

*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*



*Free and fair discussion
is the firmest friend of truth.*

MISSOURI SENATE JEFFERSON CITY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senate to Begin Session with Topical Seminars ***New Tradition Begins Legislative Session with Discussions on Seven Topics***

JEFFERSON CITY –Missouri senators will again take part in a series of Senate Seminars in the first weeks of the 2010 legislative session in order to generate open dialogue on an array of issues that affect Missourians' everyday lives.

In one of his first acts as Senate Leader last session, Sen. Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, invited experts, leaders and citizens from across the state to speak at meetings in order for all senators to gain a foundation of knowledge on an array of issues and to stimulate discussions on the future of those topics. Senator Shields today announced a series of six Senate Seminars for the 2010 legislative session to build on the tradition that began last January.

"Last year's seminars were a successful catalyst for open dialogue on issues ranging from education to agriculture to energy," said Sen. Shields. "We want to build upon that success by continuing the tradition of holding seminars in the first weeks of session, before committees are at full steam, so senators can learn about emerging issues and be in an environment where we can discuss many solutions rather than being tied to those laid out in a specific bill."

The six seminars will take place over one week and will include the following topics: Ethics, Federal Health Care Legislation, Health Information Technology, Higher Education P-20 Council, Senate "2020" Committees, Tax Policy, and the 2010 U.S. Census. A dozen people are expected to give presentations at the seminars, including Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Robert Stein and Peggy Kerns, Director of the Center for Ethics in Government of the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Senator Shields said last year's seminars were heavily participated by Republican and Democratic senators, the press and public.

"The seminars bring us together to work on emerging issues from day one of session," said Sen. Shields. "By working together across party lines we gain a strong bipartisan foundation that will help us continue to work together on more contentious issues as the session moves forward."

The seminars are open to the public. To find a full listing of presenters or to receive materials provided by the presenters, please contact Sen. Shields' office at (573) 751-7266.

The 2010 legislative session begins Wednesday, January 6. The seminars run for one week beginning Thursday, January 7. For a full listing of 2010 Senate Seminars, visit www.senate.mo.gov and click on Senate hearings.

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