***This Week in the Missouri Senate* Script: Utilities Legislation**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review a measure sure to gain attention next year…

**Nat Snd / Runs :07 / OC: of utility legislation.**

Senator Emery: *“If we can get this grid modernized, we can automate a lot of things.”*

Senator Schupp: *“There’s been a lot of talk of utility legislation.”*

During this year’s regular legislative session, several proposals were aimed at updating the electrical grid in the Show-Me State, a move supporters say is decades overdue.

Those opposed claim such a procedure would benefit the state’s electricity suppliers and raise rates in the long run.

Senator Ed Emery of Lamar sponsored and handled these measures this year, and plans to do so again next year.

He says his [Senate Bill 564](http://www.senate.mo.gov/18info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=69471981) mirrors the 2017 version, in many ways…

**Emery 1 / Runs :21 / OC: or less increases.**

*“Some of the main things that it does, that the final version last year had in it, is what are effectively rate caps. Currently, Missouri’s electricity rates have been increasing by almost 6 percent a year, on average. The caps that are built into this bill would restrict that to 3 percent or less increases.”*

Senator Emery adds modernization can equal automation…

**Emery 2 / Runs :10 / OC: stable, more reliable.**

*“That means fewer outages. It means, when then are outages, they’re likely to be much shorter outages. And, it means the power is going to be more stable, more reliable.”*

Utilities legislation does not necessarily run into partisan opposition. It is proving itself to also be something that does not follow the usual “rural versus urban” divide so many items do in the Legislature.

For instance, Sen. Jill Schupp of Creve Coeur says she can be on-board with this plan…

**Schupp 3 / Runs :20 / OC: to the consumer.**

*“Things like modernizing the grid and ensuring that we have clean water. And, certainly, we all need to make sure that when we need power — through the flick of a switch — it turns on. And, when we turn on our faucets, that the water we’re drinking is clean. We also need to make sure that, when we make any changes, we do it in a way that is affordable to the consumer.”*

She also says it’s not just infrastructure, but education, that depend upon support from Missouri taxpayers…

**Schupp 4 / Runs :15 / OC: result of that.**

*“Like our public institutions of higher education and K through 12 education, and — in some cases — even pre-school. Those taxes pay for our roads and our bridges that we definitely need to update. We don’t want to learn that a bridge has fallen down, and people have died, as a result of that.”*

Missouri senators will be returning with all 34 districts served by a senator, for the first time in a few years. Senator-Elect Mike Cierpiot will be sworn in on the first day of session. He will complete the unexpired term of former Missouri Sen. Will Kraus, who resigned earlier this year.

The Second Regular Session of the 99th General Assembly will start work on Wednesday, Jan. 3.

And, remember, you can follow these and other issues facing the Missouri Senate — plus, see a complete list of prefiled legislation — by visiting our website: [senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

Reporting from the State Capitol, I’m Dean Morgan.