



**FIGHT CORPORATE MONOPOLIES**

**CORPORATE POWER  
MAP**



**MISSOURI**



As markets become increasingly consolidated, people lose choices about where they work and spend their money. Decades of lacking antitrust enforcement has left a few big corporate actors in charge of sector after sector of the economy -- giving these corporations massive political, economic, and societal power.

This document maps out the large corporations and consolidated industries in Missouri. It's a broad overview of the corporate actors that have amassed serious power, instances where taxpayer money has directly subsidized these giants, and some of the harms that these corporations have caused. Aside from being an educational resource, we hope these maps serve as a source for those fighting corporate power, whatever your role may be.

If you think we've missed something, please let us know at [info@fightcorporatemonopolies.org](mailto:info@fightcorporatemonopolies.org)

## **HOW TO USE THIS MAP AS A POLICY MAKER**

**Commit to work on behalf of your constituents and not corporations.** The public overwhelmingly supports reining in large corporations. For an overview of popular anti-corporate and anti-corruption policy, please visit: [www.fightcorporatepower.org](http://www.fightcorporatepower.org). Many of the outlined policies would check corporate power at the state level.

**Use local examples as talking points.** Several of the corporations that are mapped out in this brief have harmed your constituents. Using local examples helps make anti-corporate policy real and tangible.

## **HOW TO USE THIS MAP AS AN ADVOCATE**

**See which elected officials the corporations in this report fund.** To better understand how the corporations in this report may influence politics in your state, see which elected officials the corporations donate to. You can view campaign contributions to federal elected officials through the [FEC website](#) or [Open Secrets](#). For contributions to

statewide and local officials, check your elections commission or secretary of state's website.

**Ask your electeds to rein in mentioned corporations.** Call, write to, or meet with your elected officials to discuss how they're protecting workers, consumers, and small businesses. Oftentimes the corporations mentioned in the brief will spend money lobbying elected officials on behalf of legislation that benefits them. If this is happening where you live, demand that your electeds oppose the legislation.

**Fight local subsidies to mentioned corporations.** Oftentimes, local or state governments sign off on huge subsidies to massive corporations. You can read more about how to spot these deals and how to fight them in [this guide](#).

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## Big Tech

**Sprint** is headquartered in Overland Park, KS, which is the largest suburb of Kansas City, MO. After its recent merger with **T-Mobile**, the firm cut 500 of the roughly 7,500 total employees at the Overland Park campus.

Executives made a fortune from the merger. Sprint CEO Marcelo Claure was [ticketed for a \\$130M payout](#) if he left the firm following the deal. He recently took an executive job at SoftBank. T-Mobile [CEO John Legere got \\$100M](#) in golden-parachute pay once the deal cleared in 2020. Other executives at the companies were reportedly in line for a further \$70M in payouts at the time the deal was first proposed.

In 2022, T-Mobile [agreed to pay](#) a \$350 million settlement in a Missouri court for a data breach and other consumer privacy violations.

Tech services giant **DST Systems** was one of Kansas City's largest employers until it agreed to a \$5.4B buyout from Connecticut-based competitor **SS&C** in 2018. The new owners laid off 1,000 Missouri workers and put the former DST headquarters up for lease.

- DST CEO Steve Hooley received a [\\$28M golden parachute](#) from the deal, atop stock options worth \$38M.
- SS&C and DST have received nearly \$380M in state and local subsidies from Missouri.

### Amazon

**Amazon** claims over [10,000 workers in Missouri](#) across fourteen locations. Amazon is notorious for [tracking employees' every movement](#) and penalizing them for "time off-task," which deprives workers of dignified bathroom breaks and other rest time. Amazon warehouse logs show an [injury rate nearly double the industry average](#) and triple the average for private companies overall. Workers must also sign non-compete clauses that trap them in an abusive relationship with Amazon. In the past few years Amazon has been guilty of [union busting](#) and firing whistleblowers who pointed out [consumer data misuse](#).

Amazon has received at least \$110M in state and local subsidies from Missouri since 2017.

A [study](#) by the Economic Policy Institute found that when an Amazon warehouse is built, the "county [hosting the facility] gains roughly 30 percent more warehousing and storage jobs but no new net jobs overall, as the jobs created in warehousing and storage are likely offset by job losses in other industries."

