 to receive text alerts!**

Join the 10,000 + Catholic Missourians who make up MOCAN. If you're already a member, encourage your family, friends, and fellow parishoners to join! As MOCAN grows, so does the Catholic voice in Missouri's Capitol. Visit mocatholic.org or send us an email at mocatholic@mocatholic.org for details.



Dear *Good News* reader,

I hope you are enjoying the Missouri Catholic Conference (MCC) bi-monthly newsletter, *Good News*, and the other communications we issue, such as the *MCC Messenger*, which appears in the diocesan papers on a quarterly basis. We try our best to keep you informed about developing issues that pose great moral questions for our state and nation and alert you when action is needed. We encourage you to check out our podcast, MCC from the Capitol (available on our website, Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Google Podcasts) in which we take a closer look at public policy issues and how they impact the Church.

With your help over the last several years, we have passed historic pro-life laws and made sure Catholic high school students can receive A+ scholarships. In 2022, the MCC will continue its work on a number of important public policy issues, including providing women facing crisis pregnancies with Alternatives to Abortion, repealing the death penalty, ensuring adequate social services and healthcare for the poor, and promoting educational opportunities for all school children, including those attending Catholic schools.

The MCC will not succeed in any of these efforts without the involvement of committed Catholics like you. Without your help, the needs of the most vulnerable among us are likely to be forgotten in the halls of Congress and in our State Capitol. That is why the MCC wants to stay in contact with you—so you know what is going on and can respond by contacting your elected officials when critical legislation is pending.

You currently receive our written MCC communications for free. At this time, I am asking you to consider a donation to help the MCC. If you can afford to give \$20, \$30, \$40, \$50 or more, your donation will help us to continue providing you with our MCC publications. To make a donation, please use the envelope provided, or visit our website (www.mocatholic.org) to donate by credit card. If you cannot give a donation at this time, you will still continue to receive *Good News* at no charge. If you would prefer to receive our information electronically, please contact us with your email address.

Thank you and God bless!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tyler McClay". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Tyler McClay
Executive Director and General Counsel