**This Week in the Missouri Senate:  
Digital Audio File Script on SB 844**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review another of the measures that will now become law, thanks to lawmakers overriding its veto…

**Nat Snd / Runs :03 / OC: Bill No. 844.**

*“Senate Bill No. 844….”*

[Senate Bill 844](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=23864240) was first passed on May 3 and was vetoed on June 28. The Legislature overrode the veto on Sept. 14.

The new law modifies provisions relating to livestock trespass liability.

The measure is sponsored by Sen. Mike Parson of Bolivar…

**Parson 1 / Runs :15 / OC: on his part.**

*“Basically — what this says — for farmers and ranchers across this state, if someone does damage to your property — or drives through your fence — is the main objective for this language. That person would be responsible. The landowner would not be responsible, if there was no neglect on his part.”*

During debate, Sen. Jason Holsman of Kansas City — while pointing out the proposal deals with livestock and not neighborhood pet issues — asked about unintended consequences…

**Holsman 2 / Runs :22 / OC: should be liable?**

*“One of the dogs, of my neighbor to the right — across the street — got through the fence and tore the ear off of the dog of my neighbor directly across the street. They came running over. Fortunately, we were able to get him in and the dog’s life was saved. When that dog, unbeknownst to the owner of that home, crossed that fence line and bit the ear off of the other dog — who do you think should be liable?”*

Currently, if any horses, cattle or other livestock break through any fence or trespass onto another's property, the owner of such animal is strictly liable for damages sustained by the animal to another's property. The new law says the owner of such animal would only be liable for damages sustained to another's property if the animal owner was negligent.

Senator Parson asks, if the landowner has done nothing wrong, why should he or she be held responsible?...

**Parson 3 / Runs: 21 / OC: he be responsible?**

*“And, what really happens in this whole language, what happens? People drive through the fences, and they leave the owners hanging, with the liability. And, our state is based on agriculture. And, there’s fences after fence after fence. And, when people run through those fences, and a farmer does nothing — or they cut the wires on those fences — and he did nothing, why should he be responsible?”*

Senator Scott Sifton of Affton adds he does not consider this to be “urban versus rural”…

**Sifton 4 / Runs :19 / OC: is real-world problems.**

*“Well — and, let’s face it — I mean, we’re talking about this issue because this happens in the real world. I mean, we’re talking about a statute that’s already on the books. So, it’s not as if we’re the first group of people in this chamber to be talking about how we approach this particular occurrence. I mean, we already have a law on this — potentially modifying existing law — but, this is real-world problems.”*

The new law will take effect on Oct. 14.

Altogether, 13 vetoed bills were overridden by the Legislature during this month’s annual veto session.

The next *regular* legislative session will start in January.

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.