



*Nothing is politically right  
that is morally wrong.*

**MISSOURI SENATE**  
JEFFERSON CITY

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is the firmest friend of truth.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Lawmakers Trying to Fix County Trash Collection Plan  
*St. Louis Area Legislators to Hold Public Hearing***

JEFFERSON CITY – Lawmakers have called a public hearing to respond to the St. Louis County Council's plan to replace independent trash haulers with a trash district monopoly system.

Lawmakers are urging St. Louis County residents who are frustrated with losing their ability to hire and negotiate with an independent trash hauler to attend the hearing. It is scheduled for 7 p.m., Thursday, May, 1, 2008, at the St. Louis County Library located on Weber Road in Affton.

Senate Leader Mike Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, is one of the area legislators who have been working to resolve the conflict and said lawmakers are stepping in because a state law says the county must give a two year notice before changing their trash collection policies.

"Residents are upset because their right to independently choose and hire a trash hauler is being stripped and shifted to the county," Gibbons said. "It seems the county's mind is made up, but we hope we can slow this change that has so many residents truly upset."

The county's plan, which is already in motion, divides the unincorporated areas of the county into eight trash collection districts. Each district would then be served by one waste hauler that the county chooses through a bidding process. The county is pushing to implement the plan as early as July 1 and have already bid and awarded trash service for one of the new districts.

Gibbons said state law requires a longer timeframe than the county is working on.

He said a state law passed in 2007, Senate Bill 54, extended the requirements already in law for cities that expand solid waste collection services into areas where the service is currently provided by a private entity to political subdivisions. The requirements include that a political subdivision (the county in this case) has to notify private haulers by certified mail. It also states that the county cannot begin solid waste collection for at least two years from the date of notification.

Gibbons and three other St. Louis County lawmakers have notified the county of the law and also sought an Attorney General's opinion, which they received, that reinforces that the 2007 law applies.

"We informed the county that because of Senate Bill 54 they are required to wait at least two years before implementation," he said. "We also sought the Attorney General's opinion, and his staff confirmed that SB 54 applies to this situation. Unfortunately, the county believes they don't have to follow state law because they are a charter county, but that is not correct."

The St. Louis area representatives and Gibbons said they will continue to work to make the county adhere to state law and urged residents to learn more at the upcoming hearing.

"This bill was passed to protect residents' right to choose their trash hauler and to make sure that small private haulers would not wake up one day without a job, with no notice."

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