



**MU News Bureau**

*Daily Clips Packet*

June 28, 2017

## **More cuts likely for University of Missouri, public schools**

By Rudi Keller

Posted Jun 27, 2017 at 10:54 PM

**Another disappointing year of state tax collections means the University of Missouri and public schools can expect a new round of cuts this week when Gov. Eric Greitens acts on 15 spending bills for the fiscal year that begins Saturday.**

The budget was written with expectations that revenue would increase 3 percent during the current year and 3.8 percent in the coming fiscal year. As of Tuesday, the growth rate has been 2 percent, said House Budget Committee Chairman Scott Fitzpatrick, R-Shell Knob.

“We could fall \$150 million or more short of where we anticipated we would be,” Fitzpatrick said.

In the \$27 billion state budget, about one third of the spending comes from general revenue. That’s the money that lawmakers appropriate for public schools, higher education and Medicaid, among other high-cost programs. The fiscal year will end with \$419.4 million in general revenue spending restrictions and lawmakers cut 6.7 percent from higher education.

The budget awaiting Greitens’ action also includes \$3.4 billion for the school foundation formula, the basic aid program for public schools, and \$105 million for school transportation needs. In the current year, no money is being withheld from the foundation formula but \$21 million was withheld from transportation support.

Greitens’ office has not stated when he will make his decisions but the bills must be signed by Friday for the state to have authority to spend money on Saturday. Budget director Dan Haug was in meetings all day and did not return calls from the Tribune seeking comment.

The UM System just completed a budget for the coming year that cut \$100 million from overall spending and eliminated 474 jobs. About \$35.9 million of the cuts is to cover the decrease in state appropriations approved by lawmakers and \$11 million was to make up for a loss of tuition revenue. The remaining cuts were intended to fund investments in programs and faculty.

The state budget allocates \$419.2 million for the university’s general operations and \$7.9 million for projects such as medical education in Springfield and a dentistry program partnership

between UMKC and Missouri Southern State University. That is about \$21 million more than Greitens' recommended in his budget proposal.

The Board of Curators on Thursday approved a request for \$21 million more in state funding in the year beginning July 1, 2018, and \$8 million more in earmarked project funding. President Mun Choi, however, said he expects more cuts.

When Greitens withheld \$31.4 million from the university soon after taking office in January, MU covered the difference from reserves. That is not a viable way to sustain the university, Choi told the curators.

"We were going beyond what was anticipated was needed so we could make some strategic investments in the future of the university," university spokesman Christian Basi said. "The cuts we have already had have put us in a very difficult financial position. When we have to lay off 80 to 100 people and cut 400 positions, we are in a very challenging financial time."

Rep. Kip Kendrick, D-Columbia and a member of the Budget Committee, said he expects Greitens to cut funding for schools and higher education. Lawmakers eager to cut taxes and changing habits of consumers are a big part of the state's budget problems, he said.

A change to the way corporate income tax liability is calculated has lowered collections by approximately \$150 million in two years.

"Sluggish economy is part of it but the special interest tax cuts have played the role in slumping revenue growth," Kendrick said. "There is continued growth in online sales and very little tax collection."

The budget for the coming fiscal year will be the third year in a row where revenues have not hit projections despite an economy that is adding jobs. By failing to keep spending in line with revenues, the governor takes a bigger role in setting budget priorities, Kendrick said.

"This is obviously a major problem when the General Assembly gets its projections off and over-appropriates, it cedes the decision to the executive branch on where to withhold money," he said.

While revenue growth is slow, it is on pace to trigger the first phase of a tax cut passed in 2014 that will lower top income tax rates and exempt a portion of business income from taxes altogether. That will lower revenue by about \$90 million a year for each of the five steps in the law, Kendrick said.

Lawmakers delayed appropriating anticipated increases for some services under Medicaid and set aside \$100 million if needed, Fitzpatrick said. That is not money that can be spent now, he said.

"Realistically, if I was the governor I would make sure that \$100 million is still there and plan on that happening," he said.



## Supreme Court Wraps Up Term With A Raft Of Opinions

By Nina Totenberg

Listen to the story: <http://www.npr.org/2017/06/27/534516150/supreme-court-wraps-up-term-with-a-raft-of-opinions>

The Supreme Court delivered a partial victory to President Trump over his travel ban. Among other cases, the court also set the stage for a major decision next term on gay rights.

