



MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

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**A Weekly Column for the
Week of Jan. 5, 2009**

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2009 Legislative Session Begins

The first full week of January marked the beginning of another legislative session as lawmakers returned to the State Capitol to begin the First Regular Session of the 95th General Assembly on Wednesday, January 7. Many lawmakers, including myself, have already filed bills for the 2009 session — with more than 140 measures filed with the Secretary of the Senate.

Missouri Senate President Pro Tem Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, listed several priorities for lawmakers in his introductory remarks to the upper chamber during his speech on opening day. Priorities for the Senate this year include addressing the rising cost of property taxes, examining problems created by illegal immigration, and making health care more accessible and affordable to more people across our state. The budget will also play a large role in how the Legislature tackles important issues this session.

In addition to the more than 140 Senate bills that were pre-filed before session began on Jan. 7, several measures were introduced on the floor the first week of session. Before work can begin on specific legislation, bills must first be referred to committees. Committees will then meet, discuss legislation, and hear public testimony before deciding whether to return the legislation to the full Senate.

The first week of session also included important committee work. The Joint Interim Committee on Voice Communications Regulations, made up of five members of the Senate and five members of the House of Representatives, met to discuss industry proposals and hear public testimony. The committee will soon submit its final report to the General Assembly, along with any recommendations for legislative action.

Opening day of the 2009 legislative session also provided my Senate colleagues and me with the opportunity to welcome six new senators to the upper chamber: Sen. Jane Cunningham, R-Chesterfield; Sen. Jim Lembke, R-St. Louis; Sen. David Pearce, R-Warrensburg; Sen. Kurt Schaefer, R-Columbia; Sen. Eric Schmitt, R-Glendale; and Sen. Robin Wright-Jones, D-St. Louis.

Throughout the year, this weekly column will inform you about legislation I have filed in the Senate, the latest Senate action on particular pieces of legislation, and issues important to the constituents of the 28th Senate District.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, 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.

