

*Nothing is politically right
that is morally wrong.*



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

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Senate Focuses on Long-term Solutions

Senate Leader Says Putting People Back to Work is Answer to Budget

JEFFERSON CITY – Describing the challenge of planning for the future in a term-limited environment, Senate Leader Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, today detailed the importance of instituting long-term planning in state government to improve the futures of all Missourians.

As Senate Leader, Shields addressed the Senate at the start of the Second Regular Session of the 95th General Assembly. Shields said Missouri is confronted with serious challenges in 2010.

“We are facing the second budget year in a row where we are working with less revenue than the year before, we need to get Missourians back to work in lasting and growing industries that pay well and offer benefits, and we must restore confidence in our elected officials with ethics reforms,” said Shields. “We need all 34 Missouri Senators working together to meet these challenges.”

Senate Majority Floor Leader Kevin Engler, R-Farmington, outlined other issues that the Senate would get to work on quickly.

“Even though the budget is our greatest challenge this year, there are still many things we can do now to help improve the lives of Missourians,” Engler said. “Those include examining ways to restructure our tax code to better protect taxpayers, extending insurance coverage to kids with autism, and saving costs by doing simple things like freezing our per diem rate.”

Shields also noted ten senators were term-limited this year, with ten more in two years.

“The revolving door of term limits will continue to spin,” Shields said. “But I propose that although our terms may be limited to 8 years, the way we think about our vision for Missouri’s future should never be limited.”

Shields described Missouri state government as a \$23 billion organization operating without a long-term strategic plan. He congratulated members on having taken the first step in changing that course by having created three committees last year that were designed to craft a vision of the kind of state Missouri can be in the year 2020 and the plan to get there.

“This legislative session, I will propose legislation to make long-term planning a permanent part of the legislative process,” he said. “We need a three-year plan, a five-year plan and, more importantly, a ten-year plan that will transcend our term limits. We must always be thinking about long-term solutions for the future of a better Missouri and have a plan on how we get there.”

The Senate also welcomed its newest member, Sen. Joe Keaveny, D-St. Louis City. He won a special election last fall to replace his predecessor who resigned. The 2010 regular session will run through May 14. To track legislation or learn more about the Missouri Senate, visit www.senate.mo.gov.

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