**This Week in the Missouri Senate:
Digital Audio File Script on Committee Hearings**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review some of the priority legislation heard in the first committee hearings of the year…

**Nat Snd 1 / Runs :05 / OC: aimed at improving.**

*“Thank you for the opportunity to present Senate Bill 643, a bill aimed at improving….”*

Perhaps the biggest issue this year is ethics reform.

Tuesday morning, the Missouri Senate [Rules, Joint Rules, Resolutions and Ethics Committee](http://www.senate.mo.gov/rjrr/) heard [Senate Bill 643](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=22246553), a measure that would modify provisions of law relating to ethics.

Sponsor, Sen. Bob Onder of Lake St. Louis, told the panel concerns over ethics are at an all-time high…

**Onder 1 / Runs :11 / OC: and other gifts.**

*“In Missouri every year, legislators accept over $900,000 worth of food, drink, sporting tickets, travel and other gifts.”*

Senator Jason Holsman of Kansas City asked the sponsor about his bill, citing how the courts struck down a recent attempt at ethics reform…

**Holsman 2 / Runs :12 / OC: compensation for that.**

*“If I resign my seat, and I have been appointed lawfully — and dutifully appointed — to a position, and you’re statutorily denying me compensation for that.”*

Senate Bill 643 awaits final committee action…

**Nat Snd 2 / Runs :05 / OC: this is relevant.**

*“Heard a lot of, ‘Hey, why does the Legislature care about this?’ And, I think the history of this is relevant.”*

Thursday morning, the Missouri Senate [Ways and Means Committee](http://www.senate.mo.gov/wame/) heard [Senate Bill 575](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=22246556), which seeks to repeal the earnings tax in the cities of Kansas City and St. Louis on Dec. 31, 2017.

Senator Kurt Schaefer of Columbia sponsors the measure…

**Schaefer 3 / Runs :07 / OC: in those cities.**

*“Which essentially is an additional layer of a 1 percent income tax on anyone who lives or works in those cities.”*

Senator Scott Sifton of Affton believes the tax to be both legal and necessary…

**Sifton 4 / Runs :09 / OC: the city ordinance.**

*“Theoretically, you could amend an ordinance to address that, while still allowing for — for instance — county residents who work in the city to be taxed under the city ordinance.”*

Senate Bill 575 awaits final committee action…

**Nat Snd 3 / Runs :04 / OC: Seniors, Families and.**

*“(SFX in) We’ll call this committee meeting of Seniors, Famiies and….”*

Another priority measure this year is [Senate Bill 644](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=22246554), which would modify provisions relating to abortion, including donation of fetal tissue, tissue reports, physician privileges and ambulatory surgical center licensing and inspections.

Senator Onder sponsors the measure, which he presented to the Missouri Senate [Seniors, Families and Children Committee](http://www.senate.mo.gov/sfpn/) on Tuesday morning…

**Onder 5 / Runs :11 / OC: and federal laws.**

*“It improves accountability in the disposition of fetal remains, and it ensures that clinic inspections are performed regularly to ensure compliance with state and federal laws.”*

During discussion, Sen. Maria Chappelle-Nadal of University City talked about something in her district that relates to the proposal…

**Chappelle-Nadal 6 / Runs :06 / OC: life as well.**

*“I think I now can define myself as someone who cares about life as well.”*

Senate Bill 644 awaits final committee action.

In honor of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday, Missouri senators will not return to work until Tuesday of next week.

And, remember, you can follow these and other issues facing the Missouri Senate by visiting our website: [senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

Reporting for the Missouri Senate, I’m Dean Morgan.