**This Week in the Missouri Senate:  
Digital Audio File Script on Mid-Session**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review the first half of the 2016 legislative session and look ahead at what could come in the remaining weeks of session…

**Nat Snd 1 / Runs :04 / OC: until 3 p.m. Wednesday.**

*“Mister President, no further business coming before the body, I move the Senate stand adjourned until 3 p.m. Wednesday….”*

The traditional mid-session recess started for Missouri senators on March 17. The previous day, time had been spent on a public pension and retirement measure. Senator David Pearce of Warrensburg says he wants to add teachers to [Senate Bill 980](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=25587117).

All in all, Senate Minority Floor Leader Joseph Keaveny of St. Louis says it’s been a difficult first half.

Senate Majority Floor Leader Mike Kehoe of Jefferson City says the Legislature has been unable to tackle transportation funding for a number of years…

**Kehoe 3 / Runs: 06 / OC: we fix that.**

*“Most Missourians, overwhelmingly, agree we have a shortfall in construction funding. This disagreement has been how we fix that.”*

But, Sen. Keaveny says, the state may have a major infrastructure project very soon.

He says we will find out next week if efforts to keep the [National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency](https://www.nga.mil/Pages/Default.aspx) will have paid off…

**Keaveny 4 / Runs :08 / OC: my hat on.**

*“We did get the resolution done for the relocation of the NGA, so we did come out in a bipartisan support for the National Geospatial [-Intelligence Agency] staying in St. Louis; so, that’s something I can hang my hat on.”*

In the first 11 weeks of session, 583 Missouri Senate and 1,457 Missouri House bills have been introduced. Of these, 50 Missouri Senate and 134 Missouri House measures have been passed by their respective chamber.

Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard of Joplin says there’s still plenty to do in the second half of session…

**Richard 5 / Runs :09 / OC: some of that.**

*“I still want to finish talking to the speaker about finishing the tort reform and we still have some issues on some of his priorities that he sent early on, on campaign finance. We’d like to finish some of that.”*

Senator Keaveny’s focus is beginning to turn to the Fiscal Year 2017 budget…

**Keaveny 6 / Runs :11 / OC: for mental health.**

*“Increase the funding for the mental health advocates and the counselors. I think we could solve a lot of our problems, both as a society, and help some individuals if we just increase the funding for mental health.”*

Missouri Senate [Appropriations Committee](http://www.senate.mo.gov/aprp/) chair, Sen. Kurt Schaefer of Columbia, says [Medicaid](https://www.medicaid.gov/) alone will cost the state close to $400 million next year…

**Schaefer 7 / Runs :11 / OC: but Medicaid growth.**

*“So, what that means is, we would have to take every single dime of GR growth for the entire year — plus cut 25 million [dollars] from somewhere else, presumably public education — and put it toward nothing but Medicaid growth.”*

Senator Keaveny says, even with the budget, there is still time for more priorities in the remaining seven weeks of session…

**Keaveny 8 / Runs :09 / OC: Supreme Court rulings.**

*“I would love to see — at least some talk on — the Medicaid expansion, some talk on deadly force statute, which everybody admits is not in compliance with [U.S.] Supreme Court rulings.”*

Lawmakers will return to the Capitol on March 29.

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.