



## ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

# Nixon signs Mo. license plate, higher ed fund bill

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No Kansas Jayhawks will be appearing on Show-Me State license plates \_ unless Missouri lawmakers first say it's OK.

Gov. Jay Nixon signed into law Thursday a broad higher education measure that, among other things, clamps down on specialty university license plates. It also creates a new state fund to help finance construction at public colleges and universities, expands college investment options and starts a new science initiative.

Missouri lawmakers this spring supported the license plate restrictions after fans of the University of Kansas and its Jayhawk mascot launched an effort to get the school featured on a license plate in its athletic rival's home state. The Missouri Legislature now will need to approve all military and collegiate specialty license plates.

**Democratic Missouri Rep. Stephen Webber sponsored the license plate measure. His district covers part of Columbia, home to the University of Missouri's flagship campus.**

"We're huge rivals with them," Webber said of University of Kansas. "You're not supposed to have Jayhawks on Mizzou license plates, and I wouldn't expect to have Tigers on Kansas license plates. The rivalry makes it fun, and part of that rivalry is tweaking each other from time to time."

Still, Webber said he would be willing to propose a later amendment repealing the license plate measure if Kansas would agree to play Missouri in basketball this year. Jayhawks men's basketball coach Bill Self had said several times during the past season that he could not see scheduling the Tigers soon.

Besides regulating license plates, the law signed Thursday also creates the Higher Education Capital Fund to provide matching funds for capital improvement projects at public colleges and universities. Schools would apply for the state money, and the funds would be limited to no more than half a project's costs. The institutions would raise private funds for the remainder of the costs and could not count money from their operating budgets, tuition or fees.

Money from the capital fund cannot go toward athletic facilities, parking structures or student housing. And the Legislature would need to endorse adding money to the state fund before any cash starts flowing for campus construction.

Supporters say state funding for construction on college campuses has been tight during the past decade and that offering some matching funds could help schools land private contributions.

Missouri officials in 2009 debated whether to seek voter approval to issue several hundred million dollars in bonds to cover the top construction needs at every public institution. Before that, the Legislature approved a plan to use money from the Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority for capital improvement projects, but some were put on hold after the student loan authority could not make all its scheduled payments.

The legislation signed by Nixon also requires the board for the Missouri Higher Education Savings Program to study investment plans available in other states and offer similar options in Missouri. It also establishes a new science, technology, engineering and math initiative to boost interest among K-12 students in those topics. The state Department of Higher Education and lawmakers could provide funding to support that effort.

# KANSAS CITY BUSINESS JOURNAL

## Missouri law will keep Jayhawks off license plates

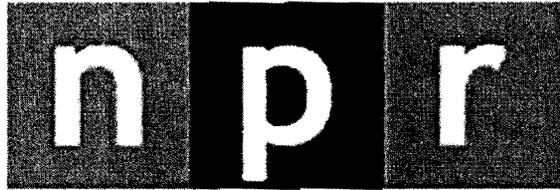
*Kansas City Business Journal*

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Don't expect to see any Jayhawks on Missouri license plates — it's the law — The Associated Press reports.

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon signed an education bill on Thursday that includes new restrictions on specialty license plates. The Legislature now must approve any requests for military or collegiate specialty plates.

**The measure was included after news reports that University of Kansas backers were working to get a specialty plate in Missouri. Rep. Stephen Webber, D-Columbia and sponsor of the provision, said he'd be willing to repeal the language if KU agrees to play the University of Missouri in basketball.**



# Land-Grant Universities And Agriculture's Future

Sandy Rikoon, professor of rural sociology, University of Missouri

July 5, 2012

The Morrill Act of 1862 began a transformation of American agriculture. Congress donated 30,000 acres of public land to each state to establish what became known as land-grant colleges and universities. Now, with looming environmental challenges, land-grant institutions are more important than ever.

## Transcript follows:

NEAL CONAN, HOST:

One hundred fifty years ago, Abraham Lincoln signed a law that transformed agriculture and education, and transformed America along the way. Named after its congressional sponsor, the Morrill Act of 1862 directed the states to create institutions of higher learning for the study of agriculture and mechanics, and provided 30,000 acres of public land to each state for the purpose. These land-grant universities include MIT, Cornell, the California state universities and Texas A&M, among many others.

They support farmers, ranchers and gardeners, and, of course, they face 21st-century challenges, beginning with funding. We want to hear from farmers, ranchers and gardeners in the audience today about agriculture extension services. 800-989-8255. Email us: [talk@npr.org](mailto:talk@npr.org). Do you use them? Have they been helpful? You can also join the conversation at our website. Go to [npr.org](http://npr.org). Click on TALK OF THE NATION. **Joining us here at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival is Sandy Rikoon. He's professor of rural sociology at the University of Missouri. Nice to have you with us today.**

SANDY RIKOON: Hey. It's great to be here. It's great to follow Woody Guthrie.

