States – like Congress – are divided on replacing Obamacare

Generated from News Bureau Expert Comment: Popular Provisions of Affordable Care Act in Danger if ‘Fundamental Bargain’ is Broken, MU Expert Says

This story was picked up on the McClatchy news wire and ran in at least ten newspapers across the country, including The Charlotte Observer, The Modesto Bee, The Tacoma News Tribune, The Fort Worth Star-Telegram and others.

By Lesley Clark, Sammy Caiola, Bryan Lowry and Daniel Chang
McClatchy Washington Bureau

Senate Republicans say they’ll insure more Americans than President Barack Obama’s 2010 Affordable Care Act and do it more cheaply – by giving power to the states.

But just like the political divide that cleaves Congress, the states seem likely to look at the latest health care proposal with a partisan eye. In Republican-led Kansas, one lawmaker was quick to embrace the idea. But in blue-state California there was caution, as Senate Republicans unveiled a new replacement plan that its sponsors hope will draw support from across the aisle. It would allow states to make the choices on health care.

“I personally think that’s the way we should go,” said Kansas state Rep. Dan Hawkins, a Republican from Wichita, who chairs the the state House Health and Human Services Committee. “I think each state is different and for us to try and do
one-size-fits-all across is part of the problem. Quite frankly, I think we could have handled it much better.”

But in California, where health advocates after President Donald Trump’s election continued to aggressively push enrollment in Medi-Cal and Covered California, and state officials have vowed not to let years of enrollment efforts go to waste, there were questions about the details. Legislative language was only released late Monday.

“For me, the absolute most important aspect of anything proposed at the federal level is the federal dollar and what’s going to be coming – is it less, or the same, or more?” said California state Sen. Ed Hernandez, D-Azusa, chairman of the California Senate Health Committee. “If they truly want to allow states to continue on within the (Affordable Care Act), then give us the same amount of money we’ve been receiving, and don’t block grant us, and we can make it work.”

California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones called it an illusion.

“The Republicans offer the illusion of access, while denying actual health insurance coverage provided by the Affordable Care Act,” he said. “It creates the illusion that somehow those states that have enacted the Affordable Care Act will have the opportunity to continue to do so, but they’ll be denied the funds to do so. And for states that are offered an alternative approach, the illusion is the offer of access to health savings accounts that most Americans don’t make enough to save into in any meaningful way.”

Sens. Bill Cassidy, R-La. and Susan Collins, R-Maine, unveiled their Patient Freedom Act of 2017, suggesting it could attract bipartisan support. But Democrats, who have vowed not to cooperate with efforts to dismantle former President Barack Obama’s signature health care law unless there is a viable alternative, said the plan falls well short of a full replacement plan.

“It is nearly impossible to keep the benefits of the Affordable Care Act without keeping the whole thing,” said Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., the Senate minority leader. “Ultimately, this proposal is an empty facade that would create chaos – not care – for millions of Americans.”

Collins, one of several senators who have urged their colleagues to come up with a plan to replace the 2010 law as they prepare to dismantle it, said she’s been talking to colleagues on both sides of the aisle in hopes of picking up support.
“We have had expressions of interest,” she said, declining to name any lawmakers for fear of putting them “too far out front.”

She noted that Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., on the Senate floor had called the plan “much more reasonable” than other Republican proposals. But Durbin went on to say that the Senate could only have a “constructive conversation” if Republicans refuse to vote to repeal the law unless there is a replacement.

The Cassidy/Collins proposal, a Durbin spokesman said, is still “a very far cry from covering all the people the Affordable Care Act does in all the same ways.”

Sam Halabi, a professor for the University of Missouri law school, said the Patient Freedom Act may be politically popular but that it lacks the necessary details to determine whether it will succeed at making health care more affordable.

“It is a shrewd first move that looks like it’s keeping some important benefits of Obamacare while fulfilling this promise that Trump and the Republican party made to the American public to at least repeal the parts the public didn’t like,” Halabi said.

Halabi said the Patient Freedom Act never addresses the economic feasibility of repealing the individual mandate while preserving the prohibition on denying coverage due to a pre-existing condition.

Senate Republicans are looking to deliver on a campaign promise and repeal the law using a budget resolution that requires just a majority of senators. But replacing major parts of the legislation would require 60 Senate votes – and a number of Democrats.

Collins said the plan is “not perfect” and will require revisions, but she urged her fellow Republicans to ensure that they have plans to replace the health care law before they vote to repeal it.

“If we do not start putting specific legislation on the table that can be debated, refined, amended and enacted, then we will fail the American people,” she said.

The plan would keep some of the more popular elements of the 2010 law: It would keep coverage for mental health and substance abuse, allow young adults to stay on their parents’ plans until age 26 and prevent patients from losing their coverage because they have pre-existing conditions.
Democrats warn that any repeal of Obamacare would 'make America sick again'  

Democratic leaders from both the Senate and House met with President Barack Obama on Wednesday to discuss the future of his signature healthcare law. "They're like the dog who caught the bus," said Schumer of his Republican colleagues. Democrats say the plan would be unworkable without the mandate, which spreads risk by covering healthy people as well as those with illnesses.

Under the Collins/Cassidy plan, states would decide coverage for their residents. States could chose one of three options, including keeping the Affordable Care Mandate and its requirements. The state would continue to receive federal premium tax credits, cost-sharing subsidies, and Medicaid dollars.

A second option, which Collins said she would expect most states to embrace, would allow states to continue to receive funding equal to 95 percent of federal premium tax credits and cost-sharing subsidies, as well as a federal match for Medicaid expansion. States could choose to receive funds in various forms, including per beneficiary grants or refundable tax credits, but the money would be deposited in patient-directed health savings accounts.

A third option would allow the states to opt out entirely from the federal program and develop their own health care programs, without federal assistance.

The Congressional Budget Office, which has warned that repealing the health care law could lead to 18 million Americans losing insurance, has not reviewed the legislation, but Cassidy said he believes the plan would “bend the cost curve down” by seeing that states are managing costs, along with the federal government.

The bill does not repeal the taxes that pay for Obamacare, including one on medical devices.

“The revenue is essential,” Cassidy said. “If we repeal all the revenue now, that’s obviously going to create a hole.” He said the taxes could be repealed at a later date, possibly as part of larger tax reform bill.

“President Trump has said he wishes to cover all, take care of those with pre-existing conditions without mandates,” Cassidy said. “For that, you need revenue, bottom line.”

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details to determine whether it will succeed at making health care more affordable.

“It is a shrewd first move that looks like it’s keeping some important benefits of Obamacare while fulfilling this promise that Trump and the Republican party made to the American public to at least repeal the parts the public didn’t like,” Halabi said.

Halabi said the Patient Freedom Act never addresses the economic feasibility of repealing the individual mandate while preserving the prohibition on denying coverage due to a pre-existing condition.

But he’s also not sure about the expanded use of health savings accounts or HSAs.

“The real questions about the proposal are going to revolve around the structure of the health savings account alternatives, and how those are going to work for states,” he said.

Another unknown in the Collins and Cassidy proposal is how states would respond to having greater flexibility to create their own health care systems.

Halabi imagined a future where some states would choose to keep the Affordable Care Act while others developed an alternative model.

“It isn’t clear that states would compete on the things you would want them to compete on,” Halabi said. “So it could end up being that states would ultimately construct their health care systems to as to attract the fewest number of sick or non-wealthy patients.

“It’s just a big question,” he added, “as to what putting states in charge of the system, or block grants to states, is really going to look like and what conditions if any the federal government might impose.”

Caiola of the Sacramento Bee reported from Sacramento, California. Chang of the Miami Herald reported from Miami. Lowry of the Wichita Eagle reported from Topeka, Kansas.
What Does Trump's Executive Order Mean for Obamacare?

