

# 2016 Legislative Review



## Senator Scott Sifton Serving Missouri's 1st Senatorial District

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### Representing Missouri's 1st Senatorial District

Dear friends:

Thank you for taking the time to read this 2016 End of Session Legislative Report. This report marks my fourth year representing you — my constituents and neighbors of the 1st District.

This past session has been an important one for our state, as the General Assembly tackled high-priority issues such as legislative ethics reform, elementary, secondary and higher education improvements and setting the \$27.2 billion state budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

While the body failed to agree on certain issues, we were able to come together to pass some meaningful legislation that will improve the lives of Missourians across the state.

I continued my work during the Second Regular Session of the 98th General Assembly advancing legislation to better our elementary and secondary students' futures, ensuring the preservation of funding for child support, banning lobbyist gifts to lawmakers and protecting senior citizens from property tax increases due to reassessment.

One of my most impactful legislative achievements this session was adding

language to Senate Bill 638 relating to dyslexia prevention and support in the Missouri school system. As many as 15 percent of U.S. school children, and 75 to 85 percent of students with learning disabilities suffer from dyslexia. It is high time the state addressed this issue, and Senate Bill 638 is going to be a great step forward.

I want to thank each and every one of my fellow 1st District residents who have contacted our office over the last four years, attended hearings at the Capitol and helped bring important issues facing the state to the General Assembly's attention. I also want to extend a very heartfelt thank you for allowing me to represent you as your state senator here in Jefferson City. I promise to continue fighting for a better and brighter future for us all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Sifton', written over a light blue background.

State Senator Scott Sifton, District 1

Missouri's  
1st Senatorial  
District



## Duties of Sen. Sifton's Committees

### *Commerce, Consumer Protection, Energy and the Environment*

Reports on bills relating to the development of state commerce, protecting Missouri consumers, the development and conservation of energy resources and other matters relating to environmental preservation.

### *Financial & Governmental Organizations and Elections*

Lawmakers on this panel take up legislation relating to financial institutions in the Show-Me State; certain conditions of departments, boards, bureaus and commissions within state government; and matters regarding election law, among other pertinent issues.

### *Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence*

Examines bills relating to the judicial department of the state, including the practice of Missouri courts, civil procedure and criminal laws, criminal costs, probation or parole of individuals sentenced under the criminal laws of the state and other related matters.

## Committees and Priority Legislation

### *Veterans' Affairs and Health*

Work on this committee includes considering measures pertaining to our state's veterans. The panel also considers the state's MO HealthNet medical services plan for certain eligible citizens, as well as other health-related issues.

### *Ways and Means*

Committee members review bills concerning the revenue and public debt of Missouri, the assessment property and the classification of property for taxation purposes.



## Highlights of the 2016 Session

### *Ethics Reform*

The General Assembly passed several pieces of legislation this year reforming lawmakers' ethical standards.

House Bill 1983 prohibits lawmakers from serving as paid political consultants. House Bill 1979 imposes a six-month ban on lobbying for former legislators. House Bill 2203 changes the laws regarding use of campaign funds. Bills banning lobbyist gifts to lawmakers, including my Senate Bill 955, advanced farther than in past years but did not achieve final passage.

### *Municipal Court Reform*

You may remember the Legislature made huge strides in curbing outrageous fines with the passage of Senate Bill 5 in 2015. Unfortunately, after that measure became law it was struck down in a court. We were able to come back with a new proposal that the governor saw fit to sign into law this year. Senate Bill 572 takes up where Senate Bill 5 left off and helps ensure municipalities cannot create new infractions simply to bring in revenue once covered by traffic tickets. These so-called "revenue enhancements" hurt the most vulnerable in our communities.

### *Marriage Discrimination*

A Senate joint resolution proposed earlier this session would have allowed religious organizations and private businesses to discriminate against people based on their beliefs regarding same-sex marriage.

