



MISSOURI SENATE
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Deepening the State's Law Enforcement Recruiting Pool

A measure I filed in the Senate is now being considered by lawmakers in the House of Representatives — one of the handfuls of Senate bills that have moved on to the House for consideration.

[Senate Bill 47](#) would change the educational requirements for Missouri Water Patrol members, Highway Patrol members, and radio personnel. Instead of limiting the job pool to only those who graduate from an accredited four-year high school, the new provision would include completion of a public or private high school program of education, or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.

As is the case under current law, patrol member and radio personnel candidates must also:

- Be 21 years of age or older.
- Not have been convicted of a felony or any crime involving conduct considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty, or good morals.
- Be a citizen of the United States and, at the time of appointment, a citizen of the state of Missouri.
- Pass specific coursework and testing administered by the various departments (Highway Patrol or Water Patrol).

Our state should not limit who can protect our waters, highways, and operate our

emergency communications systems based on a technicality regarding education. Those who graduate from public and private schools leave with the same skills and knowledge needed for “the real world.” The same can be said of those who’ve earned their GED certification.

More than 17 million people have earned their education credentials through the GED program, which was created in 1942 by the [American Council on Education](#) (ACE) to develop a line of tests that measure high school-level skills and knowledge. The [GED](#) credential offers Missourians a second chance at attending a college or pursuing a career. Those taking the test are assessed on reading and writing, social studies, science, and mathematics — all of which are typically developed in a four-year program of high school education. One in every seven Americans with high school credentials received a GED, and one in 20 college students have received this type of certificate.

Passage of this legislation would ensure that Missouri is keeping up-to-date with how our students are obtaining their education and moving into our state’s workforce. Senate Bill 47 would open the doors for many Missourians, allowing them to help serve our state in the important role of protecting our citizens.

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.

