



Senator Norma Champion
30th Senate District

MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

Capitol Building, Room 320
Jefferson City, MO 65101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Senate Passes Sen. Champion's Bill to Benefit Seniors in Long-term Care

JEFFERSON CITY – By a vote of 34-0, the Missouri Senate today gave final approval to a measure sponsored by Senator Norma Champion (R-Springfield) that provides residents in long-term care facilities with an increased personal needs allowance. [Senate Bill 538](#) now moves to the House for approval.

A personal needs allowance is a small portion of an individual's monthly Social Security check that is given to the individual for personal needs not provided by the long-term care facility. Sen. Champion's measure creates a means for the allowance to increase incrementally over time, beginning in 2010, from its current \$30 per month to a maximum of \$50 per month. The allowance would increase by no more than \$5 annually and would come from the recipients' annual Social Security cost of living allowance increase. Any additional amount beyond \$50 would require annual appropriation from the General Assembly.

"Missouri currently has the lowest personal needs allowance for residents of long-term care facilities," Sen. Champion said. "My bill provides a much-needed allowance increase for people who have worked hard all of their lives and now, because of their current health situation, are unable to care for themselves."

Many residents use the personal needs allowance for expenses such as a telephone, hair services, clothing, snacks, stationery and postage, small gifts for their friends and family, and outings coordinated by the facility.

"The personal needs allowance gives these individuals a greater sense of independence," Sen. Champion said. "It is unacceptable that they must be forced to choose between buying their grandchild a birthday gift and paying a phone bill because they cannot afford both. This money is theirs to begin with, and it is time we return it back to them."

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