

SENATE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
SENATE BILL NO. 546

AN ACT

To repeal sections 507.040, 507.050, 508.010, 508.012, and 537.762, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof five new sections relating to civil procedure.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI,
AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section A. Sections 507.040, 507.050, 508.010, 508.012, and
2 537.762, RSMo, are repealed and five new sections enacted in lieu
3 thereof, to be known as sections 507.040, 507.050, 508.010,
4 508.012, and 537.762, to read as follows:

5 507.040. 1. All persons may join in one action as
6 plaintiffs if they assert any right to relief jointly, severally,
7 or in the alternative in respect of or arising out of the same
8 transaction, occurrence, or series of transactions or occurrences
9 and if any question of law or fact common to all of them will
10 arise in the action. All persons may be joined in one action as
11 defendants if there is asserted against them jointly, severally,
12 or in the alternative, any right to relief in respect of or
13 arising out of the same transaction, occurrence, or series of
14 transactions or occurrences and if any question of law or fact
15 common to all of them will arise in the action. Notwithstanding
16 any other provision of law to the contrary, for any action in
17 which a plaintiff was injured outside the state of Missouri,
18 claims arising out of separate purchases of the same product or

1 service or separate incidents involving the same product or
2 services shall not solely be sufficient grounds to join with
3 other plaintiffs' claims in a single action. A plaintiff or
4 defendant need not be interested in obtaining or defending
5 against all the relief demanded. Judgment may be given for one
6 or more of the plaintiffs according to their respective rights to
7 relief, and against one or more defendants according to their
8 respective liabilities.

9 2. In addition to the requirements of subsection 1 of this
10 section, in any civil action in which there is a count alleging a
11 tort, two or more plaintiffs may be joined in a single action
12 only if each plaintiff could have separately filed an action in
13 that venue, independently of the claims of any other plaintiff.
14 Two or more defendants may be joined in a single action only if:

15 (1) Personal jurisdiction is proper for each defendant,
16 independently of the claims against any other defendant; and

17 (2) Each plaintiff can establish proper venue against each
18 defendant, independently of the claims against any other
19 defendant. Except that, if the court finds that one or more
20 defendants are indispensable and if there is no venue in which
21 the plaintiff can establish proper venue against each defendant
22 independently of the claims against the other defendants, then
23 venue shall lie in the county where the plaintiff was first
24 injured.

25 3. All parties for which proper personal jurisdiction or
26 venue cannot be independently established shall be deemed
27 misjoined. Misjoined parties may be joined only where all
28 parties to the action, including parties later added to the

1 action, waive objection to the misjoinder. Proceedings against
2 any misjoined parties shall otherwise be governed by the
3 provisions of section 507.050. The requirements under this
4 section are procedural.

5 4. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the
6 contrary, if two or more plaintiffs were first injured in a state
7 of the United States, other than the state of Missouri, as a
8 result of a single occurrence in which injuries occurred
9 simultaneously, the plaintiffs may be joined in one action in
10 Cole County, in addition to any other proper venue as established
11 by this section.

12 5. The court may make such orders as will prevent a party
13 from being embarrassed, delayed, or put to expense by the
14 inclusion of a party against whom he asserts no claim and who
15 asserts no claim against him, and may order separate trials or
16 make other orders to prevent delay or prejudice.

17 507.050. 1. Misjoinder of parties is not ground for
18 dismissal of an action. Parties may be dropped [or], added, or
19 severed by order of the court on motion of any party or of its
20 own initiative at any stage of the action and on such terms as
21 are just. Any claim against a party may be severed and proceeded
22 with separately. If a plaintiff or defendant is deemed misjoined
23 pursuant to subsection 3 of section 507.040, all claims brought
24 by that plaintiff or against that defendant shall be severed from
25 the action and those claims shall be transferred to a county in
26 which venue exists upon the motion of any party. For any claim
27 that has already been filed but for which the court has not
28 issued a final judgment as of the effective date of this act, all

1 pretrial rulings made by the transferring court may only be
2 reconsidered for good cause. If there is no county in Missouri
3 in which venue exists, those claims shall be dismissed without
4 prejudice.

5 2. A motion to drop or add parties may be made at the same
6 time as other motions provided for in section 509.290, and if so
7 made, the provisions of section 509.340 with reference to the
8 consolidation of motions and waiver of objections shall also
9 apply. If said motion is made at any other time, the hearing and
10 determination thereof shall not delay the trial. Objections on
11 account of misjoinder or nonjoinder of parties may also be raised
12 by answer or reply.

13 508.010. 1. There shall be only one principal place of
14 residence for each party to an action. As used in this section,
15 "principal place of residence" shall [mean the county which is
16 the main place where an individual resides in the state of
17 Missouri. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that the
18 county of voter registration at the time of injury is the
19 principal place of residence. There shall be only one principal
20 place of residence.] be determined as follows:

21 (1) For an individual person, there shall be a rebuttable
22 presumption that the county of voter registration at the time of
23 injury is the principal place of residence;

24 (2) Notwithstanding subdivision (1) of this subsection, for
25 an individual whose conduct at issue was alleged in at least one
26 count to be in the course and scope of his or her employment with
27 a corporation, the individual's principal place of residence for
28 venue purposes shall be deemed to be the applicable corporation's

1 principal place of residence;

2 (3) For a corporation, the county where the corporation has
3 its registered agent is the principal place of residence;

4 (4) For a domestic insurance corporation, the county where
5 the corporation has its registered office is the principal place
6 of residence;

7 (5) For a foreign insurance corporation, the county where
8 the foreign corporation has its registered office is its
9 principal place of residence; if such a foreign corporation does
10 not have a registered office in any county in Missouri, the
11 principal place of residence shall be Cole County.

