



Delbert Scott
28th Senate District

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 416
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

A Weekly Column for the
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Contact: Debbie Poire
(573) 751-8793

Final Opportunity for Approved Legislation to Become Law

The time between legislative sessions provides lawmakers valuable opportunities to serve in their Senate districts and spend time with their families and friends before returning back to Jefferson City. However, this time — also known as the interim — also contains several key dates that affect citizens throughout our state.

July 14 was the last day the governor could sign legislation into law or veto bills that reached his desk for his signature. The governor has 15 days to act on a bill if it is sent to him during the legislative session, and 45 days if the Legislature has adjourned.

If the governor signs a bill, then it is returned to the chamber it originated with a message of approval, and then is delivered to the Secretary of State. This year, the governor signed 58 Senate bills and 76 House bills.

If the governor vetoes a bill, it is returned to the chamber where it originated with the governor's objections. A two-thirds vote by members of both the House and Senate is required to override the governor's veto. This year, the governor vetoed nine measures, five of which were line item vetoes in budget bills.

On July 9, the governor vetoed Senate Bill 873. The measure provides for a voting student curator on the University of Missouri board of curators if Missouri loses a congressional district based on the 2010 census. In a letter to the Secretary of State, the governor lists several reasons for the veto: the legislation would create "stakeholder" representatives with voting authority on the Board of Curators where currently none of the nine curators represent a specific group of university stakeholders; the bill as written would make it extremely difficult to find a student whose status of enrollment matches the student curator's term on the Board; and student curator representatives are transitional members of the board and experience much

greater turnover than its regular members. The governor also states that the bill has received much opposition from members of the higher education community who agree with the governor's concerns.

House Bill 1689, vetoed by the governor on July 10, would transfer the Governor's Council on Disability from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to the Office of Administration. The bill would also provide legislators with a key to access the Capitol dome. The Capitol Police and the Missouri Department of Public Safety expressed their concern with the disbursal of numerous keys to lawmakers. Increased access to more than 100 additional keys could lead them to be stolen or misplaced and could result in unwanted visitors at the top of the Capitol. The governor says the legislation could also pose potential harm and danger to legislators, their constituents, and the historic capitol building.

Two Senate bills were also vetoed on July 10. Senate Bill 1190 would authorize the division of professional registration to reduce licensure fees by emergency rule under certain circumstances. The measure was vetoed due to a technicality — avoiding unnecessary reprinting of a statute that is identical to a piece of legislation already in place. Senate Bill 1061 would grant to the Missouri Coroners' and Medical Examiners' Association the exclusive right of having coroners, deputy coroners, and assistants to coroners register with their executive director. The bill would also grant to the association the exclusive right to train deputy coroners. The Missouri Constitution prohibits the General Assembly from passing any special law granting any special or exclusive right or privilege to any corporation, association, or individual.

It's unlikely that any successful attempt will be made to override any of the governor's vetoes when lawmakers return to the Capitol in September for the annual Veto Session. If you have questions or comments about the veto process or want to know what bills have been signed into law, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.mo.gov.

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.