The U.S. Supreme Court has wrapped up its current term with a draft of opinion, some with potentially historic ramifications. NPR legal affairs correspondent Nina Totenberg reports.

School choice advocates rejoiced Monday when the Supreme Court ruled that taxpayer-funded grants for playgrounds could not be denied to a church-run school. The court's ruling came in the case of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Columbia, Mo., which operates a preschool learning center as part of its ministry. In 2012, the church applied for a grant from the state of Missouri to rubberize its playground surface. It lost out on the award, even though it was otherwise qualified. The rejection was based on a Missouri constitutional provision which, like those in some 36 other states, bars state aid to religious schools.

On Monday, the Supreme Court upended the heart of those provisions. Writing for the Court, Chief Justice John Roberts said that the exclusion of Trinity Lutheran from the grant program solely because it's a church is quote "odious to our Constitution and cannot stand." By denying a benefit to a church school because of its avowedly religious character, he said, the state is penalizing the free exercise of religion guaranteed by the Constitution.

The overall vote was 7-2, with the majority split about how far it wanted to go. Two justices, Gorsuch and Thomas, wanted to go further, requiring taxpayer funds to go to religious schools for most purposes. Five justices, including the chief justice, sought to limit the decision. And two justices, Sotomayor and Ginsburg, dissented. Sotomayor, who attended parochial schools for most of her childhood, took the rare step of reading her dissent from the bench, calling the decision radical. The court, she said, blinds itself to our history and leads us instead to a place where the separation of church and state is a constitutional slogan, not a constitutional commitment.

**School choice advocates have for decades sought to funnel public funds to private religious schools, only to be stymied by state constitutional provisions like Missouri's, known as**

**Blaine Amendments. University of Missouri law professor Carl Esbeck, who filed a brief in the case on behalf of the National Association of Evangelicals, said there would be immediate consequences in other states where such challenges are pending. Among them - Colorado, New Mexico, Nevada, New Hampshire and Florida.**

CARL ESBECK: Blaine Amendments are now contrary to the Free Exercise Clause in light of the ruling today, so that's pretty profound.

TOTENBERG: But Andrew Pincus, who filed a brief on behalf of various religious and civil rights organizations, was more cautious.

ANDREW PINCUS: I think it's a big step, but I'm not sure that it really opens the door that widely. What it does do, for the first time, is say that there's constitutional protection for direct money grants to religious entities. And that's something the court has never said before.

TOTENBERG: The decision was one of many handed down on Monday. In a decision that President Trump hailed as a victory, the court said it would review his controversial travel ban, hearing arguments in October on lower court decisions that blocked the order in its entirety. In an unsigned opinion, six of the justices rejected the Trump administration's argument that it should be allowed to ban all foreigners from six mainly Muslim countries - Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen, Iran and Libya.

Instead, the justices said the government should grant visas to people who have a bonafide relationship to families and individuals or entities, including schools and businesses, in the U.S. But the court said that for now, individuals from the designated countries who have no such formal or documented relationship may be excluded for the 90 days specified in the Trump order.



## **Mizzou law professor outlines effects of Supreme Court decision**

Watch story: <http://www.abc17news.com/news/mizzou-law-professor-outlines-effects-of-supreme-court-decision/566329513>

By Barry Mangold

**COLUMBIA, Mo - Carl Esbeck, University of Missouri professor of law emeritus, says the Supreme Court's ruling in the Trinity Lutheran Church case changes the narrative in the debate over state funds going towards religious schools.**

The 7-2 decision shows it is "a pretty strong foundation for what the law is going to be, and it's not going to be easily shaken," Esbeck said.

The Missouri Constitution outlined that no state money could be allocated to any religious organization for any reason, which the court struck down as unconstitutional because it included secular issues like playground resurfacing. Money still can not be "diverted to an explicitly religious purpose, that's unconstitutional," Esbeck said.

The court's decision makes school-choice legislation more possible to pass in state governments. Such legislation would possibly allocate state scholarships for private and/or religious schools. Over 30 states have provisions in their constitution similar to the one ruled unconstitutional in Missouri.

"School-choice legislation takes a variety of forms but a popular idea is an educational trust fund... [that] can give out money to low income students in the form of a scholarship," said Esbeck, "So they can attend any school that they want, including a private religious school."



## **Can Your Pet Go Blind from the Solar Eclipse?**

By Laura Geggel

If you have plans to watch the total solar eclipse that will cross the United States on Aug. 21, you likely have a long checklist of things to do. For example, you'll want to buy special protective eyewear and plan a way to beat traffic as hordes of people travel toward the path of totality.

