



Week of January 10, 2005

## Legislative Session Begins, Clemens to Lead Ag Committee

It has been great to see so many familiar faces in Jefferson City lately. Many of my friends and supporters came to the Capitol to see the inauguration of Gov. Matt Blunt and stopped by my office and the Senate chamber.

The legislative session has barely begun, and we are already working hard to make the changes for which Missouri's voters have been clamoring. I was honored to present the first bill to a committee this year when I offered SB130 to the Small Business committee. This bill is part of our effort to reform Workers' Compensation.

This year, the members of the Missouri Senate unanimously selected state Sen. Michael Gibbons, a Republican senator from Kirkwood, to serve as Senate President Pro Tem, the chamber's top leadership position. In a show of bipartisan cooperation and support, Sen. Gibbon's nomination for the office was seconded by the Senate's top Democrat, Sen. Maida Coleman of St. Louis.

Mike Gibbons is a good friend of mine and a fine leader. He will do the best he can to remove the animosity that has festered in our Senate chamber in the recent past. I know that if anyone can lead in a bipartisan nature and still bring effective change to Missouri, it is this President Pro Tem.

The legislative committees through which all bills must pass before moving to the floor also were established. I have been selected by President Pro Tem Gibbons to head the Agriculture, Conservation, Parks and Natural Resources Committee. I am very grateful for this responsibility.

-MORE-

Since I became a Senator, my focus has been on one word: JOBS. As we all know, agriculture is one of the largest economic engines in our state. It is very important that we protect the resources that we currently have, offer improvements in the areas that need a little assistance and expand opportunities for our producers and products in local and global markets.

We will also be cooperating with the Department of Agriculture in creating an Ag-Security program in order to protect our agricultural community from the threat of eco-terror.

It is already promising to be a very busy, and I hope productive, legislative session. By the end of the opening week, more than 300 bill and joint resolutions were filed in the Senate for consideration by lawmakers.

I will have until March 1 to introduce bills, so if there are any ideas that you may have regarding legislation, there is still time to get them to me.

The governor and lawmakers are already working to resolve funding issues that have developed with the way that Missouri provides state funding for public schools.

Changes in state laws involving cases and awards in civil actions, which largely involve medical malpractice claims, also will be a major issue.

If you are in the Jefferson City area, please do not hesitate to stop by our office at the Capitol. You can always reach us by phone toll free at 1-866-242-0810 or by e-mail [dan\\_clemens@senate.mo.gov](mailto:dan_clemens@senate.mo.gov).

-END-

*Editor's note:*

*For a print-quality head shot of Sen. Clemens, contact Gus Wagner at 573-751-4008.*