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

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review work of the [Senate Interim Committee on Utility Regulation and Infrastructure Investment](http://www.senate.mo.gov/SIRI/)…

**Nat Snd / Runs :06 / OC: Public Service Commission?**

*“…Arena is, ‘Okay, so how much of those objective decisions should be turned over to the [Missouri] Public Service Commission?’”*

Formation of this panel comes after several utilities-related measures were discussed, at length, in committee hearings earlier in the year. Not much time was spent on them on the Missouri Senate floor, though.

During its final hearing on Oct. 25, committee member — Sen. Gary Romine of Farmington — told the panel he believes regulatory lag increases add to costs. He also says the [Missouri Public Service Commission](https://psc.mo.gov/) needs to stay in place…

**Romine 1 / Runs :18 / OC: an operation here.**

*“If we do modify some of these tools, or add these tools, it still needs to be a decision to be made — whether or not it is the proper usage of that tool — because, if we’re going to have economic development in Missouri, we’ve got to make sure we have an attractive utility rate. It is one of the top three that any company looks at when they want to establish an operation here.”*

Senator Scott Sifton of Affton adds lawmakers see these types of bills practically every year…

**Sifton 2 / Runs :18 / OC: it’s already over.**

*“I can’t look back on what’s happened in my term in the [Missouri] Senate, my term in the [Missouri] House and say that we’ve been terribly productive, legislatively. So, from the process standpoint, I would probably rather see us work more on the floor on this and less in committee. I only say that because it seems like, by the time we get to the strike zone on this in the Senate, it’s already over.”*

Incoming Senate Minority Floor Leader Gina Walsh of Bellefontaine Neighbors also says infrastructure improvements have been getting better over the years…

**Walsh 3 / Runs :15 / OC: the Commerce Committee.**

*“But, when I look at this committee and I look at this issue and I don’t think that we’re much further ahead now then we were then. But, I think we need to move forward and we need to move forward early in the session and to make it a priority for the* [*[Missouri Senate] Commerce [Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment] Committee*](http://www.senate.mo.gov/commerce/)*.”*

Committee Chair — Sen. Ed Emery of Lamar — says much of the panel’s time was dedicated to performance-based ratemaking, shortening delays and other regulatory reforms…

**Emery 4 / Runs :18 / OC: in opposition to.**

*“Reducing regulatory lag by reducing the time lapse during a rate case. I’m wondering whether there are particular approaches to regulation on any level — water, gas or electricity — that caught your attention, that you think you would like to speak in support of, or were there those that you are absolutely in opposition to.”*

The Senate Interim Committee on Utility Regulation and Infrastructure Investment is one of several groups that met during the interim. All of these committees could turn their recommendations into potential legislation that could be debated during the next legislative session. The First Regular Session of the 99th General Assembly will officially begin at noon on Wednesday, Jan. 4.

In the meantime, prefiled legislation received bill numbers on Dec. 1.

And, remember, you can follow these and other issues facing the Missouri Senate — plus see a [complete list of pre-filed legislation](http://www.senate.mo.gov/legislation/) — by visiting our website: [senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

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