But should that checklist include securing protective glasses for your pets?

Animals will probably be fine, as they don't tend to look directly at the sun. But it doesn't hurt to be safe and protect cats, dogs and other pets during the eclipse, according to astronomy experts.

During the Great American Total Solar Eclipse on Aug. 21, 2017, the moon will pass between Earth and the sun, casting its lunar shadow across a path that extends from Oregon to South Carolina. As the moon's shadow begins to block the sun's light, parts of the sun's fiery disk will continue to be visible, and can literally burn any eyes — human or otherwise — directed at it.

This condition, commonly known as eclipse blindness, happens when the sun's powerful rays burn sensitive photoreceptor cells in the retina. "I have seen instances where the patient has eventually shown up with crescents burned into the back of the eye, and you can almost tell exactly when they looked," Ralph Chou, professor emeritus at the School of Optometry & Vision Science at the University of Waterloo in Canada, told Space.com, a sister site of Live Science.

Eclipse watchers can remove their protective eyewear only when the sun is completely hidden by the moon. For that to happen, skywatchers must be in the 70-mile-wide (112 kilometers) path of totality, and even then, totality lasts only up to 2 minutes and 40 seconds depending on the location, according to NASA.

But because pet owners can't exactly ask their pets to follow these rules, it's best to outfit them with protective glasses, Mike Reynolds, an astronomy professor at Florida State College in Jacksonville, Florida, said at the Northeast Astronomy Forum in April.

"Safe solar viewing is always a must, no matter who it is," Reynolds said, showing a photo of a dog wearing protective glasses.

But other experts said there was no need to worry.

**"On a normal day, your pets don't try to look at the sun, and therefore don't damage their eyes. And on this day, they're not going to do it, either," Angela Speck, director of astronomy and a professor of astrophysics at the University of Missouri, said at a news conference with NASA on June 21 in Washington, D.C.**

"It's not a concern, letting them [pets] outside," Speck said. "I'm not going to worry about my cat."

However, Speck noted that the eclipse might affect the behavior of certain animals. For instance, as the sky darkens, farm animals such as cattle may think nighttime is approaching and thus may decide to head back to the barn, she said.

In addition, insects and frogs might start chirping, just as they do during dusk on summer nights. Birds may also be fooled into thinking it's nightfall, and may start "making lots of noise [to] show you that they're getting ready to go to bed," Speck said. [Sleep Tight! Snoozing Animals Gallery]

Even certain plants may furl or unfurl, just as they regularly do as darkness falls, she said.

Speck said astronomers and citizen scientists can help collect information to see how the natural world, especially wildlife, reacts to the solar eclipse.

"The nighttime comes so fast, and I don't think we have good data on this, so it's actually going to be really interesting to see what happens," Speck said.

REMEMBER: Looking directly at the sun, even when it is partially covered by the moon, can cause serious eye damage or blindness. NEVER look at a partial solar eclipse without proper eye protection. Our sister site Space.com has a complete guide for how to view an eclipse safely.



## [This volcano-shaped pyramid in Peru has experts stumped](#)

By Megan Gannon

### **Generated from a News Bureau Expert Pitch**

From far away, El Volcán in the Nepeña Valley of coastal Peru might look like a natural feature in the landscape.

But this volcano is artificial, a mound or pyramid built by human hands with a crater dug out of the top. And some archaeologists are trying to figure out what it was used for.

**Robert Benfer, a professor emeritus at the University of Missouri who focuses on biological anthropology, had previously found a series of mounds shaped like orcas, condors and other animals in coastal valleys in Peru.** He was looking for more of those earthworks by surveying valleys north of Lima when he spotted the volcanic cone that stands 50 feet tall.

"I knew that a mountain in the valley had a large archaeological site, San Isidro, with platforms oriented to the solstice," Benfer told Live Science. "So with my team, we climbed it to get a better view of the surrounding valley, and I saw the Volcán site from a platform."

In the 1960s, archaeologists had noted the volcano-like mound and identified it as artificial, but Benfer and his team decided to investigate further. As the researchers report in the latest issue of the journal *Antiquity*, they dug a trench into the inner crater of the volcano, and found a collapsed stairwell that descends below a layer of adobe bricks to a mud-plaster floor.

