



SENATOR MATT BARTLE

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Voter Registration Deadline Approaching

On Nov. 4, millions of Americans will cast their vote in the general election, bringing about the long-awaited finish to months of campaigning for everyone from local candidates to the candidates for the highest political office in the United States — the presidency.

This responsibility is not to be taken lightly. In times where financial uncertainty, controversial government bailouts and terrorist threats are the order of the day, our leaders should work to provide us with stability, security and hope for the future of this great country. What we decide in the voting booth that first Tuesday in November will ultimately determine the course for Missouri and the nation, and it's important that we take seriously our civic duty by exercising a right that is not an option for so many other people in the world.

The last day to register to vote is Oct. 8. You can complete your registration at public schools, libraries, city halls, DMVs or at the following Election Authority offices: Jackson County Board of Elections, 215 N. Liberty St., Independence, phone (816) 325-4600; or Kansas City Board of Elections, 1828 Walnut, Suite 300, Kansas City, phone (816) 842-4820. Voter registration applications are also available online at www.sos.mo.gov. You must be at least 18 years of age, a U.S. citizen and a Missouri resident to be eligible to vote.

Not only will voters choose the next president, governor of Missouri and several other state and local officials, but they will cast a vote for two constitutional amendments and three proposed state statutes.

Appearing on the ballot is Constitutional Amendment 1, which was proposed by the Legislature in 2007 and establishes English as the official language of all governmental meetings where policy is discussed or decided. Also on the ballot is Constitutional Amendment 4, which relates to the financing of stormwater control projects.

The first proposed statutory change on the ballot, Proposition A, seeks to remove the \$500 loss limit for gamblers in a preset time period. Proposition B creates the Missouri Quality Homecare Council to recruit and train the home care workforce for the disabled. Finally, Proposition C requires utility companies to use an increased amount of renewable energy with sources such as solar, wind, biomass and hydropower equaling at least 15 percent of all retail sales by 2021.

The days leading up to the November election will go by quickly and it is important for voters to educate themselves on the issues listed above so that they can make informed decisions as they cast their ballots.

If you have any comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov or by phone at (888) 711-9278. My web address is <http://www.senate.mo.gov/bartle>.

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