



## MISSOURI SENATE

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# Pandemic Preparedness Committee to Examine State Response Procedures

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JEFFERSON CITY — Between legislative sessions, lawmakers return to their districts full-time to meet with constituents and resume their private careers. However, Missouri legislators maintain their commitment to state lawmaking by taking part in committees that study state law and make policy recommendations during the interim. I am pleased to take part in this interim lawmaking process this year as chairman of the Senate Interim Committee on Pandemic Preparedness.

The duties of the pandemic preparedness committee include examining the state's preparedness and local contingency plans with regard to an epidemic or pandemic, which is an outbreak of infectious disease over a wide geographic area that affects a large proportion of the population. The committee is also charged with studying the need for coordinated response plans on local, regional and state levels, and examining interagency cooperation and public-private agreements between those levels of government.

However, the committee is not only concerned with government response plans. It must also examine the role of health-care insurers, Medicaid or other federal medical programs, and service providers in coordinated response plans. The committee is also charged with studying the availability of communication and the need for developing communication procedures, and it must research methods for filling critical infrastructure services such as police, fire and emergency medical services as well as sanitation, water and electrical services.

With the threat of avian flu and other infectious diseases that could become dangerously widespread, this committee is vital in guarding against possible hazards to the health of Missourians.

The committee will be having public meetings this fall, and I recommend that anyone interested in participating in or learning more about this subject come to any or all meetings. The tentative meeting schedule is as follows:

- Wednesday, Sept. 13, Senate Committee Room 1, State Capitol, Jefferson City
- Thursday, Oct. 19, Senate Committee Room 1, State Capitol, Jefferson City
- Thursday, Nov. 9, Location to be determined, St. Louis

I am honored to be chairman of this important committee, and I hope members of the 25<sup>th</sup> District and other Missourians become more informed on this subject.

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*Senator Robert Mayer represents the people of Wayne, Ripley, Butler, Stoddard, New Madrid, Pemiscot and Dunklin counties in the Missouri Senate.*