

*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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**Bill Unifying Water and Highway Patrol
Departments Signed Into Law**
Measure Part of Senate's Rebooting Government Initiative

JEFFERSON CITY — An all-day work session held in the Senate during the regular session resulted in many “rebooting government” suggestions leading to several pieces of legislation, one of which was signed into law by the governor today. [House Bill 1868](#), handled in the Senate by Senate Leader Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, consolidates two state agencies and reduces the size and scope of state government.

House Bill 1868 most notably merges the State Water Patrol and the Missouri State Highway Patrol for a cost savings up to \$1 million. Shields said the measure is one effort to bring greater efficiency to government entities during an on-going budget crisis that is expected to last through 2013-2014.

“The state’s budget deficit is expected to reach \$1 billion for the 2011 fiscal year, and taxpayers can no longer sustain the size and scope of state government as we know it,” said Shields. “This legislation is not the entire answer to our budget problems but it takes the right step towards streamlining state government in order to put Missouri in a budget situation it can maintain without a tax increase.”

The merger ends the need for two separate headquarters and administrative oversight. Other benefits include the cross-training of water patrol officers so they may assist the highway patrol in winter months on Missouri’s highways.

In addition, House Bill 1868 establishes the Joint Committee on the Reduction and Reorganization of Programs within State Government. This 13-member panel is required to submit a report to the General Assembly by Dec. 31, 2010, including recommendations for reducing, eliminating, or combining state programs with other programs in the same or a different department.

“We must think outside the box and consider every possible way to make government smaller and more efficient,” Shields said. “The Senate’s Rebooting Government initiative continues its efforts — whether through more control, alterations, or deletions. I urge Missourians to visit the Rebooting Government website and share their ideas on how to make government work best for the people of this state, while holding taxpayer dollars accountable for the services we provide.”

Missourians can submit their suggestions by visiting the Missouri Senate website (www.senate.mo.gov) and clicking on the [Rebooting Government logo](#). Submissions may be anonymous and every idea will be considered.

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