



## 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  
Week of Jan. 12, 2009**

**Capitol Office  
(573) 751-7852**

# Snail's Pace

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JEFFERSON CITY – The first few weeks of the legislative session move at a snail's pace while the House and Senate get organized. Members are being assigned to committees, which has to happen before the bills filed by lawmakers can be considered. Once the committee assignments are made, the President Pro Tem of the Senate will begin assigning Senate bills to the appropriate committees, which will then begin holding public hearings on those bills.

Even though the legislative process takes some time to get into gear, we have been busy talking to various advocates and constituents about what they would like to see happen this year. If you have a concern that might require a legislative solution, I encourage you to contact our office now, when it's easy to make changes to bills. I also encourage you to keep track of the Senate committee hearings (<http://www.senate.mo.gov/09info/hrings.htm>) and to attend those that interest you to make sure your voice is heard. It's best to come prepared since time is usually limited at these hearings. Jot down what you want to say ahead of time and try to keep your comments brief. If you are bringing supporting documentation, make sure to bring copies for each member of the committee. Usually the Senate Hearing schedule will list the bills to be heard by a particular committee, but if you have questions don't hesitate to call our office.

I have filed about a dozen bills and resolutions for the 2009 session and want to briefly mention a few. Senate Bill 168 allows cities, towns, villages and counties to impose a property tax to fund cemetery maintenance; SB 169 regulates insurance agents selling Medicare Advantage plans; SB 190 requires all offices of elected officials in the state capitol building to be accessible to individuals with disabilities by December 31, 2014; SB 194 creates procedures for crop sampling by a patent holder of genetically modified seed; SB 195 requires farmers to register

and pay a fee for retaining seed produced from patented genetically-modified seed; SB 205 prohibits the condemnation of property owned by a gun club or sportsmen's club; and Senate Joint Resolution 8 is a constitutional amendment, to be voted on by the people, allowing the people of Missouri to practice hand-fishing, also known as "noodling," in the waters of the state.

I'd like to thank all of the folks who made the trip from northeast Missouri to Jefferson City to watch the Inauguration of Governor Nixon. We've been reviewing the budget requests from the various state departments and I'm anxious to hear the Governor's budget plan when he delivers his State of the State address January 27th

I want to congratulate the Scotland County Commission for securing a \$28,485 grant from the Department of Natural Resources, Division of State Parks. This Missouri Heritage Property Program grant will be used to restore the clock tower on the Scotland County Courthouse to its original historic condition.

I also want to congratulate the Pike County Commission for winning a \$58,179 grant from the Missouri Heritage Properties Program to perform masonry repairs on the Pike County Courthouse. This program helps local governments renovate and preserve historic public properties when other tools like state and federal tax credits are unavailable.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the efforts of Adair County officials who won a DNR Energy Center grant of \$8,500 to upgrade the lighting in the public library. These energy conservation efforts will save an estimated \$775 a year in utility costs.

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.