

# 2023 Legislative Review

Welcome to my 2023 Legislative Review!  
In this issue, you will find a summary of session highlights and the funding I helped procure for the 14th Senatorial District.

Representing you in the Missouri Senate is an honor and a privilege, and I am grateful for your trust and unyielding support as we work to make North St. Louis County a thriving community and hub of commerce.

*Brian Williams*

**State Senator**  
**Brian Williams**



573-751-4106



[senate.mo.gov/Williams](https://senate.mo.gov/Williams)



[Brian.Williams@senate.mo.gov](mailto:Brian.Williams@senate.mo.gov)





# 2023 Legislative Highlights

The goals I set when I began my second term as your state senator were to help senior citizens, reform dated criminal justice policies and secure needed funding for our community.

Unfortunately, the governor vetoed [Senate Bill 189](#), which contained three of my priority proposals to simplify the process to expunge criminal records, compensate the wrongfully convicted and establish a statewide conviction review unit to investigate defendants' claims of innocence. I will file these important measures again in 2024.

I'm relieved the Senate blocked efforts to withhold vital funding from public libraries and agencies with diversity, equity and inclusion policies in place, raise the threshold to pass initiative petitions to 60% of votes cast and permit the state to reassume control of the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department.

Some of the new laws that did emerge include extending [MO HealthNet](#) coverage to one year for postpartum women, [banning texting while driving](#) and reauthorizing tax credits for [motion picture production](#) and entertainment industry jobs.

## Tax Credits for Seniors

My highlight of the 2023 session was the governor signing [Senate Bill 190](#) into law. I was proud to co-sponsor this bipartisan legislation to provide needed financial relief to our seniors living on fixed incomes and struggling to keep up with rising real estate assessments.

This legislation is two-fold. One provision exempts all Social Security retirement benefits from state income tax, regardless of filing status or adjusted gross income. This law aligns Missouri with the other 40 states that do not tax Social Security income.

The other provision authorizes counties to grant a property tax credit to effectively freeze property assessment rates on senior citizens' primary residence. This tax credit and cap on assessment value increases will help retirees stay in their homes, which in turn will benefit entire communities.

Retirees work their entire lives to "earn their keep" in society and purchase property, so I'm glad this new law will enable them to keep their earnings and their homes!

## Advocacy In Action

The word "advocate" has Latin roots that mean "add your voice to." Civic participation is a necessary part of the policymaking process and, in fact, the success of our democracy depends on it. I encourage you to get to know your local and state elected officials, offer to be their resource in your field of expertise and share your related personal stories. Thanks to all those who travel to Jefferson City to advocate for our community, and please reach out if I can assist you.



## Youth Advisory Board



This year's Youth Advisory Board tackled the issue of food insecurity in our community. Aably led by my former intern Colby Crowder, this dedicated group researched the root causes, toured area food production facilities and devised a gameplan to address this ongoing problem.

If you know a deserving teen who is interested in public policy and passionate about community service, please encourage them to contact my office and apply to serve on this prestigious board next year.

I was the honored recipient of two prestigious awards this year for my steadfast advocacy and support. While these awards bear my name, they are truly a reflection of my team's and our community's combined advocacy efforts.

*St. Louis Children's Hospital  
Legislative Advocate of the Year Award*

*North County Incorporated  
2023 Public Service Leadership Award*

Becoming a father has given me a new perspective on life and a passion for protecting and advocating for our most prized assets. With your help, we can and do make a difference.



# Investing in Our Community



## Infrastructure, Workforce and Economic Development Initiatives



Born and raised in North County, my top priority is providing the resources needed to uplift our community, educate children and make our neighborhoods safe and prosperous. The state budget for Fiscal Year 2024 allocates \$2.25 billion in funding for vital St. Louis area projects and an additional \$430.1 million for capital improvements, maintenance and repairs.

### AMICSTL



**\$15 million**

The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Center has been allotted funds to implement its strategic plan and establish an epicenter for research and development in St. Louis. This manufacturing facility will create jobs in the aerospace, agriculture and construction industries to spur economic growth and sustain long-term regional vitality.

### UNITED WAY



**\$5 million**

The United Ways in Missouri will utilize this funding to leverage statewide partnerships, strengthen social safety nets and coordinate services. The enhanced programming will target social determinants of health through housing and utility assistance, help stabilize families and improve the trajectory of long-term outcomes for Missouri children.

### Public Safety

\$10 million for the City of St. Louis Public Safety Access Point to consolidate emergency dispatch services and reduce response delays.

### CORTEX MO

\$7 million for training and wraparound services to prepare unemployed individuals for jobs in cybersecurity and information technology.

### Literacy

\$2.5 million to implement a statewide Literacy Reading Program and improve our students' below grade-level literacy rates.

### Museums

\$2 million for the African American Museum and \$150,000 to the St. Louis Black Museum to preserve history and showcase achievements.

### HOPE

\$250,000 in enhancements for Housing Options Provided for the Elderly to help older adults live with greater dignity and independence.



# SENATOR BRIAN WILLIAMS

201 W Capitol Ave Rm 434  
Jefferson City MO 65101

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## Fiscal Year 2024 Operating Budget

The Fiscal Year '24 operating budget totals **\$48.579 billion**, the largest in state history. Flush with federal COVID-19 recovery funds, the budget allocates \$2.8 billion to widen Interstate 70 to six lanes, fully funds education and school transportation and expands mental health services. I am proud to serve on the Senate Appropriations Committee and of the spending plan we crafted.



\* Includes: Revenue, National Guard, Elected Officials, General Assembly and Statewide Real Estate