Generated from News Bureau Expert Comment: Popular Provisions of Affordable Care Act in Danger if ‘Fundamental Bargain’ is Broken, MU Expert Says

When President Trump issued an executive order Friday to "ease the burden of Obamacare," he sent a clear message that his administration intends to abolish the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

But the order does not repeal the ACA, nor does it make immediate changes to Americans' insurance.

Healthcare law experts help sort out what did happen, what could happen, and by what timeline.

The Executive Order

Executive orders are used for foreign and domestic issues. Domestically, they are used to set broad policy.

Trump on Friday directed departments and federal agencies to "take all actions consistent with law to minimize the unwarranted economic and regulatory burdens of the Act, and prepare to afford the States more flexibility and control to create a more free and open healthcare market."

In this case, "It's basically an announcement of an intention, and it is far more symbolic than it is likely to have policy effects," Sam Halabi, JD, associate professor of law at the University of Missouri in Columbia and scholar at the O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University in Washington, DC, told Medscape Medical News. "It was largely
signed to speak to the constituency who wanted addressing or repealing Obamacare to be a priority of the administration."

Change in Direction

Timothy Jost, JD, professor emeritus at Washington and Lee University School of Law in Harrisonburg, Virginia, and a member of the National Academy of Medicine, told Medscape Medical News the order set the parameters for a change in direction.

"The Obama administration had a priority of covering people with low incomes and people with health problems, and the priorities for the Trump administration are going to be deregulation, reducing taxes, transferring responsibility for health coverage to the states, and increasing marketplace competition," he said.

Friday's order set out an agenda to interpret the ACA with those policy priorities in mind, he said.

Changing Regulations Takes Time

But nothing is likely to change quickly. Insurers are under contract for the rest of the year, and, barring emergencies, changing regulations takes drafting the language, submitting the proposal for a comment period that often lasts months, possibly running the proposal by the federal Office of Management and Budget, and, if approved, allowing time for an effective date.

"Most of the Affordable Care Act was done through regulation," Jost notes.

The most likely change this year will be in an expansion of hardship waivers for the individual mandate, experts say.

Although essential healthcare benefits would have to remain, under the provisions of the law, the way those services are delivered could change. Jost said possible changes could conceivably include fewer covered drugs or caps on visits.

Making it too easy to get the exemptions could destabilize the insurance market, Jost said, because popular parts of the law, such as covering those with preexisting conditions, depend on broad uptake, especially among healthy people.
He points to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) report released January 17, which says repealing major portions of the ACA without a replacement could result in 18 million people losing health insurance in the first year.

He says the message of the CBO and nonpartisan think tanks is to be careful with a fragile market.

"I've talked with insurance companies who say, 'We don't need the individual insurance market. It's less than 10% of business. If they're going to make it too hard, we're going to do stuff we can make money doing,' " Jost said. He added that if insurers pull out, providers will be left with mounting uncompensated care.

Halabi says the Trump administration has "demonstrated a sensitivity to the interests of insurers," who have made it clear that they need some predictability in the exchange markets. For that reason, he said, he doesn't see radical action on the individual mandate waivers.

**States Will Get More Say**

Cynthia Cox, associate director of health reform and private insurance for the Kaiser Family Foundation, said it will be months before next steps become clear and what effects they would have on insurers for 2018 and beyond.

What was clear after Trump's executive order, she told *Medscape Medical News*, is that states will get more say in managing Medicaid.

That had been a sore point under Obama, because states felt some of their choices were being taken away by the federal government.

Some states were successful in getting waivers to use a different model to expand Medicaid, she said. Arkansas, for example, used private insurers to expand the coverage, but exemptions were not granted to all.

The Trump administration may be more willing to offer states those alternatives, she said. That could come with charging premiums, sharing costs, or imposing restrictions on how long people may be enrolled or requiring people to prove they are working or can't work as a condition of receiving the benefits, she said.

Cox said states that feel Obamacare isn't working for them have the option of implementing their own version of healthcare reform under a "1332 waiver." But
to do that, they would have to prove they could provide similar coverage at a similar cost.

"We have not seen a lot of action around these," Cox said. "That may be what the Trump administration is signaling, that if states want to experiment with their own version of health reform, they are willing to work with them."

The challenge is that with the repeal and replace movement going on in Congress, there may be a new federal plan in place before states can offer alternatives.

**Proposal Allows States to Opt Out of Law**

On Monday, four Republican senators introduced a replacement for the ACA that would allow states to opt out of the law.

Called the Cassidy-Collins bill, the legislation was introduced by Senators Bill Cassidy (R-La), Susan Collins (R-Maine), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WVa), and Johnny Isakson (R-Ga).

They say their proposal is not affected by Friday's executive order.

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**MU wants to hear from public on attributes for a new chancellor**

BY MARÁ ROSE WILLIAMS

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The University of Missouri will hold a forum Thursday to gain public input on developing a profile for who would become the new chancellor on the Columbia campus.

The forum will be 10 a.m. in the Columns Ballroom at MU's Reynolds Alumni Center. Faculty, staff, students, retirees, alumni and the general public are invited.
Members of the MU Chancellor Search Committee will lead the forum, and those in attendance will be allowed to voice desired characteristics and qualifications the new chancellor should have.

In December university system officials named the members to the chancellor search committee, led by University of Missouri-Kansas City Chancellor Leo Morton and MU College of Engineering Dean Elizabeth Loboa.

Hank Foley has been serving as interim chancellor since November 2015, when Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin stepped down amid controversy that erupted during student protests over a lack of diversity, equity and inclusion on the campus. Students called for the resignation of UM System President Tim Wolf, who quit days later.

In November Mun Choi became the 24th president of the UM System, which has campuses in Kansas City, St. Louis, Rolla and Columbia. Choi, who is the first UM System president of Asian-American heritage, is to begin his new job March 1.

**ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH**

**Argentinian agriculture company to open North American headquarters in Creve Coeur**

By Samantha Liss St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 14 hrs ago

Agldea, an Argentinian agriculture company that provides research services to ag-tech giants like Monsanto, plans to open its North American headquarters in Creve Coeur.

“We know St. Louis is an important city for the agriculture industry and a lot of our clients are here,” Agustin Cresta, an executive with the company, told the Post-Dispatch. Cresta likened the agriculture industry’s presence here to that of IT in California’s Silicon Valley.

In a message posted to Facebook on Tuesday, Gov. Eric Greitens called the news a “proud moment for Missouri.”
Greitens, in the post, said he spoke Tuesday with AgIdea CEO Mariano Battista, who told the governor he selected Missouri for its leadership in agriculture and its workforce talent. “He is excited about conservative leadership that will help create an ideal environment for businesses to grow and prosper,” Greitens wrote.

Cresta told the Post-Dispatch the firm will occupy space at the Helix Center Biotech Incubator, a place for affordable lab space that is near the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and just across the street from Monsanto’s Creve Coeur campus.

**The firm is looking to hire six full-time employees and will look to the University of Missouri in Columbia for recent graduates due to its “very good agriculture school,” Cresta said.**

The university also is near farms where AgIdea is already running experiments, he said.

AgIdea was founded in 2006 and has about 60 full-time employees throughout Argentina, he said.

**Show-Me Institute: MU ranks in the middle for research, education value**

The University of Missouri’s Columbia campus does not stand out as a place where researchers are especially productive or where students get exceptional value for the money spent obtaining an education, a researcher for the Show-Me Institute said Tuesday.

Michael McShane, director of education policy at the Rex Sinquefield-funded think tank, also said MU does not rank at the bottom of either measure.

“I don’t think that Mizzou is either a leader or a laggard on most indicators,” McShane said at a policy breakfast attended by about 30 business and education professionals.
Titled “Stuck in the Middle with Mizzou,” McShane used federal data tracking students attending research institutions who receive financial aid and online data showing research production in the College of Arts and Science compared to other UM campuses and research institutions in adjoining states.

