



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the  
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# Special Session?

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JEFFERSON CITY – Governor Matt Blunt is currently mulling over the option of calling lawmakers back into a special session this fall to consider legislation restoring part of the MAWD program. The governor says he will agree to call a special session if lawmakers also agree to consider legislation targeting Medicaid fraud by providers.

The Medical Assistance for Disabled Workers (MAWD) program provided Medicaid coverage to some 17,000 disabled Missourians who earned too much to qualify for traditional Medicaid and worked outside the home. The program was eliminated last year when lawmakers reformed the state Medicaid program.

The Senate approved a measure on the last day of session to restore part of the MAWD program and combined it with measures targeting Medicaid fraud by providers, but the House refused to take up the bill for debate.

Governor Blunt responded to the call for a special session by saying, “If the House were to tell me that they are ready to pass a strong Medicaid fraud bill similar to the one the Senate passed and that I supported, I would be willing to call a special session to deal with both issues.”

The governor has the constitutional authority to convene the General Assembly for what are typically called special sessions but are sometimes referred to as “extraordinary” sessions by asserting an extraordinary occasion or reason. For example, last year Governor Blunt called a special session to consider abortion restrictions, which had failed to pass during the regular session.

Former Governor Bob Holden called lawmakers back for a special session three times, while the late Governor Mel Carnahan called four special sessions during his tenure.

Lawmakers can call themselves into special session by filing a petition with the Secretary of State signed by three-fourths of the members of the House and Senate. However, lawmakers have not called themselves into a special session since the enabling provision was adopted in 1988.

Special sessions typically are held concurrently with the annual veto session in September. This year the veto session will begin September 13. To date, the governor has issued four veto statements, all regarding line items in appropriations bills.

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](mailto: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.*