



## MISSOURI SENATE

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Kevin Engler  
3rd Senate District

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# Sen. Kevin Engler Prefiles Bill to Eliminate Partisanship in the Judiciary

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FARMINGTON – Sen. Kevin Engler (R-Farmington) filed legislation (SB 757) this week that would prevent judicial candidates from identifying a political party affiliation and would require all circuit, associate circuit, and appellate judgeships to be non-partisan.

“Because judges are obligated to uphold the rule of law through their decisions,” said Sen. Engler. “The selection of judges should be based on the integrity of the candidate running for the position, not his or her political affiliation.”

In Missouri, four counties (St. Louis, Jackson, Clay and Platte) and the City of St. Louis currently elect judges under the non-partisan court plan. Sen. Engler’s legislation requires the other judicial circuits throughout Missouri to be non-partisan. All appellate judges are already elected under the non-partisan plan, but SB 757 would specify the requirement for such candidates to avoid party affiliation.

Under SB 757, beginning on January 1, 2010, elections for circuit and associate circuit judges would be held the same day as primary elections. The names of the candidates would be included on primary ballots for both parties, but the individuals would have no party affiliation. If no single candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, the two candidates receiving the most number of votes shall be certified to a runoff election, which shall be held at the general election. The bill also includes a provision that would prevent candidates from participating in political activities or having a direct or indirect party affiliation.

The final day for Senators to introduce legislation for the 2008 legislative session is March 1<sup>st</sup>. The Second Regular Session of the 94<sup>th</sup> General Assembly begins on January 9 and ends on May 16.

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