WHEREAS, county governments serve as the “first-line providers of service” to Missouri residents; and

WHEREAS, the state of Missouri mandates that many of these public services be provided by the county in accordance with state law; and

WHEREAS, these services mandated by the state include, but are not limited to, the incarceration of state prisoners, the requirement to maintain accurate property valuation through biennial assessment maintenance efforts, the cost of administering state elections and complying with reform measures, and the requirement to furnish office space and cover certain utility expenses for state public defenders; and

WHEREAS, all counties incur costs in carrying out such state-mandated services and the combination of these unfunded and/or underfunded state programs and services that are now required of counties is reaching a critical level;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby respectfully request that the Missouri General Assembly consider the financial burden that state mandates have on county government and the corresponding impact they have on a county’s ability to provide other necessary and essential services to Missouri citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby respectfully request that the Missouri General Assembly and the Governor include the following in the state’s fiscal year 2021 budget:

• an increase in the appropriation for prisoner per diem reimbursement authorized under 221.105, RSMo, with reimbursement starting from the first day of incarceration in a county facility;

• an appropriation to fully fund state assessment maintenance reimbursements;

• an appropriation to fully fund any new obligations placed on the election officials of this state, including state payment of a proportional share of primary and general election costs;

• both an appropriation to fully fund the reimbursement for the detention and care of neglected and/or delinquent juveniles and the salaries of juvenile court personnel in single-county circuits;

• an appropriation that would relieve counties of the cost of providing office space and certain utility expenses for the various state public defenders’ offices; and

• an appropriation that would relieve counties from salary and retirement contribution increases for county prosecuting attorneys; and

• the General Assembly’s continuing to refrain from implementing the requirements of SB 711 relating to property tax enacted in 2008 until full state funding for the same is authorized.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, recognizing the difficult budgetary constraints that the state of Missouri is experiencing and the dim prospects for additional state appropriations for these programs and, as a partner with the state in the delivery of these services, the Missouri Association of Counties requests that the Governor and the Missouri General Assembly hold county governments harmless from any further state budget cuts in these areas.

Adopted Nov. 18, 2019
WHEREAS, the Missouri General Assembly should not be forced to “micro-manage” county government from Jefferson City due to the lack of local authority to deal with local issues; and

WHEREAS, Missouri county officials have expressed their opposition to the erosion of local authority which would allow counties greater flexibility in dealing with truly local issues and problems; and

WHEREAS, Missouri's county officials also believe it is critical to protect the citizens they represent when large scale developments infringe upon their constituents’ way of life, including compliance with local planning and zoning and other ordinances; and

WHEREAS, county officials expressly oppose any effort to repeal or weaken 229.100 RSMo, that requires any individual, association or company to have the approval of the county commission prior to the erection of poles for the suspension of electric light or power wires, or the laying and maintenance of pipes, conductors, mains and conduits for any purpose through, on, under or across public roads or highways of any county of this state;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby go on record in opposition to legislation that would pre-empt a county’s authority to deal with local issues and problems; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby go on record in support of legislation to repeal the prevailing wage law in Missouri.

Adopted Nov. 18, 2019
MAC Resolution #3 – 2020
RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A TRANSPORTATION FUNDING PACKAGE THAT ADDRESSES MISSOURI’S DIRE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

WHEREAS, Amendment 3 funding ended in 2009, reducing significantly the amount of funding available for maintenance and repair of our current system and leaving virtually no new money for Missouri’s transportation needs beyond our current system; and

WHEREAS, our transportation funding system is broken, all linked to the reality that Missouri has the seventh largest system in the nation and we rank 47th in funding, with Missouri’s gas tax at 17 cents per gallon — among the lowest in the country; and

WHEREAS, federal funding for state and local transportation has prompted disagreement in Congress and could possibly be expected to diminish in future years; and

WHEREAS, Missouri currently has the 9th highest number of deficient bridges in the nation, and has the most major bridges of any state with 53 bridges crossing the Mississippi or Missouri Rivers; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Missouri’s 10,400 state-owned bridges, there are 14,000 bridges on the off-system and counties are responsible for 91 percent of these, as well as the 73,476 county-owned road miles; and

WHEREAS, in 2017, legislation was proposed to allow for the conveyance of portions of state-owned lettered highways and routes to the county and local governments in which those roadway miles reside; and

WHEREAS, the state’s strong agricultural industry relies more than ever on our roads and bridges to transport grain, livestock, and other goods, and Missouri is within a 10-hour drive of half of the country’s population and the state’s vast river ways make it ideal for shipping both domestically and internationally; and

WHEREAS, if Missouri’s road and bridge systems can be improved and river ports and rail be better utilized, the state could become a central distribution point, which would bring many new jobs to the state; and

WHEREAS, if new revenues are considered, they should be required to be allocated to transportation projects and not be diverted for other needs; and

WHEREAS, the conveyance of state-owned lettered highways and routes to counties is not a solution to Missouri’s transportation funding problems, as it would be an additional financial hardship on county government, and could also be especially detrimental to the agricultural economy of Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Missouri’s transportation future is uncertain and will remain so until stable, reliable long-term funding is put in place;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby go on record in seeking the General Assembly’s support for a transportation funding package that will address Missouri’s dire infrastructure needs, without the conveyance of any state-owned lettered highway or route to county government.

