



*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

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is the firmest friend of truth.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate Sets Ambitious Agenda for 2006 Legislative Session
Priorities Include Healthcare Eminent Domain Reform,

JEFFERSON CITY – Naming healthcare reform, eminent domain reform, fully funding the school funding formula, new laws to protect children from sexual predators, and setting Missouri on a path to energy independence, Senate President Pro Tem Michael R. Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, today started the Second Regular Session of the 93rd General Assembly. Gibbons says these priorities joined with the work accomplished during the 2005 legislative session will put the people of Missouri on strong footing for decades to come.

“More Missourians are at work, businesses are choosing Missouri as a place to grow and invest over other states, even other countries,” Gibbons said. “Our children have a better chance at a great education, and we are safer.

Gibbons said chief among this year’s priorities is their continued effort to reform our healthcare system in Missouri. The Medicaid Reform Commission recently issued its report and he encouraged Missourians to read it online at www.senate.mo.gov/medicaidreform. Gibbons said an emphasis must be made on technology in healthcare reform.

“It is unacceptable in the 21st century that Jiffy Lube is more technologically advanced than our healthcare system,” Gibbons said. “Paper kills and we must move to a system where electronic medical records and e-prescribing are common place.”

Gibbons also says the Senate will work to reform eminent domain practices in the state.

“The taxpayer subsidized financial success of one by taking the property of another is not public good,” Gibbons said. “We must work to protect people’s homes, farms and businesses.”

Gibbons says the Senate will again focus attention on the state’s children. He said the Senate is committed to fully funding a new school funding formula that is based on students’ needs rather than local wealth.

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Gibbons also said Missouri will be a leader in protecting children by increasing penalties for sexual offenders who prey on children, creating a child safe internet and requiring background checks for employees who work with children.

“Any sexual predator who might consider harming a child must know, that the punishment will be swift, certain, and severe,” Gibbons said. “Or to put it another way, we are going to lock the door and throw away the key.”

Gibbons said the Senate is also committed to funding Utilicare this year in order to help seniors, disabled and the poor with high winter heating bills. However, he also said the Senate will look at putting Missouri on a path to energy independence for the future.

“We have a serious problem with the rising costs of energy,” Gibbons said. “We should strive to be a leader in America with an energy plan that utilizes our Agricultural strengths to pursue renewable fuels, cleaner burning technologies, and aggressively pursue hydrogen as a primary fuel source, so that we can be energy independent, and protect the environment.”

The 2006 regular session will run through May 12 of this year.

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