



## MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Wes Shoemyer  
18<sup>th</sup> Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 434  
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

A Weekly Column for the  
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Contact: **Kathy Armstrong**  
**(573) 751-7852**

# On Your Mark...Get Ready

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JEFFERSON CITY – As you can imagine, I've been spending a lot of time lately getting ready for the legislative session that starts on Wednesday, January 9. This will be my second year as your state senator, and I'm looking forward to representing you once again in the Missouri Senate. Please keep those comments and suggestions coming.

First off, though, I want to congratulate the Missouri Tiger Football Team for making those Arkansas Razorbacks squeal on New Year's Day. Man, this has been a great year to be a Tiger football fan – maybe the best ever. First, we beat a higher ranked Kansas team, and then we clobbered the Razorbacks in the Cotton Bowl. It just doesn't get any better!

The first week of the Second Regular Session of the 94<sup>th</sup> Missouri General Assembly will be filled with procedural matters, including the introductory remarks of the Senate President Pro Tem, who will outline his goals for the five-month session. The first week also includes the first reading of pre-filed bills. Senators have pre-filed more than 200 bills and resolutions for the session, and I expect a lot more to come as the session gets underway.

As I mentioned in previous columns, I plan to sponsor legislation this year to regulate insurance agents who sell Medicare Advantage plans. Senate Bill 773 would create a two-day waiting period before an insurance agent can complete the sale, it would require a statement that Medicare Advantage plans are not Medigap supplement plans, and it would require a statement advising the applicant to confirm with his or her health care providers whether or not the provider has contracted with the Medicare Advantage plan to provide medical services. It doesn't do any good to have health insurance if you cannot get healthcare services.

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I'm also sponsoring legislation to create a state and local sales and use tax exemption for the purchase of weather radios, to change the membership of the MO HealthNet Oversight Committee by adding a representative from a rural health clinic, and to allow counties to levy a property tax of no more than one fourth of one cent per one hundred dollars assessed valuation on all taxable property in the county to help maintain small cemeteries.

The Missouri Senate will likely address topics including illegal immigration and property taxes during the 2008 session, and we'll spend a lot of time putting together the Fiscal Year 2008 budget. But, since this is an election year, I also expect to see a lot of political posturing from folks seeking higher office and from those seeking re-election, so I'm not sure how much will actually get accomplished this session. Let's just hope politickin' doesn't get in the way of lawmaking.

Missourians will get to weigh in on the presidential selection process next month when the Show Me State holds its presidential primary on February 5. In fact, absentee balloting is underway already. I encourage everyone to participate in the primaries because I think the 2008 presidential contest will be one of the most important elections in recent years, and it represents a real opportunity to put this country back on the right track.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, send me an email at [wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov), or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.