### Google & Facebook

Missouri [lost nearly 60 percent of its local journalism jobs](#) from 2005 to 2020 as **Google** and **Facebook**'s dominance in online advertising undermined traditional news organizations worldwide. These job cuts typically follow acquisitions of local outlets by private-equity firms that have been able to buy low on local media after the dominance of large tech platforms undermined their subscriber base and advertising revenue, [as with the Columbia Daily Tribune's purchase by GateHouse](#). **The Wichita Eagle**, which prints in Missouri, has reportedly stopped covering statewide news in Kansas and withdrawn to only its home market. **The Kansas City Star** is now owned by private equity after [McClatchy sold to Chatham Asset Management](#) last year. Several local newspapers have shut down entirely, including [Waynesville's The Daily Guide](#), the [Carthage Press in southwestern Missouri](#). GateHouse's recent merger with **Gannett** is driving [further layoffs at the Springfield News-Leader](#).

Missouri Attorney General Eric Schmitt has joined the pending antitrust suits against both Google and Facebook.

### Apple

**Apple** claims to have 517 direct employees and 64 supplier firms in Missouri, though no information is readily available on specific supplier firms in the state.

## Broadband Access

**Charter** is the single largest internet service provider in Missouri.

In 2022, the FTC [fined](#) Charter for over a million dollars for defaulting on some of its bids in Missouri and other states to expand broadband access.

While the industry argues nearly everyone has high-speed internet access, that claim is based on defining high-speed as 25Mbps -- far shy of the 100Mbps speeds actually required to reliably engage with the modern internet. Half of rural Missouri can't get 100Mbps service at all, and the other half has only one provider to purchase from. One third of Missouri's urban population has only one 100Mbps provider available, and another 52 percent have only two options.

According to a [new revised federal dataset on broadband access](#), Roughly 383,000 Missouri households and 970,000 individuals -- about 16 percent of the state -- have no internet access at home at all. Almost a million people live in the 60 Missouri counties where median speeds are below the industry-standard 25Mbps. Only 21 counties have median downspeeds above 50 Mbps. Two counties have a median downspeed of 100 Mbps (the advocacy community's definition of "high-speed broadband").

According to [research](#) by the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, slow broadband speeds in rural areas result in slow job and population growth, reduced home values, entrepreneurship, and innovation, and leads to higher unemployment rates.

## **Hospitals and Health Insurance**

There are eight insurers on Missouri's Affordable Care Act exchange, but 23 percent of the population has [two or fewer choices](#) in their county. The [average price of the lowest-cost plans](#) is \$347 in 2021, higher than in four of seven neighboring states and the country as a whole. The highest-tier "Gold" plans average \$530 per month in Missouri, higher than five of its seven neighbors and the country as a whole. Overall health care prices in Missouri rose by 17.7 percent from 2014 to 2018, [more than the national average](#) of 15 percent.

- Missourians insured through their employer pay [14 percent more than the national average](#) in out-of-pocket medical expenses overall.

- Including those not insured through work, Missourians' overall OOP costs are 25 percent above the national average and 18th-highest among the states.
- Missouri [provides only partial protections against "surprise billing."](#) Hospital care outside of the ER is not protected and there is no outright prohibition on the practice. Surprise billing is [more common](#) in concentrated markets.
- One in seven Missourians have recently [forgone medical care due to costs](#). One in five rates as "highly burdened" on overall medical costs.

Religious hospital networks dominate in the Missouri acute-care market. 60 percent of hospital beds in the state belong to just four networks: **Mercy Health** (18 percent), **BJC** (16 percent), **SSM** (15 percent), and **St. Luke's** (11 percent). These monopolies have spent about \$8M lobbying Congress since 2005, and another \$1.5M in campaign contributions since 2000. Concentration in hospitals is tied to [higher prices for patients](#) and [worse quality of care](#) after hospital acquisitions.

Missouri's hospital monopolies pay their executives tens of millions of dollars per year. 25 hospital executives in the St. Louis area made a combined [\\$91.3M](#) in fiscal year 2018. Springfield's dominant provider Mercy Health pays its executives well over \$1M per year to run the nation's most monopolized local hospital market. [In 2018](#), Jon Swope made \$1.4M and Fred McQueary made \$1.5M. Earlier executives made even more -- [\\$3.7M for EVP Myra Aubuchon in 2013](#), for example.