The research project was sparked, he said, by the campus protests in November 2015 and the aftermath, including the controversy over then-assistant professor Melissa Click. While Click’s behavior at the protests got her fired, many people focused on her research — inquiries into pop culture responses to books and movies such as “Twilight” and “50 Shades of Grey” — to question whether MU is using tax money wisely.

“A lot of the discussion of what was happening on campus was happening in a data-free environment,” McShane said.

A college degree is a high-quality investment, McShane said. Data show the wages of college graduates are increasing faster than those of high school graduates and that a college graduate can expect to earn $1 million more in his or her lifetime than a high school graduate. The downside, he said, is that student debt now is $1.2 trillion, exceeding debt for automobile purchases and credit cards.

His research, he said, was designed to show whether MU provides a better chance at high wages or a lower-cost education. Among four-year public universities in the state, MU ranks second for the share of students earning more than high school graduates.

“Mizzou is about in the middle when earnings are plotted against cost of attending, versus other four-year universities in Missouri and against all top research universities in the United States,” he said.

During his presentation, Lisa Weaver of the College of Education asked McShane why he only used arts and science when large volumes of research are done in agriculture, medicine, education and other areas.

“It is incredibly labor intensive,” and with time limitations “I wasn’t able to cover everything,” he said. Compiling the data just about arts and science took about a month, he said, and he had to gather similar data for other schools for comparison.

After the presentation, Weaver said the picture he painted was incomplete.

“I think he left off what most of the institutions do best,” she said.

But, she said, the conclusion that MU is somewhere in the middle compared to peer institutions seems right. “It feels that way, but I don’t know if his data shows it,” she said.

McShane’s study also did not cover measures the UM System considers important, interim chief of staff David Russell said. The amount of time it takes students to obtain a degree and retention rates for freshmen and sophomores also show how well the university is doing, he said.
“I felt like he was going into a number of things we understood already,” Russell said.

Show-Me Institute presents data showing MU "stuck in the middle"


COLUMBIA – For more than a year, the University of Missouri has been in the spotlight, discussed and debated in public and in the halls of the state Capitol.

A state think-tank, the Show-Me Institute, weighed in on the matter on Tuesday in an attempt to measure MU and its mission as the state’s premier research university.

The Show-Me Institute hosted the Show-Me Forum: Stuck in the Middle with Mizzou presentation on Tuesday at 7:30 a.m. at the Country Club of Missouri to discuss data on MU’s performance.

With the recent appointment of a new president and the aim toward a new direction for the system, the non-profit wanted to look at how MU is performing.

Michael McShane, director of education policy at the Show-Me Institute, argued issues on campus have presented opportunities to think about the way the university operates and consider ways to improve.

The impact of enrollment declines at MU was one of the ideas that spurred his work.

McShane presented his research on where MU stands in comparison to other schools across the state, region, and nation.
“On most indicators that we find about the outcomes that we have of students who graduate from either public research-1 universities, or research 1 universities in the region, Mizzou tends to fall kind of in the middle of the pack," McShane said. "It's not at the top of any of these indicators and it’s not in the bottom, that’s where the name where Stuck in the Middle came from.”

In the presentation he addressed some issues in higher education, how MU stands in relation to the other public institutions of higher education in the state and how it compares to the other research-1 universities in the region and country.

"We use two data sources. One is federal IPEDS data, so it’s a national, federal database of statistics," McShane said. "And that tells us about a lot of things like enrollment, some of the incoming characteristics of students, so demographic characteristics, things like ACT scores and others and then we pared that with things from the College Score Card which looks at outcomes."

He also said, "We used federal government data the Obama administration put together called the College Scorecard which links earnings data and employment data to information that they have from colleges so we know roughly speaking for students who receive federal financial aid how much money they’re making in the years after they graduate, their employment, things like that."

Michael Podgursky, professor of economics at MU and board member of the Show-Me Institute, discussed what he hoped the presentation would accomplish.

“Hopefully we can at least get some of the leaders at MU and the political leaders in the state to begin thinking about these ideas,” Podgursky said.

McShane said community members have a stake in MU because its success affects the state.

Roger Fries, a Columbia resident who frequently attends Show-Me Institute presentations, said there was more interest in this one in particular.

He said he hopes MU improves its standing.

"I hope we can become a little bit better than middle or somewhat better than middle," Fries said. "It seems like the opportunity is there. I realize that funding is tough in the state right now but the university I think has to prioritize and put funding into the strong points and cut back on some of the areas that are not as strong."

McShane hopes his presentation informs stakeholders in higher education including lawmakers, employees, taxpayers and students with a set of facts to base their discussions.

The goal is to encourage data-based discussions about MU and the University of Missouri System.

The data from the presentation will be published in a research paper in the next couple of weeks.
KOMU 8 News reached out to the MU News Bureau for a statement about the research and presentation.

"University of Missouri leaders are appreciative to those throughout the state and nation who have shown passion and interest in the important issues facing Missouri’s land-grant university. Our leaders are listening and engaged in this conversation as we always look for ways through which we can improve.

"We are proud of the accomplishments of our students, who are preparing to become future state and national leaders, and our faculty, whose groundbreaking discoveries in the laboratories are saving lives and creating new companies and jobs for the state of Missouri.

"As one of the first institutions to join the Association of American Universities (AAU), we attract nationally prominent faculty who are leaders in their fields and elected members of national academies and key academic organizations. We continue to be the state’s largest and most comprehensive university while serving as an economic engine for the state and nation."

MU offers free tax help to Missourians


COLUMBIA – Missourians have a free place to get tax help. Tax experts in the personal financial planning department at MU's College of Human Environmental Services, MU Law School and MU Extension are offering free tax clinics starting Jan. 24.

MU will operate Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites on the MU campus and one site in downtown Columbia through Apr. 17. The VITA sites will be staffed by students from the MU School of Law and Department of Personal Financial Planning. All students who volunteer go through IRS training and certification prior to working with clients.
"The greatest thing about volunteering here is getting the experience of working with actual clients, and so a lot of the law school students and personal financial planning students will go out and they'll work in fields that involve talking about money. And money is still a very taboo subject," MU assistant extension professor for financial planning Andrew Zumwalt said.

The program generally works with clients with incomes less than $60,000, many of whom receive the Earned Income Tax Credit, an anti-poverty program for low income people. Zumwalt said people with incomes greater than $60,000 have tax returns too complicated for the VITA staff to complete.

VITA is an IRS sponsored program, which allows students to receive real world experience and class credit for many. Though course credit is limited to undergraduates in the MU Department Personal Financial Planning, one MU Law Student who volunteers views his experience as invaluable.

"Before I started, I really didn't even know how to prepare my own taxes, but now I've learned how to do a variety of tax related issues and as a future lawyer, that's going to be really helpful for me," volunteer and MU law student Anthony Meyer said.

VITA sites are walk-ins only. The volunteers will not prepare tax returns involving farms, complicated small business and rental property income.

VITA is offering services at the following locations:

Hulston Hall on the MU campus Mondays from 4:15pm to 7:45pm

162 Stanley Hall on the MU campus Tuesday through Thursday from 3:30pm to 7:00pm and Saturdays from 9:00am to 12:30pm

Family Impact Center on 105 E. Ash St. Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00am to 12:30pm.
Mug takes coffee from piping-hot to drinkable quickly

Generated from News Bureau press release: New Coffee Mug Holds Liquids at Optimal Temps for 8 Hours

Hongbin “Bill” Ma is the first to admit he enjoys coffee.

“I drink a lot of coffee every day,” Ma said from his College of Engineering office at the University of Missouri, where he is a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering and director of the Center for Thermal Management.

Like many a coffee drinker, he encountered the classic problem. “At the beginning it’s too hot,” he said of taking a quick trip to his favorite coffee shop. “By the time I’m back at my office, it’s too cold to drink.”

It got him thinking that a “cup with constant temperature” would be ideal, he said.

