



MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

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A Weekly Column for the
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Gaming Regulations, Financial Interest Statements

JEFFERSON CITY – Legislation I am sponsoring will ease the paperwork burden on Missouri's smallest communities and ensure those who operate gambling facilities in our state adhere to high ethical and moral standards.

Senate Bill 479 changes the requirements relating to the filing of financial interest statements. Judges, elected and appointed officials, members of boards and commissions, and others are required by law to file financial interest statements.

Currently, elected officials, candidates, chief administrative officers, purchasing officers and general counsels in political subdivisions with an annual operating budget of more than one million dollars are required to file financial interest statements. As communities have grown, however, the one-million dollar threshold has remained the same. SB 479 would raise that operating threshold to two million dollars, reducing the bureaucratic burden on our smallest communities, which often have limited staff to handle government red tape. SB 479 has been passed by the Senate and has been referred to the House Elections Committee.

Senate Bill 477 adds a provision to Missouri statutes governing gaming facilities in the state. The provision would prohibit the state from issuing a gaming license to any company that has been fined in any state for promoting prostitution or providing prostitutes for customers.

Since gambling is legal in Missouri, we need to ensure gaming operations are held to as high a standard as possible for the welfare of the patrons.

The \$19 billion proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2006 continued to be debated in the House Budget Committee this week. Approval by the full House would send the budget to the Senate. Meanwhile, both bodies approved a \$217.5 million spending bill to carry the state through the final months of the current fiscal year, which ends June 30. House Bill 14 supplements the state's \$18.9 billion budget for the current fiscal year.

Senators witnessed the elections of two new colleagues this week. Voters turned out Tuesday, April 5, to elect Republican candidate Bill Alter and Democratic candidate Frank A. Barnitz. Alter won the 22nd District seat, which represents part of Jefferson County. Barnitz is the senator-elect for the 16th District, representing Crawford, Dent, Gasconade, Maries, Montgomery, Osage, Phelps and Pulaski counties.

The secretary of state must certify the elections and the senators-elect would be sworn in approximately one week later. Upon swearing in, there would be 23 Republicans and 11 Democrats in the Senate. The 16th District was vacated by Sarah Steelman upon her election as state treasurer, and the 22nd District was formerly held by Steve Stoll, who left the position to be city administrator of Festus.

The First Regular Session of the 93rd General Assembly ends May 13.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.