Six rural hospitals in Missouri [have closed](#) since 2010. One was part of a [billing-fraud scheme](#) engineered by an out-of-state firm. Another of that firm's three Missouri hospitals "[was essentially in abandoned condition](#)" for six months after the fraud was detected. Two of its other hospitals just across the Kansas border also closed for good.

Health insurance conglomerate **Centene Corp.** is headquartered in Missouri and ranks among its top employers. The firm controls one fifth of the market for individuals insured through the ACA exchanges nationwide. It recently [laid off 3,000 workers and canceled plans for 1,500 hires](#) following a merger with **WellCare**. It is [now also planning to absorb substance abuse and mental health services giant Magellan Health](#) for \$2.2B in a deal announced in January 2021.

- Thousands of Missourians lost jobs in a merger that made CEOs millions. Centene CEO Michael Neidorff was paid [roughly \\$25M](#) in total compensation that year, more than 300 times the median Centene employee's pay. Wellcare's top two executives [received millions of dollars in bonuses](#) as part of the merger.
- Centene's 2022 Magellan Health deal [could trigger a \\$15M "golden parachute" for Magellan Health's CEO](#), and another \$19.3M to four of his top deputies. A further \$1.6M will go to eight Magellan board members who are not employees.

**Cerner Corp.**, the second-largest vendor of IT systems for health records, is headquartered outside Kansas City, MO. It is the largest employer in KC. It has laid off at least 110 Missouri employees as part of [roughly 500 layoffs](#) since late 2019. Cerner's products have been blamed for critical delays and snafus -- in both billing and [actual provision of critical care in ICUs](#) -- in multiple hospital systems in the U.S. [and Canada](#). **Western Missouri Medical Center** [effectively lost its ability to bill for service](#) after adapting Cerner's glitchy systems. Cerner has received \$1.7 billion in state subsidies.

- After Trump officials defied expert advice to hand Cerner a major contract for Veterans Affairs health system management, [the agency spent \\$900,000 on a kickoff event at Cerner's Kansas City headquarters](#). Three years later, the program rollout was paused after a pilot effort in Washington state wreaked havoc on veterans' care.
- In August 2022, Cerner agreed to a [\\$1.8 million settlement](#) to resolve a dispute over racial discrimination in their hiring practices.

## Pharmaceuticals, Pharmaceutical Benefits Management Firms (PBMs), &

### Retail Pharmacies

Nearly 600 Missourians were [laid off when Pfizer bought Wyeth in 2010](#), a 60 percent reduction in staffing at Pfizer's St. Louis research center. Wyeth CEO Bernard Pousot received [at least \\$24 million](#) in golden-parachute bonuses as part of the deal.



St. Louis-founded **Express Scripts** is the third-largest pharmacy benefits management firm. It was bought by **Cigna** in 2018. It has received \$120M in state subsidies over the years. It reported a \$4.5 billion net profit on \$100 billion in revenue in 2017.

- Express Scripts CEO Tim Wentworth got a bonus of \$5M or more from the deal, and was offered [a \\$28M "golden parachute"](#) as part of the deal.
- Express Scripts has been [sued by 11 counties in Missouri](#) over its role in the opioid crisis.
  - In June 2022, a [pending lawsuit against Express Scripts was unsealed](#). It contended that Express Scripts "defrauded the federal government and vendors out of billions of dollars by delivering unnecessary prescription drugs to military personnel."

Missouri lawmakers in 2020 proposed significant PBM reforms, sponsored by state Sen. David Sater (Dist. 29) that would likely have shrunk the power of Express Scripts and other PBMs operating in the state; it died in committee. In 2021, a revised package from Rep. Dale Wright (Dist. 116) passed the House 126-28 and is now pending in the Senate. The state's retail-pharmacies trade association supports the bill.

Missouri is one of just three states [without any conflict-of-interest rules](#) governing the state boards that oversee pharmaceutical businesses.

Corporate pharmacies control [73 percent](#) of Missouri's retail prescription drug market by sales volume.

- Two-thirds of Missouri retail pharmacy locations are owned by drug store chains, supermarkets, or big-box retailers.
- **Walgreens** and **CVS** alone control more than 36 percent of all retail pharmacy locations in the state.
- More than 80 percent of the state's community retail pharmacists work for corporate chains.

