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GOVERNOR PARSON ANNOUNCES OVER $133 MILLION IN CARES ACT AND GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS

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JEFFERSON CITY Today, Governor Mike Parson announced over $133 million in funding to support critical services in several areas, including nearly $95 million in CARES Act funding and $40 million in general revenue. Nearly $100 million of these funds will support K-12 and higher education.

“When we evaluated the impact of COVID-19 on Missouri’s economy and state revenues back in June, we had to make some difficult decisions to keep our budget balanced,” **Governor Parson** said. “However, we promised to reevaluate our spending after the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2021, and that is what we have done.”

Due to the financial impact of COVID-19, the state restricted approximately $436 million in spending earlier this year to ensure a balanced budget and the necessary funds to combat the virus moving forward. At the time these budget decisions were made, Missouri’s unemployment rate was projected to be at roughly 16.3 percent.

Currently, Missouri’s actual unemployment rate is at 7 percent – less than half of what was originally projected and lower than the national unemployment rate of 8.4 percent. Additionally, the state’s monthly General Revenue Report released this week showed that net general revenue collections for September 2020 increased 3 percent compared to September 2019, increasing from $917.3 million last year to $944.5 million this year.

“As a result of our Show Me Strong Recovery Plan, we are outpacing our projected budget forecast, and we are now in a position to release some of the funding that was restricted earlier this year,” **Governor Parson** said. “We are excited to be able to announce these funds today and will continue to evaluate our budget and spending as we move forward.”

Of the $100 million in CARES Act funding, $61.5 million will go to K-12 education, which will be distributed to school districts through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on a per-pupil basis.

“Schools continue to face unprecedented challenges this school year,” **Commissioner of Education Margie Vandeven** said. “The added expenses of operating schools during the pandemic is just one of those challenges, so we appreciate Governor Parson providing this relief to schools as they work tirelessly to serve Missouri students and provide each of them the high-quality education they deserve.”

The remainder of the CARES Act dollars will help support private colleges and universities, assisted living and residential care facilities, child care providers, and independent living centers. The funds will also help citizens suffering from substance use disorders access additional recovery services.

In addition to $10 million in CARES Act funds for private colleges and universities, $26 million in general revenue will also go to higher education, including public community colleges and four-year higher education institutions.

“We appreciate Governor Parson's decision to release these funds and the commitment to higher education institutions and students that his decision reflects,” **Commissioner of Higher Education Zora Mulligan** said.

“We appreciate the support from Governor Parson for the University of Missouri System. We can’t think of a more important endeavor than the education of new leaders and supporting important precision health breakthroughs,” **University of Missouri President Mun Choi** said. “The release of these funds will ensure that we continue to meet our mission for student success, research and engagement programs that benefit Missouri.”

“The Presidents of the Council on Public Higher Education are very appreciative of the crucial leadership and support of Governor Parson as we continue to work together to serve our students and the state during these extraordinary times,” said **Paul Wagner, Executive Director of the Council on Public Higher Education**.

The remainder of the general revenue funds will help build on Missouri’s infrastructure and serve military communities, help senior citizens and developmentally disabled citizens access critical services, help those experiencing barriers to entering the workforce, and help fight violent crime through the Attorney General’s Safer Streets Initiative.

The funds will also help ensure that individuals receiving government assistance actually qualify for that assistance, ensuring better accountability for taxpayer dollars.

To view a full breakdown of the CARES Act and general revenue funds, **click here (https://oa.mo.gov/sites/default/files/FY_2021_Expenditure_Restriction_Release_and_CARES_Act_Spending_October_7%2C_2020.pdf)**.

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