About 18 months ago, he started working on the concept. The first of several products, a 10-ounce LEXO mug, is manufactured by ThermAvant Technologies LLC, 1000A Pannell St., a company owned by Ma as president and Joe Boswell as CEO. They are working on a larger mug to be available April 1 and a soup bowl to be available in June.

The secret to the patented mug is phase change material and advanced heat transfer, which is capable of storing and releasing high amounts of energy. The mug changes boiling-hot liquid to a constant temperature of 130 to 150 degrees, an ideal drinking temperature, within two minutes and keeps it there for eight hours, Ma said. The product is a joint venture between MU and ThermAvant, he said.

The mug has multi-layered walls. The middle layer of material “changes phase from solid to liquid and absorbs the thermal energy to quickly cool your coffee to your ideal drinking temperature,” Ma explained.

When coffee temperature drops lower than the ideal drinking temperature, “the thermal energy is released from the phase change material and sent back to your coffee to maintain this ideal drinking temperature.”

To provide an example of how that works, Ma brings up ice.
“Ice is one kind of phase change material. But ice changes phase from solid to liquid at a temperature of 32 degrees Fahrenheit. When ice changes phase from solid to liquid, it needs a lot of energy, and when it changes back from liquid to solid, it releases a lot of thermal energy.”

Inside the mug’s two layers of stainless steel is a thicker layer of phase change material where the thermal energy shifts back and forth, just like ice changing from solid to liquid. “Heat transfers through the phase change material,” Ma said.

He found the phase change material being manufactured by another company.

“It is very safe,” he said. It is 100 percent renewable, biodegradable and bio-based. That’s important, he said, because should there be a breach in the kitchen-grade stainless-steel wall, he would not want coffee drinkers to be harmed by the material.

The mug’s name, LEXO, stands for latent heat, equilibrium, “X” as in special material, and O for “Oh, wow,” Ma said. The mug, for sale online, is also BPA-free and dishwasher-safe.

In addition to keeping coffee at a constant temperature, his employees have discovered the mug keeps ice at zero for 12 hours.

“It also works for hot chocolate mix with boiling water,” Ma said. The temperature “is perfect for drinking in two minutes,” making it ideal for children. Plus, “several hours later, it’s still the perfect temperature to drink.”

Angela Davis before MU appearance calls for marchers to become a movement

Generated from News Bureau media advisory

The demonstrations Saturday, when millions of women and men participated in marches across the nation and the world, was a moment that can develop into a lasting movement if organizers do the necessary hard work, Angela Davis said Tuesday during a news conference in Columbia.

Davis, a professor emeritus at University of California-Santa Cruz and one of the most recognizable faces of the Black Power movement from the 1960s and 1970s, met with reporters a
few hours before she was scheduled to deliver a lecture sponsored by the University of Missouri in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday.

She spoke at the Women’s March on Washington, the main event for the weekend demonstrations, calling for resistance to mass incarceration and the anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant policies of President Donald Trump and the abolition of private prisons. Davis’ most recent book, “Freedom Is a Constant Struggle: Ferguson, Palestine, and the Foundations of a Movement,” compile lectures and writings that draw connections between demonstrations in Ferguson and Palestinians seeking recognition of their homeland.

A demonstration can be a moment that grabs public attention, she said. A movement can change minds and society, she added.

“The challenge is to take advantage of the moment and do the organizing that eventually can perhaps result in the emergence of a powerful movement,” Davis said.

**The Concerned Student 1950 demonstrations on the MU campus have echoed on campuses across the country, she said.**

“What happened on this campus, particularly drawing attention to the ways in which structural racism was being expressed within the educational institution and particularly on college and university campuses, the students and faculty and workers who participated in the protest, helped to galvanize this movement,” Davis said.

The march on Saturday was not intended to alter the policies of the Trump administration, Davis said. Paraphrasing English radical essayist and poet John Berger, she said demonstrations show participants the potential power they hold.

“Demonstrations are really about impending or possible revolutions,” Davis said. “They are not so much designed to convince the powers that be that our cause is just.”

Davis was a member of the Communist Party in 1969 when she took her first academic job as an assistant professor at UCLA. She was fired for inflammatory rhetoric in 1970, then arrested on charges she helped an offender obtain weapons used in an escape from a courtroom. During the escape, the offender and two other defendants took a judge, the prosecutor and three jurors hostage. Police fired as they fled, killing the judge and the three offenders.

Davis was charged with murder and captured as a fugitive after being placed on the FBI’s Ten Most Wanted list. She was acquitted in 1972. Controversy over her actions and the verdict led to fierce debates about her presence in some cities where she would lecture.

She is no less radical but does not generate that kind of personal controversy. The reason, she said, is that opposition to racism and sexism has become more widely accepted, Davis said.
“I would say that things have changed and what was once utterly radical is now more acceptable,” she said. “That is a good thing because what we have been doing has helped to transform consciousness.”

Activist Angela Davis urges cooperation against injustice

BENNITO L KELTY, 8 hrs ago

Generated from New Burea Media Advisory

COLUMBIA — Activist and scholar Angela Davis urged a packed audience Tuesday at the Missouri Theatre to take collective action as a way to remedy social injustice.

She described collective action as a group of people working together in a movement, even if each one is not directly affected by the outcome.

"We have to figure out how to show up when it’s not necessarily about us," Davis said.

Davis spoke to a sold-out crowd of 1,200 at the theater, and another 80 watched a live stream in Keller Auditorium in MU’s Geological Sciences Building.

Her speech was part of a series of events in Columbia to commemorate Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Jan. 16. The event was sponsored by MU’s Office of Inclusion, Diversity and Equity and the Missouri Students Association.
Davis' speech in Columbia marks her first public address since Saturday's Women's March on Washington, where she was a keynote speaker. Davis lauded the march, where hundreds of thousands of protestors gathered after Donald Trump's inauguration, as an example of collective action making a difference.

A large group of people coming together brings attention to a cause, and, in turn, change, she said.

"We will be asked to defend others," Davis said. "I want to see the same crowd from the women’s march stand up for illegal immigrants."

Davis is a distinguished professor emerita of history of consciousness at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She co-founded Critical Resistance, an organization devoted to eliminating the prison-industrial complex, and she was a prominent voice of the Black Panther Party and the Communist Party USA during the 1960s.

Davis reminded the audience that Martin Luther King, Jr. made a difference by creating mass demonstrations organized by communities. The success of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s can be used as a model today, she said. For change to be made, it is vital for people of different races, genders, ages and other demographics to organize and cooperate.

Davis praised student-led protests at MU in November 2015 as a foundation for making a change locally. In a series of protests that prompted a national discussion of race on campus, MU students demanded that then-University of Missouri System President Tim Wolfe resign because students said he failed to address racism at MU.

Davis encouraged their actions because they were collective.

"The activism for change in higher education here has resonated throughout the world," she said.

Davis acknowledged that many Americans are afraid and unsure of their future following the election of Trump. She answered this uncertainty by repeating a quote from her past:
"I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept," she said.

She continued by urging that now is the time for everyone to act together to end the fight that has been fought throughout American history.

"American history is already a story of colonialism and slavery," she said. "But we can change our future. What we are experiencing now is the last gasp of a dying culture."

She said everyone has the attitude and ideas necessary to make a difference and these ideas gain momentum through organization. Without it, ideas are powerless, she said.

The audience met Davis' speech with emphatic applause, especially when Davis said she supported the Standing Rock Sioux tribe and its opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline, the release of Chelsea Manning and Saturday's women's marches.

Davis ended her speech with a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr., noting that working together in the face of inequality benefits everyone.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," she said.

Similar stories also ran in:

KOMU: **Crowds turn out for activist Angela Davis at MU**

The Maneater: **Activist Angela Davis speaks at MU about continuing MLK’s legacy**
Missouri universities looking to tuition hikes to cover state funding shortfall

JEFFERSON CITY — Midyear tuition hikes and the likelihood of significant hikes in the fall could be the result of budget cuts imposed by Gov. Eric Greitens, higher education leaders told lawmakers on Monday.