(LAUGHTER)

CONAN: Nice to follow Woody. Well, he opened for you. He opened for you.

RIKOON: OK.

CONAN: Of course, the University of Missouri, also a land-grant university.

RIKOON: Absolutely.

CONAN: And how does that shape the character of a university, do you think?

RIKOON: I think the land-grant universities are special breeds. I mean, I've worked abroad in agriculture in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, and there's great jealousy over our agricultural land-grant universities, because what we do is combine learning, research and the extension system that you mentioned, or community outreach. So we're not just folks who are in the laboratory, doing our own thing. We're people who are doing research, trying to discover new things. And with those new things, then we have the service, this extension service to carry this new information out to the people of the state.

CONAN: New information about seeds, about soil conditions.

RIKOON: New information about - just about everything. I mean, you know, it's the college of agriculture, but now, we're the college of agriculture, food and natural resources, OK? So it's - agricultural production is one thing. Nutrition is a big deal, OK? We have nutrition education assistance all over the state. We have community development specialists, economic development specialists, business and industry development specialists.

CONAN: And we think about, of course, ranchers and farmers, but gardeners, too - the Master Gardener Program.

RIKOON: The Master Gardener Program and the Executive Master Garden Program.

CONAN: I did not know about that.

RIKOON: For those who want to go the extra mile, you can become an Executive Master Gardener Program. But this is 95,000 people, volunteers around the country who are out there, willing to help not only individuals who are - have questions about their own vegetable or fruit or flower gardens, but are also really instrumental in this latest movement, and that's the establishment of community gardens.

CONAN: Community gardens not just in, well, anywhere.

RIKOON: Anywhere. In Missouri connected with the drug-court system, connected with food pantries. I mean, one of the aspects of community gardens is to practice sustainably, to raise food and to provide that food to people who need it. And so in Missouri, food pantries are a major client of these community gardens.

CONAN: What are you doing that's exciting at the moment in terms of the extension services?

RIKOON: I think that - the biggest thing that I think about today is health and nutrition. This is a major deal, obviously, with the concerns about obesity and type 2 diabetes and diet and food.

And, of course, I'm a little prejudiced, because this all relates back to the food system - at least in part. And so I think that what I've seen over the last five or 10 years is the growth of the nutrition education programs around the state - not only dealing with kids through WIC programs and things like that, but working in concert with food pantries and in schools and so on. So I really - I have to pick nutrition.

CONAN: And you're picking nutrition and food pantries and all wonderful programs. As you know, though, the - some states, there's great criticism that the research is too tied to corporate farming and corporations and funded, in fact, by those corporations, and so devoted towards, well, genetically modified crops and other programs like that.

RIKOON: Yeah. OK. So I'm from Missouri. You know who's headquartered in Missouri.

CONAN: I think it's Monsanto.

RIKOON: Yeah, this little corporation called Monsanto. And for people who are critics of the University of Missouri, they have retitled us Monsanto University. Frankly, it's not the truth. I mean, if you look at where the funding comes from for agricultural research, even in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource, the primary source of funds remains the USDA and public funds.

It's not that we don't look for industry funds and we don't partner with Monsanto. We have a Monsanto Auditorium in one of our buildings. But really, they are still the minority of funding. And public funding, which is the best kind of funding, in my opinion, still drives our research agenda.

CONAN: But that public funding is dwindling.

RIKOON: It's really tough. It's really tough. We depend on the USDA not only to fund research but to fund extension and to fund our agricultural experiment station farms around the state. And as the state, you know, cuts back on its funding and the Feds face obvious cuts in their funding, how we are going to maintain this research and these programs becomes really questionable.

CONAN: We're in a tent at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, another one of these periodic visits by a water truck, trying to keep the dust down here on the National Mall. So you're going to hear some extraneous sounds you would not hear if were broadcasting from Studio 3A. But well, it's worth to get to some of the people here with us at the mall and our guest, who's Sandy Rikoon, professor of rural sociology at the University of Minnesota.

We want to hear from those of you who use university agricultural extension services, if you're a gardener or a rancher or a farmer, 800-989-8255. Email us: [talk@npr.org](mailto:talk@npr.org). And let's start with Sarah(ph). Sarah is on the line from Fresno.

SARAH: Oh, yes. Thank you for taking my call. Long time listener, first time caller.

CONAN: Well, thank you. Go ahead.

SARAH: I work in California as what they call a pest control adviser. We're licensed professionals but are actual plant doctors. And we use the extension service to help us determine what kinds of things we can use to keep the crop healthy, not just pesticides, but how to check the crops and to make sure that they're healthy. They use independent research all the time to help us with this. And with the public funds just dwindling, we have a lot less independent research that go on and have to go on more of what the chemical companies are telling us.

