



## April 2018 Legislative Chair Report

### LOCAL INFORMATION:

#### **Distracted Driving Awareness Month**

Back in 2011 students in the state of Missouri came together to write, promote and pass the [Distracted Driving Resolution](#). This resolution was then submitted and passed at the National Convention. Why was this issue so important to the students? At the time both Missouri and National PTA had resolutions pertaining to teen driving and cellphone use but nothing that spoke to the larger problem of distracted driving. Distracted driving isn't a teen problem. Every driver who makes the decision to drive distracted poses a potential risk to everyone else on the road, including him or herself. Distracted driving spans all ages, genders and socioeconomic backgrounds. Did you know that at highway speeds, the amount of time a driver keeps their eyes off the road to type a 3 to 5 second text message they will have traveled the length of a football field? Your personal awareness can make a difference. For more information on statistic, research, campaigns, and pledges check out [Distraction.gov](#)

### NATIONAL INFORMATION:

#### NATIONAL PTA APPLAUDS THE OMNIBUS APPROPRIATIONS BILL

ALEXANDRIA, Va., (March 22, 2018)—Last month, Congressional leaders reached an agreement on a bill to fund the government through September 2018. The bill includes all of National PTA's top funding priorities, including \$10 million in funding for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) program.

"For years, PTA members and families nationwide have been advocating for investments in the SFECs program because family engagement is critical to student success and school improvement efforts, including efforts to make our schools safer," said Leslie Boggs, president-elect of National PTA. "We applaud Congressional leaders for acknowledging the importance of family engagement and for their bipartisan commitment to the SFECs program to help ensure every child receives a high-quality education in an environment that is safe and reaches their full potential."

The SFECs program is included in the Every Student Succeeds Act. The program will provide states and districts with the capacity to support effective implementation and enhancement of meaningful family engagement policies and initiatives.



In addition to funding for the SFECs program, National PTA is pleased to see that the omnibus includes a \$2.6 billion increase in funding for education overall from the fiscal year 2017 level as well as an increase of \$300 million for Title I—which provides assistance to schools with high percentages of children from low-income families—and an increase of \$275 million for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), through which grants are provided to states to help provide a quality education to children with disabilities.

National PTA is also pleased that the omnibus includes \$1.1 billion in funding for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (Title IV-A), which support safe and healthy students through funding of comprehensive school mental health programs, drug and violence prevention programs, training on trauma-informed practices, and other health and physical education programs. Additionally, the grant program ensures school districts have the resources to support a well-rounded education and the effective use of technology in schools.

Further, National PTA is pleased that the omnibus effectively repeals the Dickey amendment, lifting a ban on research to study the causes and effects of gun violence. The bill also includes the STOP School Violence Act and the Fix NICS Act, both of which National PTA advocated for during its annual Legislative Conference last week.

“We have all watched in horror as our country has experienced far too many gun-related tragedies. Enacting these bipartisan policy solutions is essential to help provide a safer and healthier environment for students and protect our children,” said Nathan R. Monell, CAE, National PTA executive director. “We commend Congressional leaders for addressing gun safety and violence prevention and investing in programs to ensure our children can learn and thrive in school. National PTA urges Congress to pass the omnibus and the president to sign it as soon as possible for students, families, schools and communities.”

## **STATE INFORMATION:**

### **SB 617- Bill Eigel**

Modifies provisions related to taxation.

Missouri PTA opposes any measure that would take away funding for schools in Missouri. The loss of revenue generated from individual income tax is a large portion of funding for Missouri schools. Without quality schools it will be hard to attract new businesses and may even cause the loss of existing businesses, which hurts all of Missouri.



In the current fiscal year, the tax is budgeted to reduce \$464 million for the general revenue budget. These cuts would come at a time when Missouri is already struggling to meet its budget needs due to previously enacted tax changes and would require additional and steep cuts to services including education.

The net effect of SB 617 would cut \$464 million from state general revenue in 2019 while SB 611 would reduce state revenue by more than \$1 billion. In context, \$462 million is the equivalent of 50% of state general revenue funding for mental health. It is more than Missouri spends in general revenue on all early education and child care services combined.