The regents of State Technical College of Missouri in Linn already have approved a 0.7 percent tuition increase, President Shawn Strong told the House Subcommittee on Appropriations-Education. He said he is not certain whether to actually impose the increase.

That is the largest tuition increase state law allows for the current fiscal year. But it would cover only $50,000 of the $430,000 that is the college’s share of $83.8 million cut from college and university budgets, Strong said. The college receives $6 million of its $18 million budget from state appropriations, he said.

“We are very lean, and these withholds are very significant for us,” Strong said.

If the cuts carry over into the coming fiscal year, the school’s shortfall grows to $745,000 because of a mandatory increase in the pension contribution rate and higher costs for health insurance, he said.

Public colleges and universities kept in-state undergraduate tuition stable for the current academic year after striking a deal with then-Gov. Jay Nixon for an appropriation increase that averaged 4 percent. Greitens’ withholding took about 8 percent of each college and university’s overall appropriation.

For the coming year, the tuition cap will be 2.1 percent, the rate of inflation for the past year. The University of Missouri Review Commission recommended repealing the law imposing the cap. The law allows Commissioner of Higher Education Zora Mulligan to grant a cap waiver.

Strong spoke to the committee that will take the first look at education spending for the coming year after Greitens submits his budget. The committee was taking public testimony in advance of the budget message. Chairman Lyle Rowland, R-Cedar creek, said he sees little chance of providing more in the coming year than static spending.

“I would be ecstatic with that; I really would,” he said.
The most likely result is further cuts, said state Rep. Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia, a committee member. He said he expects most, if not all, colleges and universities to seek a waiver of the tuition cap this year.

“I don’t know how the General Assembly can be angry” about seeking waivers “when we continue to make cuts to higher education,” Kendrick said.

The competition for any available money will be fierce. Nathan Miller, director of financial aid at Columbia College, asked the committee to increase spending for the Access Missouri scholarship program. The maximum award this year of $2,250 is well below the legal cap of $2,850, he said. “Access Missouri is crucial assistance in overcoming one barrier — money,” Miller said.

Four-year state universities need money from the state to keep college affordable, said Paul Wagner, executive director of the Council on Public Higher Education. The four-year schools are teaching 4.7 percent more students than in 2011, granted 11,000 more degrees in 2015 than in 2010 and have increased tuition by only 5.4 percent over the past five years, he said.

“We are very concerned we will have to pass costs on to students if there are additional cuts it the fiscal ’18 budget,” he said.

Rowland asked how that would affect enrollment.

“The University of Missouri feels their tuition is well below the market,” Wagner said. “They might feel like they could raise tuition a little more.”

Open enrollment schools, such as Missouri Western State University or Harris Stowe State University, might lose students, he said.

“Their students are much more sensitive to costs and have fewer resources,” he said.
“While state leaders made cuts to line items in the state’s budget, MU leaders will be making decisions about the university’s entire amount of cuts and determining where those cuts will do the least amount of harm to our students, researchers, employees, state citizens and our economic development mission,” Basi said in an email.

Campus officials will be working around the $19.82 million overall loss that came from four different line-item restrictions in the list of cuts that the Missouri Legislature passed on Jan. 16.

Specific cuts to the university include: -$13.7 million reduction from the university’s general operating fund, which covers administration and faculty salaries as well as facility operation costs for academic and administrative buildings. -$4 million reduction from an MU School of Medicine expansion in Springfield. -$2 million reduction from MU Extension, which runs educational and economic stimulation programs throughout the state -$121,250 reduction from the University of Missouri Telehealth Network.

But the specific budgets or programs slated to lose funding may not be the ones ultimately taking the brunt of the cuts. Basi said that while the state may pull funding and suggest certain areas for it to be cut from, it is ultimately the university’s responsibility to decide how it will cover the $20 million shortfall.

Basi said there is currently no timeline for when university officials will determine how the budget will be adjusted to accommodate the cuts.

These cuts come after the university implemented measures to deal with a $36.3 million drop in tuition revenue that stemmed from a 21.1 percent decrease in freshman enrollment for the 2016-17 school year.

MU administration took steps earlier in the school year to accommodate budget shortfalls, including a mandated 5 percent reduction in each department’s budget — all of which were made by the individual schools and colleges in the ways they chose.

University administration also enacted a hiring freeze last March and eliminated the merit increase program, which rewarded high-performing faculty with pay raises, during the 2017 fiscal year.

MU is far from the only campus affected by the cuts. Of the cuts Greitens announced last Monday, over half will be taken from public college and university budgets. These cuts will take place over the course of the semester.

This is only the first round of cuts. In a video statement Greitens released on social media the day the cuts were announced, he said a total of $700 million will need to be slashed from the state’s budget. Like the most recent round of cuts, there is a possibility that university budgets could be a target for further cuts.

Steven Chaffin is the executive director of the Associated Students of the University of Missouri, which advocates at the statehouse on behalf of undergraduate and graduate students at all four
UM campuses. Chaffin said the trend of cutting funds from higher education to balance the state budget shouldn’t go unnoticed by students.

“That is something that concerns ASUM, and that is something that should concern every student,” Chaffin said.

Chaffin and seven other student representatives — four from MU, two from UM-St. Louis and one from Missouri S&T — meet with lawmakers in Jefferson City twice a week to inform them about the interests and needs of students who attend UM System schools.

According to ASUM’s website, university funding is one of the core parts of the organization’s platform.

“There are a number of reasons why higher education ought to be prioritized,” said Chaffin, who credited the UM System as the second-largest employer and health care provider in Missouri. “So we try to relay that to lawmakers so they are aware and can make good decisions when the budget is finally decided.”

Chaffin said students should educate themselves about the actions of the state legislature, especially about higher education funding.

“I try and be cautiously optimistic in all situations, but I do want students to be concerned because this is a big issue, and not one that has an immediate solution,” he said.

Mizzou athletics posts record revenues, expenses during 2015-16

*Buoyed by a spike in the media-rights payout from the Southeastern Conference, University of Missouri athletics revenue reached a record $97,275,839 during the 2016 fiscal year.*

Total operating expenses also reached a record level between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2016, according to a copy of the Tigers’ NCAA Agreed-Upon Procedures report obtained by The Star.
Missouri claimed more than $91.2 million in revenue for the 2015 fiscal year, which also was a record, but revenue jumped another 5.5 percent in 2016 despite the football and basketball teams’ struggles during the 2015-16 academic year.

The athletic department’s expenses increased 8.6 percent during that same period to a record $94,323,693 because of, in part, a sizeable hike in the student-aid payments after the introduction of cost-of-attendance stipends.

The revenue increase stems from the influx of SEC Network revenue, which was the primary contributor in a nearly 27 percent increase in media-rights revenue.

Year over year, the Tigers jumped from $26.4 million in media-rights revenue to $33.5 million in 2016, an increase of more than $7 million.

That helped offset an 18.3 percent decline in revenue from ticket sales.

Mizzou’s ticket revenue fell from $23.4 million during the 2015 fiscal year, when the football team claimed the second of its back-to-back SEC East titles, to $19.1 million last fiscal year.

Football — whose ticket revenue dropped from $16.3 million to $13.3 million, a decline of 18.7 percent — accounted for the majority of the losses.

The school attributed the drop to having one fewer home football game — the Tigers’ November 2015 game against BYU was played at Arrowhead Stadium — coupled with “a losing season in football and men’s basketball,” the report said.

Mizzou football finished 5-7 that season, a disappointing campaign marked by a midseason player boycott and Gary Pinkel’s retirement, while the men’s basketball team finished 10-21 and endured a self-imposed postseason ban that was announced last January.

The trend of slumping ticket sales seems unlikely to reverse itself during the 2017 fiscal year.

