



October 24, 2022

**VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS AND EMAIL** (scott.fitzpatrick@treasurer.mo.gov)

Missouri State Treasurer Scott Fitzpatrick  
Missouri State Treasurer's Office  
Capitol Building, Room 229  
P.O. Box 210  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Dear Treasurer Fitzpatrick,

I wanted to write you directly in response to your press release dated October 18, 2022. In your press release you wrote that BlackRock "refused the Board's demand to abstain from voting the plan's proxies." That is an incomplete description of our engagement with the staff of Missouri State Employees' Retirement System (MOSERS).

MOSERS was invested in Collective Trust Funds (CTF) managed by BlackRock. The CTF structure is an excellent value for policy holders given the instant diversification and low cost it provides.

In June, MOSERS reached out to us and informed us that it preferred not to have its pro-rata portion of the CTFs voted by BlackRock, and, instead, expressed a desire to abstain from voting while still staying in the CTF. MOSERS is an investor that is eligible to participate in our Voting Choice program. We spent a great deal of time over two months working with MOSERS staff on activating voting choice to allow the plan to remain invested in the CTFs while at the same time ensuring the MOSERS board was able to express its voting preferences.

MOSERS chose not to participate in the Voting Choice program.

Our stewardship activities are designed for a single reason: to maximize long-term value for our clients. Our fiduciary duty to our clients is our "North Star," as the money BlackRock manages is our clients and our responsibility is to help them meet their long-term financial goals.

BlackRock is proud of our work on behalf of Missourians, both through our relationship with MOSERS as well as investments in the state on behalf of clients. For example, BlackRock recently invested nearly \$1B into a Missouri-based company, Transaction Data Systems, a leading pharmacy software provider to nearly 15,000 pharmacies across the country.



Given our longstanding commitment to your state, it was disappointing to see you publicly and incorrectly characterize MOSERS' decision the way you did, rather than reach out to us to have a fact-based conversation.

At BlackRock we are driven by putting our clients' interests first and this extends from our investment strategies to our stewardship activities. We are honored to serve MOSERS and help workers and retirees in its plan to achieve their financial goals. I hope this letter better explains our position. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter with you either in person or by phone.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark McCombe", written over a light gray rectangular background.

Mark McCombe, Senior Managing Director, Chief Client Officer