12 2. In all actions in which there is no count alleging a
13 tort, venue shall be determined as follows:

14 (1) When the defendant is a resident of the state, either
15 in the county within which the defendant resides, or in the
16 county within which the plaintiff resides, and the defendant may
17 be found;

18 (2) When there are several defendants, and they reside in
19 different counties, the suit may be brought in any such county;

20 (3) When there are several defendants, some residents and
21 others nonresidents of the state, suit may be brought in any
22 county in this state in which any defendant resides;

23 (4) When all the defendants are nonresidents of the state,
24 suit may be brought in any county in this state.

25 3. The term "tort" shall include claims based upon improper
26 health care, under the provisions of chapter 538.

27 4. Notwithstanding any other provision of [law] this
28 section to the contrary, in all actions in which there is any

1 count alleging a tort or a claim for uninsured or underinsured
2 motorist benefits, and in which the plaintiff was first injured
3 in the state of Missouri, venue shall be in the county where the
4 plaintiff was first injured by the [wrongful] acts or [negligent]
5 conduct alleged in the action. In all actions in which there is
6 any count against an insurer, whether in tort or contract,
7 regarding the rights, benefits, or duties under an insurance
8 contract or any action arising from an insurance contract, other
9 than claims for uninsured or underinsured motorist coverage,
10 venue shall be determined as described in subsection 6 of this
11 section.

12 5. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in all
13 actions in which there is any count alleging a tort or a claim
14 for uninsured or underinsured motorist benefits and in which the
15 plaintiff was first injured outside the state of Missouri, venue
16 as to that individual plaintiff shall be determined as follows:

17 (1) If the defendant is a corporation, then venue shall be
18 in [any] the county where [a] the defendant [corporation's
19 registered agent is located] has its principal place of residence
20 or, if the plaintiff's principal place of residence was in the
21 state of Missouri on the date the plaintiff was first injured,
22 then venue may be in the county of the plaintiff's principal
23 place of residence on the date the plaintiff was first injured;

24 (2) If the defendant is an individual, then venue shall be
25 in [any] the county [of] where the [individual defendant's]
26 defendant has his or her principal place of residence in the
27 state of Missouri, which for venue purposes shall be deemed to be
28 that of his or her employer corporation if any count alleges

1 conduct in the course and scope of his or her employment with
2 that corporation, or, if the plaintiff's principal place of
3 residence was in the state of Missouri on the date the plaintiff
4 was first injured, then venue as to that individual plaintiff may
5 be in the county containing the plaintiff's principal place of
6 residence on the date the plaintiff was first injured;

7 (3) Notwithstanding subdivisions (1) and (2) of this
8 subsection, if the plaintiff was first injured in a foreign
9 country in connection with any railroad operations therein and
10 any defendant is a:

11 (a) Corporation that, either directly or through its
12 subsidiaries, wholly owns or operates the foreign railroad; or

13 (b) Wholly owned subsidiary of a corporation that, either
14 directly or through its subsidiaries, wholly owns or operates the
15 foreign railroad;

16
17 then venue shall exclusively be in the county where any such
18 defendant corporation's registered agent is located, regardless
19 of venue as to any other defendant or, if the plaintiff's
20 principal place of residence was in the state of Missouri on the
21 date the plaintiff was first injured, then venue may be in the
22 county of the plaintiff's principal place of residence on the
23 date the plaintiff was first injured.

24 6. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section to
25 the contrary, in all actions in which there is any count against
26 an insurer, whether in tort or contract, regarding the rights,
27 benefits, or duties under an insurance contract or any action
28 arising from an insurance contract, including but not limited to

1 claims of bad faith, refusal to settle, claims under section
2 375.296, or claims under section 375.420, venue shall be in the
3 county either of the insurer's principal place of residence or if
4 the insured was a resident of Missouri at the time the insurance
5 contract was issued, the insured's principal place of residence
6 at the time the insurance contract was issued. Venue shall be
7 determined by this subsection even if the insured's rights or
8 claims under the policy have been assigned or otherwise
9 transferred to another party. However, intervention by an
10 insurer in an action pursuant to section 537.065 shall not affect
11 the venue of the action. The provisions of this subsection shall
12 not apply to any action against an insurer relating to uninsured
13 motorist coverage or underinsured motorist coverage, including
14 any action to enforce such coverage.

15 7. Any action, in which any county shall be a plaintiff,
16 may be commenced and prosecuted to final judgment in the county
17 in which the defendant or defendants reside, or in the county
18 suing and where the defendants, or one of them, may be found.