The Tigers averaged 65,120 football fans — drawing 390,720 for six home games — in 2015, but the average attendance last fall dipped to 52,236 with fewer fans — 365,651 — coming through the turnstiles despite playing seven games at Memorial Stadium.

Meanwhile, the men’s basketball team’s continued struggles, including a 5-13 start this season and an 0-6 mark in SEC play, have deepened the attendance decline at Mizzou Arena.

Ticket revenue for men’s basketball already plummeted 20.9 percent last season from $4.7 million in 2014-15 to $3.7 million in 2015-16, a figure that seems will drop again.

The net revenue for third-year coach Kim Anderson’s program plummeted to $3.38 million last season, the lowest in more than a decade, aside from the 2012 fiscal year when Missouri forfeited its conference revenue during the move from the Big 12 to the SEC.
The postseason ban also cost the program $1.3 million in revenue.

MU’s distribution from the NCAA for men’s basketball was $960,207 — down from $1.86 million during the 2015 fiscal year — as a result of being ineligible for March Madness (and its resultant revenue). The Tigers’ SEC distribution for men’s basketball dipped from $392,958 to $675.

On the expense side of the ledger, cost of attendance helped drive up MU athletics’ cost for student aid by 19.9 percent.

Part of that is because Mizzou’s cost-of-attendance figure climbed 77 percent, going from $3,079 per student-athlete during the 2015 fiscal year to $5,451 last year.

With NCAA Division I schools now paying athletes the full cost of attendance rather than the traditional grant-in-aid formula, the Tigers’ student-aid costs rose from $9.38 million during the 2015 fiscal year to $11.25 million last year.

That was hardly the only expense to spike during the 2015-16 academic year.

Missouri also saw significant increases in team equipment (up 43.8 percent to $1.71 million), team camp expenses (up 26.2 percent to $1.22 million) guaranteed money paid to opponents for home games (up 26.0 percent to $3.26 million), debt service (up 17.9 percent to $7.1 million), recruiting (up 17.1 percent to $1.47 million) and non-coaching staff salaries (up 11.2 percent to $18.9 million).

Mizzou athletics revenue, expenses continue to climb

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 7 hrs ago

COLUMBIA, MO. • The most popular questions we hear from Missouri fans not asking about coaching searches usually come down to money. Where do they spend it all? Why don’t they have more to spend?

Every year Mizzou gives us a peek at the books with its submission to the NCAA Membership Financial Reporting System, a line by line accounting of the athletics
department’s revenues and expenses for every sport on campus. This week, the Post-Dispatch received the latest report via an open records request. The latest numbers are for the 2016 fiscal year, which reflects the 2015-16 academic year. In terms of the school’s most high profile teams, these are the numbers for the 2015 Missouri football season, a 5-7 campaign that ended with Gary Pinkel’s retirement, and the 2015-16 basketball seasons. For the men, that was the second season under Kim Anderson, a 10-win team that did not include a trip to the SEC Tournament because of a self-imposed ban. The women’s team had a breakthrough season, reaching the NCAA Tournament’s second round.

We’ll explore the numbers more in print in the coming days, but here’s what we learned from the 63-page report: Mizzou athletics is making more money than ever … and spending more money than ever.

Missouri’s total operating revenue climbed from $91,217,778 in 2014-15 to $97,275,839. That’s an increase in 6.6 percent.

Missouri’s total expenses climbed at a higher rate, from $86,859,158 to $94,323,693.

That gave Mizzou a surplus of $2,952,146, down from $4,358,620 the previous year. But, still, a surplus.

Let’s take a closer look at where the money came in and where it went.

**Mizzou athletics revenue for 2014-15 ... 2015-16, percent change**

Ticket sales: $23,428,311 … $19,152,889, down 18.2 %

Guarantees: $303,500 … $3,510,700, up 1,056.0 %

Contributions: $17,227,888 … $17,701,314, up 2.7 %

Direct institutional support: $1,515,000 … $1,515,000, no change
Media rights: $26,426,915 … $33,509,476, up 26.7 %

NCAA distributions: $2,022,496 … $1,186,799, down 41.3 %

Conference distributions: $8,421,187 … $8,483,295, up 0.7 %

Programs/concessions/parking: $2,742,424 … $2,312,107, down 15.7 %

Royalties/licensing/advertisements: $2,482,433 … $3,053,899, up 23.0 %

Camps: $1,823,821 … $1,905,221, up 4.4 %

Endowment/investment income: $1,295,169 … $1,333,454, up 3.0 %

Other operating revenue: $1,496,634 … $1,830,439, up 22.3 %

In-Kind: $2,032,000 … $2,281,246, up 12.3 %

Total operating revenue: $91,217,778 … $97,275,839, up 6.6 %

Mizzou athletics expenses for 2014-15 … 2013-14 figures, % change

Athletic student aid: $9,380,384 … $11,247,490, up 19.9 %

Guarantees: $2,585,687 … $3,258,529, up 26.0 percent

Coaching salaries/benefits/bonuses: $18,103,259 … $18,563,146, up 2.5 %

Support staff salaries/benefits/bonuses: $16,959,380 … $18,852,331, up 11.2 %

Recruiting: $1,252,674 … $1,467,231, up 17.1 %

Equipment/uniforms: $1,186,849 … $1,706,588, up 43.8 %
Game expenses: $3,443,657 … $3,352,605, down 2.6 %

Fundraising, marketing: $1,081,571 … $1,104,958, up 2.2 %

Camps: $968,156 … $1,222,044, up 26.2 %

Facilities maintenance/rental: $6,060,631 … $7,145,864, up 17.9%

Spirit groups: $408,241 … $518,447, up 27.0 %

Medical expenses/insurance: $1,000,110 … $1,092,070, up 9.2 $

Membership dues: $58,647 … $78,643, up 34.1 %

Direct overhead/administrative: $9,350,836 … 9,099,575, down 2.7 %

Other operating expenses: $8,502,661 … $8,118,884, up 4.5 %

Total operating expenses: $86,859,158 … $94,323,693, up 8.6 %

Digging deeper, a few more observations …

• Football ticket sales revenue took a dip from $16,394,964 to $13,283,209, a drop in 19.0 percent. The change is partially explained by the schedule: With the addition of the 2015 game against Brigham Young in Kansas City, Missouri played just six home games that season compared to seven in 2014, though MU collected other sales revenue from the game as if it were a home game.

• The football team collected a whopping $3.5 million in guaranteed appearance fees for the 2015 season, an unusually high total. The bulk of that payout came from the Kansas City Chiefs through MU’s agreement to play the BYU game at Arrowhead Stadium. MU also collected $250,000 that year for playing a game at Arkansas State.
• For men’s basketball, ticket sales revenue went down from $4,719,097 in Anderson’s first season to $3,733,734 in his second season. That’s a plunge of 20.1 percent.

• Contributions to the football program increased by $783,835 from the previous year, while contributions to men’s basketball fell by $30,744.

• Conference distribution took a major fall, from $392,958 to just $675. As part of the program’s self-imposed sanctions Mizzou agreed not to accept any revenues from the 2016 SEC Tournament and NCAA Tournament.

• Ticket sales to women’s basketball games soared, more than doubling from $40,399 to $94,051, an increase of 132.8 percent.

• The NCAA report tracks head coaches’ total salaries, benefits and bonuses. Pinkel was the rare head coach whose total decreased in 2015, from $4,689,009 to $4,213,696. Pinkel missed on several performance bonuses during the 5-7 season. Pinkel’s nine assistant coaches, however, saw their collective salary/benefits/bonus pool climb from $5,302,605 to $5,844,238.

• Women’s basketball coach Robin Pingeton saw her salary nearly double, from $528,743 to $985,126.

• Anderson’s salary went up moderately, from $1,306,508 to $1,509,598.

• Like Pinkel, softball coach Ehren Earleywine saw his salary figures drop, from $290,560 to $261,939.