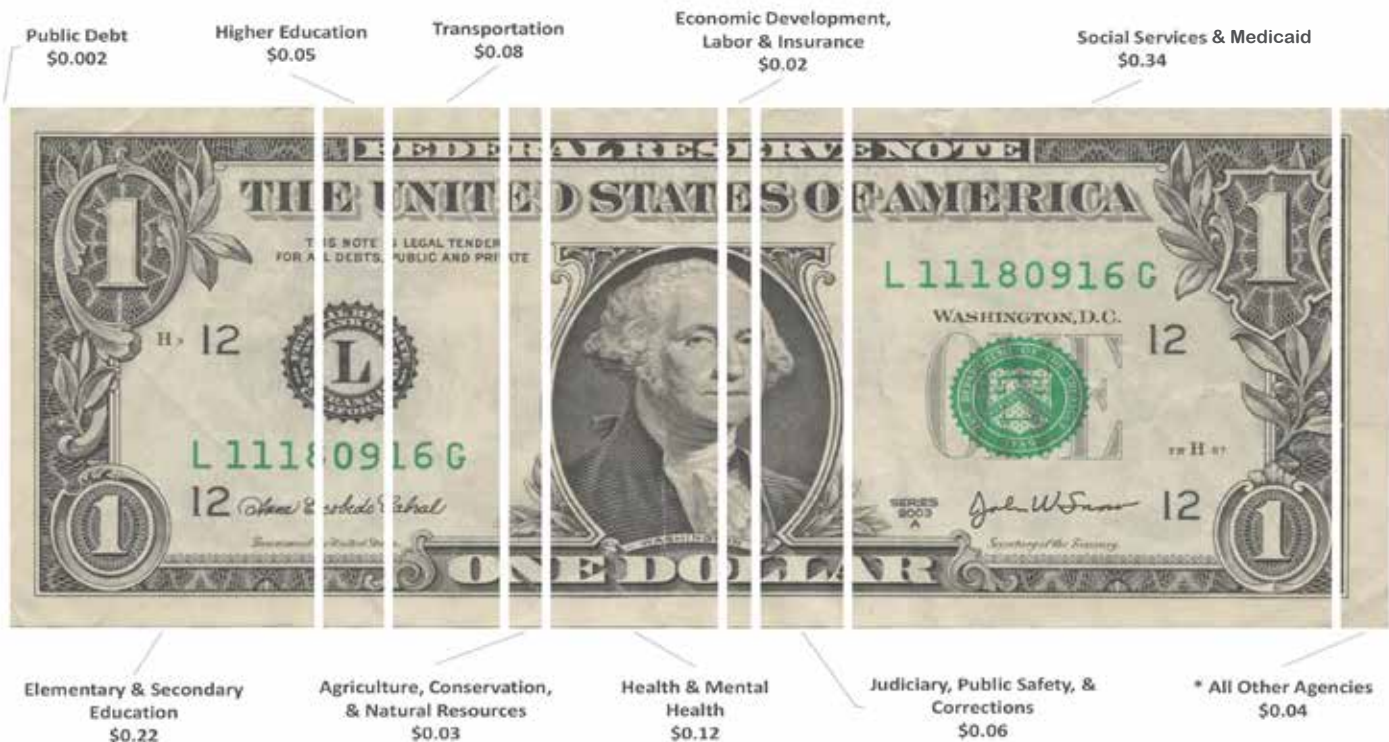
After orchestrating a 39-hour filibuster with my fellow Minority Caucus senators, the legislation was killed in the House. The demise of this legislation was a big win for the business community and all Missourians.

## Uniform Interstate Family Support Act

My Senate Bill 905 relating to the "Uniform Interstate Family Support Act" (UIFSA) was signed into law by the governor on June 15. The Act addresses the enforcement of child support obligations and allows states to work together to standardize their child support collection systems. My bill will ensure Missouri does not lose any federal funding by enacting the UIFSA as quickly as possible. This immediacy is necessary for our state's child support enforcement program, so Missouri's support system can work as efficiently and effectively as possible.