19 [7.] 8. In all actions, process shall be issued by the
20 court in which the action is filed and process may be served in
21 any county within the state.

22 [8.] 9. In any action for defamation or for invasion of
23 privacy, the plaintiff shall be considered first injured in the
24 county in which the defamation or invasion was first published.

25 [9.] 10. In all actions, venue shall be determined as of
26 the date the plaintiff was first injured.

27 [10.] 11. All motions to dismiss or to transfer based upon
28 a claim of improper venue shall be deemed granted if not denied

1 within ninety days of filing of the motion unless such time
2 period is waived in writing by all parties.

3 [11.] 12. In a wrongful death action, the plaintiff shall
4 be considered first injured where the decedent was first injured
5 by the wrongful acts or negligent conduct alleged in the action.
6 In any spouse's claim for loss of consortium, the plaintiff
7 claiming consortium shall be considered first injured where the
8 other spouse was first injured by the wrongful acts or negligent
9 conduct alleged in the action.

10 [12.] 13. The provisions of this section shall apply
11 irrespective of whether the defendant is a for-profit or a
12 not-for-profit entity.

13 [13.] 14. In any civil action, if all parties agree in
14 writing to a change of venue, the court shall transfer venue to
15 the county within the state unanimously chosen by the parties.
16 If any parties are added to the cause of action after the date of
17 said transfer who do not consent to said transfer then the cause
18 of action shall be transferred to such county in which venue is
19 appropriate under this section, based upon the amended pleadings.

20 [14.] 15. A plaintiff is considered first injured where the
21 trauma or exposure occurred rather than where symptoms are first
22 manifested.

23 16. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the
24 contrary, in any civil action in which there is any count
25 alleging a tort, each plaintiff shall establish that the court
26 where the action is filed is a proper venue against each
27 defendant, independent of the claims brought by any other
28 plaintiff or against any other defendant. Venue for each

1 plaintiff and each defendant cannot be established by joinder or
2 intervention.

3 17. If the county where the plaintiff's claim is filed is
4 not a proper venue, that plaintiff shall be transferred to a
5 county where proper venue can be established. If no such county
6 exists in the state of Missouri, the claim shall be dismissed
7 without prejudice.

8 18. Any party to a suit shall have a right to an
9 interlocutory appeal to the Missouri supreme court of any
10 decision regarding the joinder and venue statutes contained in
11 chapters 507, 508, and 509 or applicable Missouri supreme court
12 rules. The underlying action may be stayed pending appellate
13 review.

14 19. For the purposes of this section, a domestic insurance
15 company shall be deemed to reside in, and be a resident of, the
16 county where its registered office is maintained. A foreign
17 insurance company shall be deemed to reside in, and be a resident
18 of, the county where its registered office is maintained. If a
19 foreign insurance company does not maintain a registered office
20 in any county in Missouri, the foreign insurance company shall be
21 deemed to reside in, and be a resident of, Cole County.

22 508.012. At any time prior to the commencement of a trial,
23 if a plaintiff or defendant, including a third-party plaintiff or
24 defendant, is either added [or] to, removed, or severed from a
25 petition filed in any court in the state of Missouri which would
26 have, if originally added [or] to, removed [to], or severed from
27 the initial petition, altered the determination of venue under
28 section 508.010, then the judge shall upon application of any

1 party transfer the case to a proper forum [under section
2 476.410].

3 537.762. 1. A defendant whose liability is based solely on
4 his status as a seller in the stream of commerce may be dismissed
5 from a products liability claim as provided in this section.

6 2. This section shall apply to any products liability claim
7 in which another defendant, including the manufacturer, is
8 properly before the court and from whom total recovery may be had
9 for plaintiff's claim.

10 3. A defendant may move for dismissal under this section
11 within the time for filing an answer or other responsive pleading
12 unless permitted by the court at a later time for good cause
13 shown. The motion shall be accompanied by an affidavit which
14 shall be made under oath and shall state that the defendant is
15 aware of no facts or circumstances upon which a verdict might be
16 reached against him, other than his status as a seller in the
17 stream of commerce.

18 4. The parties shall have sixty days in which to conduct
19 discovery on the issues raised in the motion and affidavit. The
20 court for good cause shown, may extend the time for discovery,
21 and may enter a protective order pursuant to the rules of civil
22 procedure regarding the scope of discovery on other issues.

23 5. Any party may move for a hearing on a motion to dismiss
24 under this section. If the requirements of subsections 2 and 3
25 of this section are met, and no party comes forward at such a
26 hearing with evidence of facts which would render the defendant
27 seeking dismissal under this section liable on some basis other
28 than his status as a seller in the stream of commerce, the court

1 shall dismiss without prejudice the claim as to that defendant.

2 6. [No order of dismissal under this section shall operate
3 to divest a court of venue or jurisdiction otherwise proper at
4 the time the action was commenced. A defendant dismissed
5 pursuant to this section shall be considered to remain a party to
6 such action only for such purposes.

7 7.] An order of dismissal under this section shall be
8 interlocutory until final disposition of plaintiff's claim by
9 settlement or judgment and may be set aside for good cause shown
10 at anytime prior to such disposition.