• Pinkel’s support staff (analysts, grad assistants, administrative staffers) saw huge pay increases, from $757,516 to $1,254,997. Pinkel added multiple analyst positions in his final year, which might explain for the steep rise in wages.

• Recruiting expenses increased across the board for almost every sport except wrestling and swimming but saw a huge increase for track and field, a program that’s invested in more global recruiting lately. The two track teams spent $115,085 on recruiting, up from $88,307.
Mizzou's spending on uniforms, equipment and supplies saw a significant jump. Football was the rare sport that spent less on these items, $479,447, down from $681,109. The women's soccer team spent more than $20,000 more on these items from the year before.

Overall, Mizzou spent nearly $2 million more on athletic student aid, the result of higher cost of attendance figures. The average cost of attendance for in-state athletes climbed from $24,704 to $27,294 and for out-of-state athletes increased from $38,730 to $42,576.

Study Reveals Gender Pay Gap in MO Higher Than National Average

Generated from News Bureau expert pitch

Watch the story: [http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=cf0e3aff-7de8-4022-a858-b7dd96dd4e3f](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=cf0e3aff-7de8-4022-a858-b7dd96dd4e3f)

MISSOURI-- A recently released study reveals the gender pay gap in Missouri is greater than the national average. **The 2016 Status of Women report conducted by the Women's Foundation and the University of Missouri Institute of Public Policy reveals Missouri women working fulltime earn $0.78 for each dollar a man in the state earns.**

That data shows Missouri's pay gap is wider than the national average where women earn 80 cents for every dollar a man earns. The gender pay gap is almost 22 percent in Missouri, which is nearly two percent higher than the national average of 20 percent.

Emily Johnson with the University of Missouri's Institute of Public Policy said the pay gap generates a compounding impact. "Ultimately we see that gap continues through their lives,"
Johnson said. The 2016 Status of Women report reveals that 2/3 of seniors living in poverty are women.

"We see it starts as young women when they start entering the workforce then, we have the numbers that we have in terms of seniors in poverty, because that carries on throughout their lifetime," Johnson said.

In Missouri, women working full time make an average of $35,759 while Missouri men on average make $45,897, according to the study.

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**Bill to protect student journalists from censorship returns**

**NO MU MENTION**

JEFFERSON CITY (AP) — School administrations would be restricted from censoring student journalists under a bill discussed in a Missouri House committee.

The Columbia Missourian reported that the bill discussed Monday would broaden protections for high school and college journalists. Schools would remain able to limit content if it is deemed libelous or slanderous, invades privacy, violates federal or state law or violates school policy or disrupts school.

After unanimously passing through the House last legislative session, a Senate committee held the bill while waiting for a vote.

The latest version mimics the language of a longstanding law in Kansas, known as the Kansas Student Publications Act.

If it passes, Missouri would become the twelfth state, in addition to the District of Columbia, that has approved additional legal protections for high school students.
University of Missouri to Extend Cerner Program to Improve Rural Health Care

Watch the story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=cfab9358-c3aa-4c77-9ab6-1ad97a965f8e

Democratic senator's inquiry finds $118 million more of Missouri money invested in Russia

Will Schmitt , WSCHMITT@NEWS-LEADER.COM Published 10:44 a.m. CT Jan. 24, 2017 | Updated 13 hours ago

JEFFERSON CITY — The Public School and Employee Retirement Systems of Missouri has more than $118 million worth of investments in Russian companies, legislative researchers said Tuesday in a memo to a Democratic state lawmaker wanting to eliminate the Show-Me State's investments in Moscow.

Research conducted by nonpartisan Senate research staff at the behest of Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal, D-University City, shows that this sum constitutes less than half a percent of the state teachers' pension system, which has a market value of at least $38.3 billion.
Still, the find gives Chappelle-Nadal's office a reason to continue its probe from last week, which turned up about $17.7 million invested via the Missouri State Employee Retirement System and the University of Missouri Retirement, Disability, and Death Benefit Plan. The senator called for Missouri to cut investment ties with Russia after President Donald Trump said he believed Russia, led by President Vladimir Putin, was responsible for hacking the Democratic National Committee.

"This revelation demonstrates the very real and immediate need to reassure the taxpayers of Missouri that their hard-earned dollars will not be sent overseas to aid and abet the Putin regime," Chappelle-Nadal said Tuesday in a news release.

Researchers also determined that the Missouri Higher Education Savings Program "may contain investments in the Russian Federation," noting possible investment options that allocate either 1 percent or 0.2 percent of funds to Russia.

Chappelle-Nadal's bill, which would ask voters whether to prohibit Missouri from investing in Russia or its occupied territories, has been referred to the Senate Insurance and Banking Committee.

Legislative researchers also provided detail about the University of Missouri’s stock holdings, saying the university fund had two stock holdings totaling $2 million in Sberbank, Russia’s state-owned bank, and Yandex, the country’s largest search engine.

McClatchy DC reported earlier this month that Rex Tillerson, the former Exxon Mobil CEO and Trump’s Secretary of State nominee, had been scrutinized for holding no more than $15,000 of stock in Yandex, Russia’s largest search engine.

The U.S. Treasury Department has previously sanctioned Sberbank and its subsidiaries.
Mizzou tasks Howard Richards with improving relations in St. Louis

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 7 hrs ago

From his days as an NFL offensive lineman to his years in the CIA, Howard Richards has built a career out of providing security. A first-round draft pick out of Missouri in 1981, Richards played six seasons for the Dallas Cowboys, charged with protecting quarterback Danny White and running back Tony Dorsett.

With the CIA, Richards worked clandestine assignments all over the globe and served on the security detail for four CIA directors. For more than two years, Richards was stationed in Israel and managed the security facilities for the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv.

His latest assignment is completely different but connects to his former life overseas. As Mizzou’s new assistant athletics director for community relations, Richards is tasked with securing relationships in the St. Louis market. Call it a rebranded course of nation building.

Richards, a St. Louis native who attended Southwest High School in the 1970s, first approached Mizzou’s administration about serving in such a capacity when he joined the football program’s radio broadcast team in 2011. Six years and two athletics directors later, he convinced new AD Jim Sterk it was a worthy cause.

One of Richards’ core ambitions is to improve Mizzou’s image and connections with St. Louis’ African-American community.

“It’s the relationship side where things have suffered for many years,” said Richards, who will make $100,000 per year in this role and continue to reside in St. Louis. “There was a lot of talk
and rhetoric about how bad relations were in the African-American community, and a lot of people said Missouri needs to have a presence in St. Louis — and not just in athletics but in academics as well, too."

Since retiring from the CIA in 2003, Richards has worked in real estate and private security and for four years served as the director of public safety at Harris-Stowe State University. In 2015, he took over as Mizzou’s College of Arts and Science senior manager for external relations in St. Louis.

In his new role, Richards will give Sterk a local resource to help foster relationships with high schools, corporate sponsors and alumni groups. Those who know him best believe Richards is perfectly suited for the role.

“This was obvious when we first interviewed him for the radio, but he has a deep passion for the program and the institution for everything it’s done for him,” said longtime Mizzou play-by-play voice Mike Kelly, who also lives in St. Louis. “I don’t think Missouri could ever go wrong having a consistent presence in the St. Louis market 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, someone who doesn’t have to make that drive from Columbia for every meeting. If he can work with corporations and the fan base there, I think it could do wonders for the relations in St. Louis.”

Becky Kling, president of the St. Louis Mizzou Tiger Club booster group, has worked closely with Richards for several years.

“He’s happy to help out but doesn’t want to headline a cause, because he’s a humble person,” she said. “That’s just how he’s wired. The same is true about his commitment to our university. It’s never about him, it’s about what he can do to promote Mizzou in St. Louis and, especially, our student-athletes.”

