



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
Week of Sept. 01, 2008**

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Interim Committees

JEFFERSON CITY – Although most of the work Missouri lawmakers do on behalf of their constituents occurs while the General Assembly is in session from January through May, the work does not stop once lawmakers return home to their districts. Many of us serve on Interim Committees, which try to get a handle on some of the most pressing issues facing the state while the legislature is not in session. After members of the committee review all of the public testimony from the committee hearings, one or more members will then draft legislation to be considered by lawmakers during the upcoming session. These committees allow lawmakers to get out in front of issues before they become insurmountable problems, and they also give us plenty of time to delve into issues in depth.

This year I am serving on a couple of interim committees. The Senate Select Committee on MoHealth Net Provider Reimbursement Rate Equalization is trying to determine whether or not it is possible to establish an objective standard to apply to all MoHealth Net provider reimbursement rates. It's often difficult to come up with a one-size-fits-all solution, especially when it comes to health care, but I think it's important to ensure our health care providers are reimbursed for their services fairly and reasonably, regardless of whether they practice in our large cities or in our smaller, rural communities. This committee is meeting during the annual Veto Session in Jefferson City and will issue its report to the full Senate no later than January first.

I also serve on the 14-member Joint Committee on Pre-need Funeral Contracts, which has been ordered to make a comprehensive study of the consumer and economic impacts of the pre-need funeral contract industry in Missouri, and then to determine whether or not any changes in

state law are needed. These are important issues that all of us will deal with at some point in our lives, and lawmakers just want to make sure Missouri consumers do not face unnecessary financial difficulties or contract disputes with regard to funerals.

I've had the chance to attend several high school football games this fall, and I'd encourage everyone to go out and support your local team. Friday night football is still a big deal because it gives everyone a good reason to come to town to visit with friends and neighbors while cheering on our student-athletes.

Finally, I want to offer my congratulations to Truman State University in Kirksville for being named the number one public university in the Midwest area by U.S. News & World Report. This is the 12th consecutive year Truman has received this honor – go Bulldogs!

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.