Missourians face a corporate monopoly on pharmacy retail that endangers their health. Missouri pharmacists [report](#) being placed under tremendous time pressure that leads

them to make errors in serving patients. 60 percent of respondents to a state survey of pharmacists said they are “pressured or intimidated to meet standards or metrics that may interfere with safe patient care.” Multiple respondents described store policies that lead to drug-dispensing errors that put patients at risk. At least one described a requirement to upsell patients on unnecessary medications and chain drugstore promotional programs.

These corporate pharmacy retailers built their monopoly [through years of unchecked mergers & acquisitions](#), both nationwide and in Missouri. CVS made at least four major retail-pharmacy acquisitions from 2004 to 2018, including numerous **Target** pharmacies in Missouri. More recently, CVS took over **Schnucks** pharmacies across the midwest in 2020.

## Industrial Agriculture

**Anheuser-Busch** was purchased by **InBev** in 2008. The merged firm shrank the in-state workforce by more than 20 percent over the following decade: Between 1,000 and 2,000 jobs from its St. Louis facilities.

- Budweiser’s CEO made \$17M from the merger as workers lost jobs. August Busch IV got [a \\$10.4M immediate payout plus a \\$120,000 monthly consulting fee](#) for the following five years as part of the deal.
- A year after laying off Budweiser workers, the new executives took \$2.5 billion in bonuses out of the combined firm. InBev CEO [Carlos Brito pocketed \\$289M](#) by spinning off a Korean brewery in 2009, with other executives netting another \$2.2B in bonuses from the deal.

**National Beef** and **Smithfield**’s hog-processing arm are each headquartered in Missouri. National Beef was absorbed into its fellow “Big Four” beef packing firm **Marfrig** in 2019. Smithfield is part of the meatpacking industry group that has been repeatedly accused of cartel pricing, worker abuses, and environmental abuses. National Beef has been accused of price-fixing and failing to protect workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Corporate agriculture monopolies won an amendment to the Missouri constitution that prohibits lawmakers from restricting harmful industrial agriculture practices. Voters narrowly approved a so-called “Right to Farm” amendment to the state constitution in 2014, giving corporate agriculture monopolists a major victory [by just 2,500 votes out of 1 million cast](#). The provision bars the state from restricting agricultural pollution or curbing abusive meatpacking business practices through either law or regulation. Meatpackers can continue imposing restrictive contracts on producers, gouging them on prices, and forcing farmers toward high-pollution feed and fertilizer practices associated with CAFOs (factory farms). Such proposals typically [follow model legislation from ALEC](#), the corporate front-group represented in Missouri by the right-wing Show-Me Institute.

A report found that 21 Missouri pig firms (all owned by Smithfield's since 2006) are responsible for [7.3 million gallons of spilled waste](#) over the last three decades.

**Monsanto** is headquartered in Creve Coeur, MO. It has been among the world’s dominant agricultural firms for decades and was absorbed into Bayer in 2016. The control it exerts over farmers’ land-use practices has been widely blamed for driving agricultural consolidation, environmental pollution and reduced consumer choice in retail food. The merged company [employs roughly 500 fewer people](#) in the St. Louis area than it did before the deal.

- Monsanto CEO Hugh Grant [got a \\$32.6M “golden parachute”](#) from the Bayer merger, [plus a \\$70M windfall](#) from the increased share price of his existing stock options.

[Research](#) suggests that when agricultural production is controlled by only a few large farms, profits are more likely to be pulled out of the community, instead of circulating within it.

## Tax Prep

**H&R Block** is headquartered in Kansas City. It is the second-largest tax preparer in the country, with a 16 percent market share in 2019. It routinely and successfully lobbies

to bar the IRS from producing a free-file product that would compete with the platform it uses to sell lower-income taxpayers paid services they don't need. It has received state subsidies totalling \$370M. In 2017, roughly 2 million Missourians [should have been eligible](#) to file their tax returns for free. Only 59,000 did.

## Finance

St. Louis-based **Scottrade Financial Services** was absorbed by **T.D. Ameritrade** in 2017 in a multi-billion-dollar merger that yielded the 8th-largest in the country. T.D. executives immediately began laying off hundreds of Scottrade employees in St. Louis, [eventually cutting more than 1,100 jobs in the city](#). Three years later, the same T.D. executives sold to Charles Schwab and [cashed out tens of millions in golden parachute bonuses](#).

## Retail

Missouri once had 45 **Sears** and **K-Mart** locations. After a private equity bust-out of the two retailers engineered by hedge fund owner Eddie Lampert drove the chains into bankruptcy, all but 10 of those 45 stores closed. Lampert and his investors made hundreds of millions off of the deal.