They also found a fireplace at the bottom of the stairwell, full of bits of charcoal and shell. Archaeologists can determine the age of such organic material using radiocarbon dating. A sample of burned material from the hearth showed that the last fire was lit sometime between A.D. 1492 and 1602.

Benfer believes this date range is important. During the 16th century, there would have been four total solar eclipses, visible from El Volcán, in short order: in A.D. 1521, 1538, 1539 and 1543. This would have been a rare occurrence. "The chances that four solar eclipses could occur during the probability distribution of the radiocarbon date of the hearth is less than 0.0003," Benfer told Live Science. (That's less than a 0.3 percent chance of occurring.)

In their paper, the researchers wrote that "the people of the northern and central coasts, the Yungas, unlike the later Incas, greeted eclipse[s] of the sun with joy, not fear." Benfer speculated that the fire might be all that's left of a ceremony linked to one of these eclipses.

The researchers are not sure when the mound was first built. It's possible that the original structure might be much older than the hearth. The nearby archaeological site at San Isidro was active during the Late Formative period (900 B.C. to 200 B.C.).

The meaning behind the mound's shape is also still unclear. Benfer noted that there are no volcanoes around El Volcán that would have served as models for its construction, if it was indeed meant to look like a volcano, and no other structures like it have been found in Peru.

# Missourinet

## [The Bill Pollock Show—#Mizzou renting out dorms could be another PR disaster that the university doesn't need right now](#)

BY BILL POLLOCK

**I don't wish any ill-will on the University of Missouri, but after reading and listening to more details come out about renting unused dorms during the football season, the more and more I think this is a bad idea.** This just opens up the university for another public relations night mare.

They've already sold out for two weekends, but even if they sell out an entire weekend (for two nights) for each of the seven football games, they're recouping the cost of just a few students they've lost due to lower enrollment for 2017. My estimates show less than 1.3% recovery.

The University, known for its great education should not be competing with the hotel business.

Single beds, no TVs, no breakfast. How well does Mizzou's \$120 per night bed compare to some of the 1 and 2 star hotels in the Columbia area...not well. I looked at prices and accommodations around Columbia for Homecoming weekend...there are still some good deals and comfy arrangements for just a little more money per night.

The university admits "This is not hotel accommodations,".

# Missourinet

## NAACP organizes rally over civil rights issues; It's leader meets with Gov. Greitens

**BY JASON TAYLOR**

The Missouri NAACP anchored a rally at the state capitol Tuesday to draw attention to recent events and legislative moves it claims infringe upon civil rights.

And after publicly asking for a conference, the organization's state president, Rod Chapel, also met with Republican Governor Eric Greitens.

Among other things, the NAACP Missouri chapter has issued a travel advisory to instruct individuals to be extremely cautious when passing through or spending time in Missouri. It says incidents involving residents and visitors offer examples of looming danger, and lists a number of occurrences to support its conclusion.

In one of them, an African American man from Tennessee died in jail after an altercation with a sheriff who had been suspended. In another instance, two internationally born men were killed by a person who thought they were Muslim.

The advisory notes that black high school students in St. Louis have been attacked with hot glue while being denigrated racially.

It further acknowledges a report by the attorney general that African Americans are 75% more likely to be stopped while driving than whites, and references a statement by a state Representative Rick Bratton that homosexuals are not human beings according to his faith.

**The advisory also contends racial threats and attacks at the University of Missouri have threatened civil rights.**

A coalition of faith and labor groups joined the NAACP at the rally, which also drew attention to legislation passed this year that would make it more difficult to sue for employment and housing discrimination.

Governor Greitens hasn't said whether he'll sign the measure. He's been critical of discrimination in general, but has also strongly backed legislation to limit lawsuits that could hamper the state's business climate.

The Missouri Chamber of Commerce, which has given a full throated endorsement of the litigation bill, was also a strong supporter of Greitens. Some lawmakers have speculated that Greitens will avoid any political fallout and let the bill become law without his signature.

NAACP leader Chapel doesn't think the governor, who was a Rhodes Scholar and a Navy Seal, will back away from the consequential decision.

"He's a man of courage" said Chapel. "He served his country with distinction. I think that he would take the same high road in terms of any action that he would issue. Either he would veto it, or sign it, but not let it pass. No pocket pass is what I'm saying."

Greitens will have to sign or veto the litigation bill by July 14th, or the measure will automatically become law. Enforcement of it would begin August 28th.

*Story [continues.](#)*