CONAN: Well, can you give us one example of a plant or a crop that was kept alive with the help of the extension service?

SARAH: Well, I'm looking at a cotton crop right now, and the farmer advisers, the cotton farmer advisers in California, helped us what the program called plant mapping, where we were able to take a look at what's going on with the plant even though we might have bugs out that could be damaging the crops. We (unintelligible) are going to turn into (unintelligible) and determine, now, do we really need to spray or not...

CONAN: Yeah.

SARAH: ...and how the plant's growing. It's a very - it's a very good program.

CONAN: I'm a bit of a gardener myself, Sandy Rikoon, and the ability to tell which bug is going to actually destroy your garden and which ones, well, they're benevolent, is - as far as I'm concerned, they all look mean.

RIKOON: So it one of the perks of the job. So if I have a beetle or something in my garden, I just find a little container. I put the beetle in the container. I take it over to the university, over to extension, and they'll tell me what it is and how to get rid of it. And not just necessarily how to get rid of it with pesticides or insecticides, but what other types of natural or sustainable kinds of controls we could use.

So extension is really the envy of other countries. I could say one thing in terms of international work. Many countries are trying to duplicate the extension system. Many countries have research, agricultural research, but what they don't have is that group of people who take the research and then take it to the people.

CONAN: Thanks very much for the call.

SARAH: Thank you.

CONAN: And here's an email that we have from Judy. University extension systems and their personnel provide vital services to small farmers. Too often one extension agent must wear way too many hats. Agricultural extension programs should be supported as much as possible. What does she mean by wearing way too many hats?

RIKOON: Well, this - to me?

CONAN: Yeah.

RIKOON: I think that relates to cutbacks. You know, in Missouri, if you went to Missouri 20 years ago or 25 years ago, every county had an extension office and there were multiple extension people, probably in every office. Well, the state appropriation has not risen with the level of population, the local contributions have gone down, and so you're finding we're consolidating offices into regional offices. One extension person may cover seven counties or may cover two or three different areas.

One thing that I should notice is we often focus on extension, and they're primary, but there are other parts of the USDA that have people who do extension-type activities. So let me just mention one of my favorites, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, OK? And they deal with farmers on soil conservation and water quality and things like that. They have technicians and they have other folks who also go out to the farms and help farmers. So extension works in cooperation, I think, with some of these other organizations.

Here's another phone call. This is Mar(ph), Mar with us from Elbow Lake in Minnesota.

MAR: Yes, sir.

CONAN: Go ahead. You're on the air.

MAR: OK. I'm just (unintelligible) and I just heard the program. In Minnesota, basically the problem is that research isn't being done because they've cut back on research. They've cut back on extension. There is very few extension agents in the county anymore. They're regional, and then they even cut regionals now. The one in Fergus Falls is basically gone, going(ph) in Morris, and it's so far away.

And like the one gal said, one agent has too many hats to fill because of - increasingly the amount of information and monies that's given to the extension, they've cut it. Unlike...

CONAN: And how is that - I'm sorry to interrupt.

MAR: What I'd like to say is agriculture is the foundation of science and industry, and without it we don't have a country.

CONAN: I'm sorry to interrupt, Mar. But how is this going to change your life?

MAR: Well, at least I can get information on what crops are grown and the university is basically in wheat and some of these other small grains that the big companies have quit doing any research on. Well, at least we've got varieties that are going to be useful and have weed resistance or chemical resistance (unintelligible) and so on.

CONAN: All right. Well, thanks very much for the phone call. Good luck to.

MAR: Yes, sir. But...

CONAN: We're talking about the 150th anniversary of the law signed by Abraham Lincoln that created land-grant universities. You're listening to TALK OF THE NATION from NPR News. Our guest, again, is Sandy Rikoon, professor of rural sociology at the University of Missouri.

A couple of emails. This is from Robbie(ph) in Houston: Besides the great services in agriculture, the extension services are also one of the major places where young people can learn to sow. That may not sound like much, but sowing is a tremendous life skill. And now that it's not taught very much in the schools, extension services have help pick up the slack. And those are not what you think of in terms of agricultural extension.

RIKOON: You know, the most - one of the most popular programs in Missouri in the last several years for extension has been preserving food, storing food, how to use a pressure cooker. I mean, there's this revival of - not only of home gardening, but people now have lost the ability to maintain and store and preserve their crops. And so these are sold out, right away.

CONAN: And let's go next to Dawn, and Dawn's with us from Oak Creek. Oak Creek where?

DAWN: Colorado.

CONAN: Go ahead, please.