In addition, SB 617 would eliminate the individual income tax over time, increasing its cost each year and eventually resulting in an annual cut of \$6.6 billion. Individual income tax currently provides \$6.6 billion to support the FY 2018 budget, or 36% of all state-source funding (not including federal funds). There would simply be no way for Missouri to compensate for the loss of revenue. This bill would place Missouri on a fiscal path that would make Kansas' recent experience with tax cuts look like a cake walk.

This bill would provide large tax cuts to wealthy Missourians, at the expense of everyone else. SB 617 would give Missourians with average incomes of \$1.387 million a tax cut of \$11,096 in 2019, while most working Missourians would see little impact or even tax increases. In fact, an analysis by the Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy found that 91% of the tax cut would flow to the wealthiest 20% of Missourians.

As in the Kansas experience, Missouri would have little alternative but to move toward regressive consumption taxes (sales tax), increasing the burden on working Missourians.

Schools are already struggling in part due to gaps in the budget created by the passage of [SB 641](#) and [SB 1025](#) in 2016. When Missouri is unable to fully fund its portion of schools every district and every child suffers. This can be felt most strongly in districts that are struggling to pay for the cost of education due to lowering property values and tax revenue. The corporate tax is vital to these schools to help to make the playing field level for all Missouri children no matter the school district.

There are a few districts in Missouri that will be better able to adjust to such a loss in income. However, what about the districts that cannot? There are several districts that



already have cut music and extra-curricular activities out of their budget. They already have had to lay off support staff and may have to eventually lay off teachers. How are those schools going to be competitive with the schools that are better able to make up for decrease in funding? The further lack of funds that the loss of income tax would create a greater disparity between school districts.

Furthermore, with an educated population comes a qualified workforce. This work force will help attract new businesses to Missouri. These new businesses in turn create new employment opportunities for Missourians. If we cannot fully invest in education we dissolve the very force that will propel Missouri onward. The children of Missouri deserve to have an equal chance no matter from which district they attend. We need to ensure they have career opportunities waiting for them to encourage them to stay in Missouri. SB 617 is on the calendar for a full Senate vote. MO PTA has submitted testimony in opposition to this bill and sent out JC/DC Alerts to our membership.

### **[HB 1255](#) - Nick Schroer [SB 793](#)- Wayne Wallingford**

Requires children under the age of 18 to be prosecuted for most criminal offenses in juvenile courts unless the child is certified as an adult. MO PTA supports these bills. These are the bills that we are starting our student advocacy campaign around this month. It has been PTA's long held position to support efforts and legislation that prohibits the incarceration of youth in adult facilities.

HB 1255 Has been voted out of Committee and will be up for a full House vote.

SB 793 has been voted out of the Senate and has been assigned to the General Laws committee in the House and had its hearing. This is a direct result of our #18in18 campaign. MO PTA submitted testimony for the hearing and has published 2 JC/DC Alerts. THANK YOU for your help. Please keep posting to social media: #18in18 because 17 is too young! @molegislature @missouriPTA @RaisetheAgeMO

### **[HB 1248](#)- Patricia Pike**

Adds powdered alcohol to provisions relating to intoxicating liquor.

PTA supports this bill. Powdered alcohol contains 55% alcohol. A percentage much higher than beer (3-10%), wine (8-14%) and the most common spirits (Tequila 40-50%, Vodka



30-50%, and Whisky 40-53.3%). But unlike the liquid forms of alcohol, powdered alcohol is easily concealed by youths and can be mixed in a manner making the end product more harmful to youths.

Powdered Alcohol can be sprinkled onto food products, taken as a pill, snorted, and mixed with alcohol making it even more potent and inhibiting the user's ability to fight off alcohol poisoning. It can also be mixed with caffeinated beverages resulting in a dangerous mix of a depressant and stimulant. This bill would label powdered alcohol an intoxicating substance and will help prevent the ability of youth to purchase this substance.

HB 1248 Has been voted out of the House and is now in the Senate.