



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
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Government Review Commission

JEFFERSON CITY – A task force appointed by Governor Blunt at the beginning of the year to find ways to make state government more efficient, competent, responsive and effective has completed its work and forwarded its recommendations to the governor.

The Missouri State Government Review Commission has spent months reviewing the operations of every executive department in state government to identify opportunities to restructure, retool, reduce, consolidate or eliminate state government functions, resulting in the best and most cost-effective service for Missouri citizens.

In his executive order creating the commission, Governor Blunt noted that technological advancements and innovation in the last three decades have provided tools that can enhance state government's efficiency and effectiveness, if those tools are carefully examined and properly utilized. The governor also noted that the organization of Missouri's state government has not been completely reexamined from top-to-bottom in over three decades, so this review is long overdue.

The Missouri State Government Review Commission has solicited testimony from state department directors, and held hearings across the state to consider the testimony of Missouri citizens regarding ways state government could be improved. The panel completed its work last month and forwarded its recommendations to the governor.

Among the commission's suggestions:

- Creating a Department of Financial Regulation and Professional Registration, consolidating the regulatory functions of several state agencies;

- Expanding the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission from six to eight members to ensure representation of all areas of the state;
- Requiring the State Emergency Management Agency to report to the director of the Department of Public Safety;
- Moving oversight of the Disassociated Persons Program, which allows problem gamblers to ban themselves from casinos, from the Missouri Highway Patrol to the Missouri Gaming Commission, and;
- Preparing the state's operating budget every two years instead of annually.

The commission's work is just the first step in making state government more efficient and effective. Implementing these suggestions will be up to the governor, the legislature, and in some cases, a successful constitutional amendment.

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.