



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
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Missouri Voter Protection Act, Immigration Reform Bill Approved

JEFFERSON CITY – Senators gave final approval to a bill requiring Missourians to submit a government-issued photographic identification card in order to vote. Senate Bill 1014 prohibits potential voters from using paychecks, utility bills or bank statements as valid identification. The bill also requires the state to issue photo IDs to all citizens unable to obtain them for financial reasons.

SB 1014 exempts from the photo-ID requirement voters with disabilities and individuals born before 1941 who have completed an authorized affidavit. The measure, which would take effect this year, contains an exemption for 2006 elections. The bill allows those lacking photo IDs to cast a provisional ballot that would count if they sign an affidavit, present another form of ID and can be verified as registered voters. SB 1014 has been sent to the House.

Legislation implementing stricter laws on illegal immigration this week received final approval from the Senate. SB 1250 requires members of the Missouri State Highway Patrol to receive training on federal immigration laws from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. The legislation also allows police officers in Missouri to apprehend illegal immigrants and transfer them to federal immigration officials. Also under the measure, illegal immigrants are prohibited from attending public colleges and universities in Missouri.

A House bill restricting the use of eminent domain this week was approved by the Senate Pensions, Veterans' Affairs and General Laws Committee. HB 1944 prohibits governments from taking private property "for predominantly economic development purposes."

The measure also requires property to be determined fully blighted before it can be taken by eminent domain and exempts farmland from being designated as blighted.

HB 1944 also requires factors such as fair market value, willingness of the owner to sell the property, heritage value, and the costs of relocation to be considered when deciding fair compensation for property taken through eminent domain. Approval by the full Senate sends the bill back to the House.

The Senate Transportation Committee approved House legislation strengthening penalties against Missouri drivers who do not pull over for emergency vehicles. HB 1310 increases the penalty from a class B to a class A misdemeanor for motorists who fail to yield the right-of-way to emergency vehicles. If drivers have acted with criminal negligence to cause the death of emergency personnel, they will be charged with second-degree involuntary manslaughter and second-degree assault.

Senate legislation creating a new option for public education was approved this week by two House committees. SB 912 establishes a virtual school program to be made available over the Internet. Virtual schools are intended to be used by students who are temporarily homebound or who want to take advanced courses not offered in their districts. Under the program, students would use a personal computer to access lessons modeled on in-class instruction, and an estimated 2 to 4 percent of public school students would be enrolled. Virtual schools would be subject to all laws applicable to Missouri public school districts. Approval by the full House sends the measure back to the Senate.

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.