DAWN: OK. Well, I actually work for the sheriff's office out here, and we use the extension office in a lot of ways as well as the traditional ways. But we just met with them to work on fire evacuation plans with livestock. I refer a lot of our townspeople on livestock lost and how they affect them. And I refer them to the extension office for that kind of information.

CONAN: And forgive me, Oak Creek. Are you in one of the areas affected by one of the eight or nine fires burning in Colorado right now?

(LAUGHTER)

DAWN: Not directly. We're between Steamboat Springs and Vail.

CONAN: Good for you. And I assume you're seeing some smoke though.

DAWN: Oh, yeah.

CONAN: Well, good luck and we hope that persists.

DAWN: Thank you.

CONAN: Go ahead.

RIKOON: But it brings up - actually brings up a good point. In fact, all these conversations do. The USDA probably ought to be changing its name, OK? Agriculture is only one of the things that they do. They do a lot of work with food. They do - the Forest Service is part of USDA.

Natural Resources Conservation Service is part of USDA. Alternative energy is part of USDA. Rural well-being in general is part of the USDA - electrification, broadband access. It's much more than a Department of Agriculture, and the extension is taking on all of these roles as well.

CONAN: Yet, is part of the funding problem related to the reduced number of people living in rural areas in so many parts of the country?

RIKOON: You know, it could be. It could be. I mean, the agricultural lobby is still fairly strong. But given that a majority of the funds that go to the USDA does not go to agriculture - I think only about 15 percent of the funds that go to the USDA go to agriculture. A lot of it goes to the food programs. It goes to conservation and natural resources. It just means that other constituencies need to be speaking up, including consumer groups, I think, for continued USDA funding.

CONAN: This email from Karen in Beresford, South Dakota: Hello, I'm a master gardener in South Dakota. The extension service in South Dakota State University Extension Service took a hit last year when the governor and legislature decreased education funds, and SDSU applied the hit to the extension service. We're still in recovery mode and still feeling the effects. And if you just tell us a little bit more about this master gardener program and how that helps people.

RIKOON: Well, I'm not a master gardener. But as I understand it, to become eligible to be a master gardener you have to satisfy a number of classes, probably take a test or two, and then you become a certified master gardener through extension. And then your name goes on a list, and so you become available as a resource to people in your counties or in the region who have questions about gardening.

CONAN: Do they go to schools and teach kids how to garden and...

RIKOON: I'm sure they do. I'm sure they go to schools. I'm sure they're - again, they're consulted by community gardens, by local parks and recreation departments, and so on.

CONAN: And let's end with this email from Lee in Colorado: I work for Colorado State University Extension to help market their programs. I see extension agents work harder than almost anyone else I know. They do it not for money but because there's a need. Extension is one of the best and last public service programs in America. Sandy Rikoon, I hear you saying amen.

RIKOON: I say amen because it is a public service. And you know, maybe there's this move towards privatization of all services that the government used to provide. Personally, I think extension has done great work, and it's a public service like education that the government needs to be involved in.

CONAN: Sandy Rikoon, professor of rural sociology at the University of Missouri, with us here at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. Our thanks also to our hosts here at the festival, including Cristina Diaz-Carrera, Steve Fisher, Robert Schneider, Alex Saunders, Pam Rogers, and the rest of the staff of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. And, of course, to our producers and engineers here in the heat, as well.

## Federal charges filed in library fire

Thursday, July 5, 2012

The Columbia man suspected to have started fires last year at Ellis Library on the University of Missouri campus and at a Stephens College building is now facing federal charges.



**Christopher Kelley:**

Accused of setting fires at MU, Stephens

Christopher Kelley, 26, faces two counts of maliciously damaging buildings used in interstate commerce, a violation of U.S. Code. The federal charges in the U.S. Western District of Missouri are classified as a Class C felony and come with a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

He was released Tuesday on a personal recognizance bond, which didn't require a financial payment.

Columbia police arrested Kelley in February in connection with a May 2011 fire at 1400 Windsor St. at Stephens. He also is accused of stealing a computer from the building. Kelley also faces second-degree burglary and arson charges for a September fire that caused as much as \$1 million in damage at Ellis Library.



## **Accreditation team to visit MU police**

Thursday, July 5, 2012

A team will visit the University of Missouri Police Department next week for an accreditation assessment.

The assessors from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies will arrive Sunday, according to a news release from the department, and will examine policies, management and other aspects of campus police operations. The accreditation is part of a voluntary process, the news release said, and includes 373 standards by which the three-year reaccreditation will be determined.

The public is invited to comment at a session at 2 p.m. Monday in rooms 1209 A and B of MU's Student Center. Comments may also be called in to 884-9901 between 10 a.m. and noon Monday.

Phone and in-person comments are limited to 10 minutes and must address the agency's ability to comply with CALEA's standards. A copy of those standards is available at the department.