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**SENATE COMMITTEE CONSIDERS LEGISLATION ESTABLISHING  
A LEGISLATIVE ACADEMY WITHIN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

JEFFERSON CITY -- The Senate Financial and Governmental Organization, Veterans' Affairs and Elections Committee, chaired by Sen. Anita Yeckel, R-Sunset Hills, held its first meeting of the 2004 Legislative Session on Monday. Committee members heard testimony on four bills including one that would create a Legislative Academy within the General Assembly.

Under Senate Bill 717, this academy would be designed to educate members of the General Assembly about the organization and operation of state government, appropriations and a variety of other aspects of the legislative and executive branches, as well as the state constitution.

“This idea has been around for a number of years, but I think in this age of term limits an academy like this would be a useful tool,” said Yeckel. “After November’s elections the General Assembly will lose the last of its long-term legislators and their institutional memory will be gone. The academy will offer new lawmakers an inside look on how state government operates.”

An advisory committee comprised of nine former legislators would be established to supervise the academy.

Similar legislation passed the Senate in 2003, but died in committee in the House of Representatives.

Additional bills considered by the committee:

**Senate Bill 712** – Would create a \$150,000 death benefit for public safety officers killed in the line of duty.

**Senate Bill 783** – Would change the qualifications for member composition of the State Fair Commission.

**Senate Bill 799** – Would allow the state registrar to issue a certification of stillbirth.