# Missouri's Fiscal Year 2017 Budget

## DISTRIBUTION OF EACH TAX DOLLAR FISCAL YEAR 2017 AFTER VETO OPERATING BUDGET All Funds: \$27.258 Billion



\* Revenue, Office of Administration, Elected Officials, General Assembly and Real Estate

## Addressing Dyslexia in Our School System

The Senate was able to pass meaningful legislation this Session that will help our state government and education institutions better identify and address dyslexia in Missouri students.

I was able to attach language addressing the issue of dyslexia in Missouri schools to Senate Bill 638, which was successfully passed through the Senate and signed by the governor on June 22. The act requires the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop guidelines for the appropriate screening of students for dyslexia and related disorders so schools

can develop the necessary classroom support and guidance needed for the affected students.

Dyslexia is a serious disorder that can hinder a person's abilities to read, write, spell and even speak properly. Complications with reading and comprehension are especially difficult for individuals with dyslexia, and the sad truth is that many of these students can go undiagnosed. Students with dyslexia can thrive under the appropriate learning conditions and with the proper support. Senate Bill 638 will also establish a Legislative Task

Force on Dyslexia, to advise the governor, education committees and relevant state agencies on ways to improve the handling and treatment of dyslexia in our state school system.

The Task Force will be made up of 20 members, including four legislators, the commissioner of education and 15 members appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate and the speaker of the House. Also outlined within the bill is the requirement that practicing teacher assistance programs must include two hours of in-service training regarding the disorder to be

provided by each individual school district for all its teachers.

Our state's education system needs to be doing more to help identify and support the thousands of students affected with dyslexia, struggling against the obstacles this serious disorder presents them. This bill is a great step toward helping these children reach their full creative and educational potentials. Through stronger support, we give dyslexic students a better outlook for their educational futures.

# Senator Scott Sifton

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### Senator Sifton's Legislation for the 2016 Session:

- SB 632** — Imposes a gift ban for the members of the General Assembly and their candidate committees
- SB 633** — Modifies provisions relating to school transfers
- SB 634** — Reauthorizes the Missouri Homestead Preservation tax credit program
- SB 695** — Provides a cause of action against pay disparity based on gender
- SB 696** — Removes the statute of limitations on civil actions and prosecutions involving offenses against children
- SB 697** — Creates the Missouri Parent/Teacher Involvement Program to provide grant awards to schools to develop and build trusting relationships between families and school staff
- SB 727** — Restricts the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education from including certain data from facilities for neglected or delinquent children in school district aggregate data
- SB 728** — Modifies the requirements for school anti-bullying policies
- SB 729** — Requires every felony arrestee 17 years or older to provide a DNA sample for matching with unsolved crimes
- SB 749** — Allows emergency workers to request, receive and submit absentee ballots
- SB 750** — Modifies class-one election offenses
- SB 751** — Modifies provisions relating to event tickets
- SB 803** — Creates new sections of law relating to bereavement leave from employment
- SB 809** — Requires public schools to screen students for dyslexia and related disorders
- SB 827** — Creates a legislative task force for dyslexia
- SB 828** — Provides that attorneys and title insurance companies are not precluded by land surveyor statutes from preparing property descriptions
- SB 834** — Authorizes a sales tax in St. Louis County to fund law enforcement if approved by voters
- SB 905** — Changes the effective date of the repeal and enactment of certain provisions of the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act
- SB 925** — Creates the MO HealthNet Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities program
- SB 955** — Institutes a gift ban for the members of the General Assembly
- SB 1020** — Authorizes deductions for small business employing certain employees
- SB 1131** — Provides licensing and taxation for online daily fantasy sports games
- SB 1132** — Modifies appeal procedures for cases originating with the Public Service Commission
- SB 1133** — Prohibits discrimination between certain types of mental health professionals