Feb. 11, 1839

*This Date in Missouri Senate History*

On *This Date in Missouri Senate History*, the date was Feb. 11, 1839, the day the [University of Missouri](http://missouri.edu/) was chartered by the state Legislature.

The act itself contained five chapters and 13 sections, governing everything from location of the university to revenue distribution to the state’s role in its operation.

Government chartering of higher education was originally an idea from Thomas Jefferson. From this came the Geyer Act, which opened the door to state control of educational institutions, and the university’s charter.

On Feb. 8, 1839, lawmakers passed state Rep. James Rollins’ measure to select a location for the University. On Feb. 11, the Missouri General Assembly met in a joint session to put in place the first MU board of curators by a vote of 91-to-one. The board would later hold its first hearing, in October of 1839.

The university started as a single building, Academic Hall, which sat on 44 acres of ground. Thanks to then-Cong. James Rollins, more money started coming into the institution in the 1860s, which led to more buildings and more students.

But, it all started on Feb. 11, 1839, the date marking the chartering of the University of Missouri, on *This Date in Missouri Senate History*.

(Sources: *Mizzou Weekly* archive, Missouri Senate and House Journals)