Adopted Nov. 18, 2019
MAC Resolution #4 – 2020
MAC STANDS IN OPPOSITION TO LEGISLATION
THAT ERODES THE LOCAL TAX BASE AND CALLS UPON
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO ADDRESS
MISSOURI'S ANTIQUATED TAX STRUCTURE

WHEREAS, the cost of county services continues to increase annually, prompting many to diversify their revenue streams through the use of sales taxes to supplement the property tax base; and

WHEREAS, Missouri taxes are structured around laws drafted and passed in the 1930s which were designed to tax the main focus of industry in the state at that time; and

WHEREAS, local businesses are at a competitive disadvantage to businesses that operate outside of the state of Missouri and do not collect state and local sales tax; and

WHEREAS, a serious erosion of the local tax base is occurring with the unprecedented growth of uncollected sales and use taxes on internet purchases; and

WHEREAS, the ruling in the South Dakota v. Wayfair case has allowed South Dakota to begin collecting sales tax revenue for online vendors that do not have a physical presence in their state; and

WHEREAS, other states in the country are positioned far ahead of Missouri with regard to collecting online sales tax based on the Wayfair decision; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly has not passed any legislation that will allow Missouri to collect sales tax from businesses that do not have a physical presence in Missouri or has not enacted laws enabling it to participate in the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA), with which South Dakota is a member; and

WHEREAS, Missouri and its local governments are losing millions of dollars in online sales tax because Missouri has not simplified its local sales taxes or entered into the SSUTA; and

WHEREAS, county governments have an obligation to their constituents to look to the future to ensure that adequate funding sources will be available to meet the required service needs of local governments;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties does hereby call on the Missouri General Assembly to limit legislation that would have a negative budgetary effect on local governments without guaranteed replacement revenue. The Association also asks that the General Assembly address Missouri’s antiquated tax code, especially as it relates to online sales tax, so that both state and local governments are well-positioned in the future to meet the increasing service needs of our citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties shall support changes in legislation that standardizes the local assessment of wind in power generation and transmission regardless of ownership; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties shall support changes in legislation that ensures local assessment of solar and coal in power generation and transmission regardless of ownership with all related tax revenues to be taxed and distributed at the local level.

Adopted Nov. 18, 2019
WHEREAS, the federal government enacted the Davis-Bacon Act in 1931, which established the requirement for paying the local prevailing wage on public works projects; and

WHEREAS, Missouri enacted similar legislation in 1957, Chapter 290, Section 250 of the RSMo., to incorporate setting the local prevailing wage performed by each type of worker in the locality it is performed on construction projects that use public funds; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri Department of Economic Development sets the prevailing wage for specific labor on public works projects on a county-by-county basis; and

WHEREAS, in accordance to state law, any publicly funded construction project in Missouri must pay the prevailing wage performed by each type of worker; and

WHEREAS, the cost of construction projects may fluctuate every year based on locality, as well as other factors, including but not limited to, labor, materials, liability and health insurance; and

WHEREAS, local contractors may not be able to bid on public work projects in their area because they may not be able to comply with state law which requires them to pay the prevailing wage, leading to a lack of competitiveness in the bidding process that can drive up the costs on projects and put a strain on the budgets of local governments; and

WHEREAS, construction projects that are built without the assistant of any public funds may have a more competitive bidding process because these types of construction projects do not have to comply with the state’s prevailing-wage law, thus saving money on construction projects; and

WHEREAS, if Missouri’s prevailing-wage law was fully repealed, it may lessen the budget burden of the state, counties, municipalities and others that use public funds on public works projects by not having to pay the prevailing wage, and may lead to a more competitive bidding market by allowing contractors to bid on projects in their area because they no longer have to comply with the prevailing-wage law;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Missouri Association of Counties does hereby go on record in support of legislation that calls for the full repeal of the prevailing-wage law in Missouri.
WHEREAS, HB 949 proposed in 2019 called for the expansion of options available for county commissions to post annual financial statements for public review; and

WHEREAS, annually Section 50.800 RSMo. calls for county commissions, on or before the first Monday in March, to prepare and publish their annual financial statement in some newspaper as defined by state law or in 10 places within said county; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri Association of Counties values the role local newspapers play in local government and the local political process; and

WHEREAS, lawmakers when approving the existing statute, related to the posting of annual county financial data, could not have foreseen the dawn of the internet and its impact on how 21st century individuals would obtain news; and

WHEREAS, the internationally recognized Pew Research Center in 2018, found for the first time that one-in-five adults in the U.S. get their news from social media, slightly higher than the share who often do so from print editions (16%) and that 43% of U.S. adults often get news from social media or news websites; and

WHEREAS, the Associated Press in 2019, in conjunction with the University of North Carolina, analyzed data and reports more than 1,400 towns and cities in the United States have lost a local newspaper over the past 15 years; and

WHEREAS, as local newspapers struggle to retain readership many Missouri counties have seen their local newspapers, increase advertising rates, reduce editions, or stop production entirely; constituents no longer have a watchdog to report on their local government; and

WHEREAS, posting county financial statement information on the internet can reach many more voters than any bulletin board in the County Courthouse; and

WHEREAS, many Missouri counties no longer have a local newspaper, of general circulation, but instead must use regional newspapers to print public notices, ballot notifications, or annual financial statements; and

WHEREAS, the printing of a financial summary, as similar to that required by Missouri municipal governments, in a local or regional newspaper of general circulation, that in turn directs constituents to the internet for more details can benefit the constituent, county government and newspaper organization; and

WHEREAS, expanding the posting options available to county governments, to include a designated county website or news website, to Missouri counties will ensure more citizens have access to county financial data;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Missouri Association of Counties supports the expansion of financial statement publishing options for counties of second, third or fourth classification in the state of Missouri.