Richards will also work with local corporations as MU continues to tap into the local market in the wake of the Rams’ departure to Los Angeles. Richards plans to work with MU’s newly installed ticket sales branch to connect with former Rams season ticket holders.
Shortly after he arrived at Missouri in 2001, former football coach Gary Pinkel held a summit meeting with several former MU players, both black and white, to address concerns about the program’s direction and, specifically, friction between Mizzou and the St. Louis area’s black community. For years, Pinkel and others cited that meeting as a turning point for the program. Pinkel’s staffs never completely sealed the recruiting border in the region but signed its share of prominent St. Louis players. Mizzou signed eight St. Louis area players in Pinkel’s first season and added six in 2013, when the Tigers were coming off a 5-7 debut season in the Southeastern Conference.

In the 2015 and 2016 seasons, Pinkel’s final year and the program’s first under coach Barry Odom, Mizzou offered scholarships to 13 players in the St. Louis area and signed 10.

This year, though, the Tigers aren’t expected to sign any players from the area, sparking murmurs of disconnect between the program and the region. St. Louis features a thin pool of prospects this year with only six from the area who received offers from Odom’s staff. Five are committed to sign elsewhere, while the sixth, East St. Louis receiver Jeff Thomas, has narrowed his choices to Louisville, Miami and Oregon.

Starting with Pinkel and continued by Odom last year, Mizzou developed a foothold at the Illinois powerhouse, signing four players from there between 2014-2016. Flyers quarterback Reyondous Estes committed to Mizzou in August then backed off his pledge and last week committed to Minnesota. Greg Taylor, a safety from East St. Louis who joined the Tigers last summer after a junior college stop, left the team in January and blistered the coaching staff on Twitter on his way out. In radio interviews, Flyers coach Darren Sunkett has grumbled about Odom’s efforts recruiting the school, though the second-year coach visited East St. Louis the day after he landed the MU job and returned for a game last fall.

Other coaches in the area are quick to praise the staff’s diligence in the area, notably longtime recruiter Cornell Ford, one of Pinkel’s coaches Odom kept on staff.
“Missouri does a great job of recruiting St. Louis, especially Coach Ford,” Lutheran North coach Carl Reed said. “Even years when I don’t have any recruits, he’s here. Every guy in the area that’s good enough to play there has an offer (from Missouri.)”

Still, Richards sees room for improvement. He’s already bounced ideas off Mizzou director of recruiting A.J. Ofodile. He especially wants to soothe relations at East St. Louis and plans to involve his former Mizzou teammates who came to Columbia from East St. Louis: Kellen Winslow, Johnnie Poe and Eric Wright.

“There have been decades of concerns and questions and false information about the relationship between the African-American community and Mizzou,” Richards said. “What I’m tasked with is putting together a group of people, a council or coalition of deep thinkers, people from many walks of life, a diverse group, of black and white people who have perspective and understand higher education. We’re talking about people who can come up with suggestions and solutions how we can do business better.”

One topic that Richards expects to face frequently is the racial unrest that rocked Mizzou’s campus in the fall of 2015, when a group of black students protested system president Timothy M. Wolfe for his handling of racially charged incidents on campus, culminating in the football team’s boycott and Wolfe’s resignation. Richards, whose daughter will attend Mizzou in the fall, doesn’t hide from the discussions.

“The way I’ve addressed it in my role in Arts and Sciences when I talked to administrators and students and parents, the first question they always ask is, ‘Was campus violent? Was it safe?’” he said. “I tell them, ‘I wouldn’t be sending my daughter to Mizzou in 2017 if I thought it was unsafe. That’s how strongly I feel about it.’

“Everything evolves. Institutions and big corporations all have to undergo change. It’s not a perfect situation. What happens after is the response, how the university realized it needs to make changes. That’s where Mizzou is right now. We’ve addressed and continued to address these issues and are trying to move forward and moving ahead to make things better.”
Argentinian agriculture company to open North American headquarters in Creve Coeur

By Samantha Liss St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 14 hrs ago

Agldea, an Argentinian agriculture company that provides research services to ag-tech giants like Monsanto, plans to open its North American headquarters in Creve Coeur.

“We know St. Louis is an important city for the agriculture industry and a lot of our clients are here,” Agustin Cresta, an executive with the company, told the Post-Dispatch. Cresta likened the agriculture industry’s presence here to that of IT in California’s Silicon Valley.

In a message posted to Facebook on Tuesday, Gov. Eric Greitens called the news a “proud moment for Missouri.”

Greitens, in the post, said he spoke Tuesday with Agldea CEO Mariano Battista, who told the governor he selected Missouri for its leadership in agriculture and its workforce talent. “He is excited about conservative leadership that will help create an ideal environment for businesses to grow and prosper,” Greitens wrote.

Cresta told the Post-Dispatch the firm will occupy space at the Helix Center Biotech Incubator, a place for affordable lab space that is near the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and just across the street from Monsanto’s Creve Coeur campus.

The firm is looking to hire six full-time employees and will look to the University of Missouri in Columbia for recent graduates due to its “very good agriculture school,” Cresta said.

The university also is near farms where Agldea is already running experiments, he said.
Judge Sides With U. of Kentucky in Fight Over Openness and Privacy

By Tom Hesse January 24, 2017

A Kentucky Circuit Court judge has ruled in favor of the University of Kentucky in its lawsuit against the university’s student newspaper, which had been seeking records regarding sexual-assault allegations against a professor.

Judge Thomas L. Clark found that the investigation file involving the professor, James D. Harwood, was protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Mr. Harwood, an associate professor of entomology, left the university before his case was adjudicated. He has denied the allegations against him.

The case captured national attention because it highlighted questions about how universities should balance the interests of transparency and privacy in cases of alleged assault and harassment. The university had argued that publicity from the case had made victims more reluctant to come forward.
Kentucky’s president, Eli Capilouto, said in a written statement that the university was “gratified” by the outcome but added that the university had more work to do.

“Our next step — no matter how the legal process unfolds — must be to reform a system that is imperfect in the way it safeguards the interests of victims and the accused,” Mr. Capilouto said. “We have started on the path of reform already, significantly increasing training for both faculty and graduate students about the parameters of acceptable behavior. Now, we will be working with faculty, student, and staff leaders to ensure that someone who wants to join our community must disclose any record of sexual misconduct in their past.”

Marjorie Kirk, editor in chief at the student paper, the Kentucky Kernel, disagreed with the ruling and said the Kernel would appeal it.

“I was definitely disappointed with the judge’s decision, but that has not stopped me or my staff from continuing to move forward with our own stories about this case and with our decision to appeal,” Ms. Kirk told The Chronicle.

Frank D. LoMonte, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, said the decision strengthened the argument that the federal privacy law can be expanded to cover allegations made against employees. The ruling, he said, applies a broad interpretation of the law that student publications have criticized.

“The result of this decision, if it’s not overturned, is going to make campuses everywhere less safe,” Mr. LoMonte said.

He argued that the judge had made a “blanket, all-or-nothing determination.”

Judge Clark cited previous cases in which the law, known as Ferpa, broadly defined how records “directly” related to students, writing in his decision that a record can “both relate directly to a student and a teacher.”

Further, Judge Clark said, the records could not be redacted to a degree that would sufficiently protect the accusers. The decision cited a previous ruling that said any amount of information would be enough for “skillful Googlers” to determine the identity of the person in question.

Mr. LoMonte said that sort of reasoning did not apply to privacy laws.
“The judge indulged some pretty far-fetched scenarios about members of the public sleuthing their way through university records in order to make an identification,” he said. “That’s taking privacy law to an absurd extreme.”

“Privacy law is about whether or not the documents themselves are identifiable,” he continued, “not whether some Sherlock Holmes is able to deduce the identity by doing additional sleuthing. By that logic, you could never produce or redact a document.”

Ms. Kirk, of the *Kernel*, agreed, saying that the pertinent information related to claims made against Mr. Harwood, not the people making the claims.

“It is absolutely possible to redact the necessary information to protect the survivor’s privacy,” she said. But in this case, the university would like “to limit as much of that information as they can from public disclosure to protect their own image,” she said.