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**Capitol Report**

**August 2, 2018**

**The Importance of Voting**

In a few days, Missourians will be able to exercise one of their most important rights by heading to the polls to vote in the August 7 primary. Voters from all over the state will participate in the elections process to help determine who will represent them in the halls of government. By casting their votes, they will be able to make their voices heard on candidates and issues that will help determine the path the state takes heading into the future.

While the state generally sees strong voter turnout for the November general election, voters typically participate at a much lower rate during the August primary. In fact, Missouri typically sees voter turnout in the 20 to 25 percent range for primary elections. As a matter of comparison, the August 2016 primary saw 24.8 percent of voters participate in the process while the November general saw voter turnout greater than 66 percent of the state's registered voters.

The primary turnout means, in effect, that three out of every four voters choose to disenfranchise themselves by not participating in the process. When considering that some primaries in 2016 were decided by as few as 50 votes, it reinforces the fact that every vote counts and that Missourians need to become more engaged in the political process.

Over the next several days, Missourians have the opportunity to research the candidates and their issues and prepare to make their voices heard on August 7. Missourians will have the ability to help determine the winners and losers and, ultimately, the kind of policies the state will work toward in the coming years. For the process to work, it's essential that Missourians not take their fundamental right for granted. Hundreds of thousands of men and women have fought for, and some have made the ultimate sacrifice, to protect our republic and your right to vote.

The Federalist №39 (James Madison), 233–34 (We may define a republic to be, or at least may bestow that name on, a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people, and is administered by persons holding their offices...for a limited period, or during good behavior.

It is essential to such a government that it be derived from the great body of the society, not from an inconsiderable proportion, or a favored class of it; otherwise a handful of tyrannical nobles, exercising their oppressions by a delegation of their powers...”).

Individuals interested in checking their polling location, and what issues or candidates will be on the ballot, can visit [www.GoVoteMissouri.com](http://www.GoVoteMissouri.com) and click on the “Where Do I Vote?” link, or contact their local election official. Any questions about elections can be directed to 800-669-8683. For information on Missouri’s photo voter ID law that went into effect last year, Missourians can visit [www.ShowIt2Vote.com](http://www.ShowIt2Vote.com).

### **Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday**

As summer starts to wind down, families will now turn their attention to sending their kids back to school. School starting up again soon means parents will need to buy new school supplies and clothes to get their children ready for the classroom. To help with this process, Missouri has a three-day back-to-school tax holiday that exempts everything from school supplies to computers from sales tax.

Approved by the legislature in 2003, the three-day period allows parents to buy school-related items such as clothing, school supplies and computers without having to pay the state sales tax of 4.225 percent. In some cases, local municipalities have also chosen to honor the holiday, which means parents in these areas will be able to forego local sales tax as well. For a complete list of the cities and counties that have chosen not to participate, please use the following link:  
<http://dor.mo.gov/business/sales/taxholiday/school/>

This is a great way for Missourians to stretch their dollars by making the cost of going back to school a little more affordable. Parents are encouraged to take advantage of the holiday that begins Friday, Aug. 3 at 12:01 a.m. and runs through Sunday, Aug. 5. It’s important to note that the school supply tax exemption has a limit of \$50 per purchase, while the clothing exemption has a \$100 limit and the personal computer tax exemption has a limit of \$1,500. For more information, please visit: <http://dor.mo.gov/business/sales/taxholiday/school/consumers.php>.

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as your voice in Jefferson City.



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