**Dollar General**, **Family Dollar**, and **Dollar Tree** operate several hundred locations across Missouri, though an exact figure is hard to come by given disparities in sources. The Institute for Local Self-Reliance counted roughly [1 store for every 10,000 residents](#) as of 2017, and the brands have expanded dramatically nationwide since then. Dollar General operates 571 stores in Missouri, including [130 new stores opened since 2014](#). Family Dollar's website lists 107 locations in the state, though the real number is likely many times higher.

These corporations' expansion overlaps with a hollowing-out of local grocery stores [across rural Missouri](#). The typical dollar-store customer earns less than \$40,000 per year; Dollar General and Dollar Tree have a combined market cap of nearly \$50 billion. The business model of this industry sector causes both economic and social harm to the areas it targets.

- Dollar stores' charge far higher per-unit prices for staple goods than even high-end traditional retailers. Milk at a dollar store [can cost more per gallon](#) than at high-end luxury chains like Whole Foods.
- Dollar stores destroy locally-owned retailers then extract local wealth to faraway investors and executives. Because Dollar General is owned by the private equity firm KKR and has a lower-income customer base than even Walmart, its business model strips income out of Missouri and into high-net-worth investors' pockets. Family Dollar and Dollar Tree also siphon profits out of state to the large professional investors that are the primary shareholders of these corporations. Surrounding communities generally lose locally-owned businesses and the associated revenue and economic stability independent retailers provide. The average dollar-store retailer employs roughly half as many people as the average locally-owned grocery.
- Dollar-store corporations have also been criticized as [magnets for violent crime](#) in urban-area storefronts.

## Transportation

**Enterprise Rent-A-Car** is headquartered in St. Louis. It is the dominant car-rental company in North America. It is wholly owned by the Taylor family through a firm called the **Crawford Group**. It has [ramped up its federal lobbying](#) in recent years, spending approximately \$750,000 to influence lawmakers in 2020 alone. It [laid off 2,000 Missouri employees](#) in April of 2020.

- The family that owns Enterprise has also profited from notorious prison healthcare and commissary vendors Trinity and Keefe, which are the dominant firms in their respective segments of the prison-contractor market. The Taylors appear to have spun off their prison holdings in 2016; the firms are now owned by Miami-based private-equity firm H.I.G. Capital.

Legacy freight hauler **Kansas City Southern** would be absorbed into Canadian Pacific Railway under a proposed \$25B merger announced in March 2021. Roughly 700 of

Kansas City Southern's ~7,000 total employees are based at its Missouri headquarters. The proposed merger has [prompted significant fear](#) among local workers.

**American Airlines** all but eliminated direct service to and from St. Louis after absorbing two major competitors in the 1990s and 2000s. It canceled all non-stop routes from Lambert Airport to 20 other cities [in 2010](#). This followed [previous major decreases](#) in St. Louis flights in 2001 and 2002 following American's acquisition of TWA, a further 50 percent cut to American flights through St. Louis in 2004, and further cuts after it absorbed U.S. Airways. By 2010 it operated just 36 daily flights through Lambert. Overall passenger traffic through Lambert is now half the pre-mergers (and pre-9/11) peak, despite a decade of steady increases driven largely by **Southwest Airlines'** expansion into the gates American abandoned. [[see fig. 3.3 here](#)]

## Utilities

Three investor-owned utilities -- **Empire, Ameren, and Kansas City Power & Light** -- control residential and commercial electricity in Missouri. Ameren is the dominant player and has led opposition to both utility deregulation and at-home solar subsidies. Several of the state's rural utility co-ops have also sided with the utilities against solar competition.

Missouri's corporate-backed solar reforms would allow monopoly utilities to set home-solar fees so high as to wipe out the economic benefits and savings incentives that have driven Missouri's solar boom. The solar industry has generated thousands of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in annual economic activity over the past decade. House Bill 539 and parallel Senate legislation would let Empire, Ameren, and KCPL impose surcharges for home solar; Several other states have seen utilities impose fees that erase all financial incentive to install home solar after adopting similar legislation.

## **Real Estate**

Housing prices have increased in Missouri [by 46 percent](#) since 2020, despite a [recent boom](#) in home construction. Part of this price increase can be attributed to the role of private investors in the housing market, who in 2021 [bought 26 percent of Missouri homes sold](#).