



Senate Gives Nod to Sen. Scott T. Rupp’s Bill to Expand No-Call List, Require ‘Paid for by’ Statement on Political Calls

JEFFERSON CITY — The Missouri Senate today (3/26) gave final approval to a bill sponsored by Sen. Scott T. Rupp, R-Wentzville, that would add cell phone numbers and fax machines to the state’s no-call list and would regulate political “robo-calls.”

[Senate Bill 65](#) — first introduced by Sen. Rupp in 2008 — would add automated calls to home and cell phone numbers to the state’s no-call list and would require anyone making an automated political phone call to a Missouri resident to include a “paid for by” statement and to register with the Missouri Ethics Commission. Phone polls that seek to influence public opinion, known as push polls, would also be added to the no-call list.

“This bill offers solutions for getting rid of these unwanted calls, and I encourage the House to also endorse these measures to answer Missouri citizens’ pleas for help with regulating these calls,” Sen. Rupp said.

Under Sen. Rupp’s proposals, similar solicitations via faxes, graphic imaging or data communication (which includes text messaging) would be banned under the no-call list. Also, businesses and other non-committee organizations making political calls would be required to register with the Secretary of State’s office and the Missouri Ethics Commission and to disclose on whose behalf they are making phone calls. Organizations that give out the phone number of an elected official in a political radio advertisement would also be required to register with the ethics commission and to disclose who is paying for the advertisement. The proposed bill also would require organizations to keep records of payments for political solicitations for up to two years.

In addition, Sen. Rupp’s bill would prevent anyone making solicitation or automated calls from blocking their number from appearing on any caller identification service. Another component of the proposed legislation would allow individuals who receive more than one automated phone call or political solicitation over a 12-month period from the same entity — an entity that is in violation of the no-call list or caller identification — to bring legal action, with a proposed two-year statute of limitations. Any violations of the no-call list would be subject to civil penalties up to \$5,000 per violation.

The bill now moves to the Missouri House for equal consideration.

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