***This Week in the Missouri Senate* Script: FY 2018 Begins**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review Missouri’s Fiscal Year 2018 operating budget…

**Nat Snd 1 / Runs :08 / OC: as a Legislature.**

Senator Cunningham: *“Seems like every year there’s tough ones, but this year’s an extremely tough one.”*

Senator Schupp: *“The budget reflects our priorities and our priorities as a Legislature.”*

The new budget totals $27.6 billion.

[Missouri Senate Appropriations Committee](http://www.senate.mo.gov/aprp/) member, Sen. Mike Cunningham of Rogersville, says the state still faces a leftover shortfall…

**Cunningham 1 / Runs :12 / OC: way in the hole.**

*“We’ve gone through tough times before. I — oh, my goodness — I’ve been up here 13 years in office, I think it is, and 15 years — besides two years spent up here as chief of staff. And pretty tough times, but this is one of the tougher budgets and-and we were just way in the hole.”*

He adds the budgeting process started later than usual, because of the executive branch…

**Cunningham 2 / Runs :28 / OC: we look for.**

*“There’s no fiddlin’ around. It’s time to move it and do it, puts pressure on negotiators to move it, and that is a secret. A lot of the stuff up here is negotiations. You never compromise your principals, but you need to learn to negotiate. You’re not going to get your way all the time up here, but — to get something done — you negotiate. If it doesn’t work out, then add to it or subtract to it the next year, but that’s just a lot of it is learn to negotiate. Like I say, never on your principals. You stand on your principals. You don’t budge on that, but there’s usually room to negotiate on bills and on the budget. So, that’s what we look for.”*

Senator Cunningham also says, unfortunately, school transportation tends to be cut…

**Cunningham 3 / Runs :10 / OC: a governor goes.**

*“So much of this depends on the economy of the state of Missouri and how it keeps rolling. Of course, that depends a lot on the national economy. But, we get into a budget shortfalls, that’s the first place that normally a governor goes.”*

Senator Jill Schupp of Creve Coeur considers the budget a snapshot of the state…

**Schupp 4 / Runs :09 / OC: the most part.**

*“Our priorities as a Legislature are the priorities of those people who are in charge; so, my colleagues across the aisle, for the most part.”*

She adds lawmakers have been building toward the afore-mentioned shortfall for some time…

**Schupp 5 / Runs :30 / OC: people with disabilities.**

*“And, it’s a false choice that was created out of the short-sightedness of previous Legislatures in the recent past, who decided to continue to give additional tax breaks to corporations. So, when we do this — and, when legislators want to go home and cheer on themselves for the fact that they cut taxes for one group, what ends up happening is, we increase taxes for another group — and, in this case, this hole in the budget is going to be filled on the backs of our low-income seniors and people with disabilities.”*

Senator Schupp also says balancing the budget was dependent upon passing [House Committee Bill 3](http://house.mo.gov/Bill.aspx?bill=HCB3&year=2017&code=R)…

**Schupp 6 / Runs :12 / OC: pay property taxes.**

*“What is being proposed through this ‘circuit-breaker bill’ is taking away those credits from people who rent, under the guise — I will say — of saying, ‘Well, they don’t pay property taxes.’”*

Fiscal Year 2018 runs July 1 through June 30 of next year.

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 from the State Capitol, I’m Dean Morgan.