***This Week in the Missouri Senate* Script: 2018 Session**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we preview some of the issues likely to be discussed when Missouri lawmakers return to Jefferson City next week…

**Nat Snd / Runs :10 / OC: very proud of.**

Senator Richard: *“My goals have always been job creation and a better environment to people to hire, to people who go to work.”*

Senator Schupp: *“We also have a bill that we worked on and filed last that I’m really very proud of.”*

The Second Regular Session of the 99th General Assembly will begin at noon on Wednesday, Jan. 3, with 34 senators ready to start a new year. In addition, Sen.-Elect Mike Cierpiot of Lee’s Summit will be sworn in before the normal opening duties are fulfilled.

For eight Missouri senators, 2018 will mark a final year, as they will be unable to run for another Missouri Senate term, thanks to term limits.

For others, the new year will also mean a return to items they have been trying to make law for any number of years.

Missouri Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard of Joplin says for him, economic development remains priority one…

**Richard 1 / Runs :16 / OC: those institutions something.**

*“Job creation and a better environment to people to hire, to people to go to work. I think that takes care of a lot of ills, families and they have a decent income. And, that follows with good education and, we have a little issue with higher educational funding. Hopefully, we can work something out to try to get those institutions something.”*

He adds his role is simple: help the other 33 Missouri senators get their priorities as far as possible between now and the middle of May…

**Richard 2 / Runs :12 / OC: but it’s different.**

*“Do what I do to make senators’ legislation — that’s their priorities — a priority with me, so I’ll be getting couple of their priorities — all of them — to committee and see what the committees do with them, and we’ll go around again and get some more priorities. It’s the same, but it’s different.”*

It can be fairly common for time to be spent bringing back a measure or undoing something that became law the previous year, and 2018 may be no different.

Senator Jill Schupp of Creve Coeur says she wants to bring back her family leave bill from this year…

**Schupp 3 / Runs :19 / OC: with paid leave.**

*“And, we worked with a lot of stakeholders, big businesses and small, students and faculty from SLU Law [*[*St. Louis University School of Law*](http://law.slu.edu/)*] in St. Louis, and I worked with [State] Rep. Tracy McCreery on this bill: Family Medical Leave Act. And, we’ve come up with a great idea and a great plan of how to provide our working families in the state of Missouri with paid leave.”*

She adds leave would be provided by employers and not paid for by taxpayers.

Senator Schupp also says this is only one of several things likely to be repeated in 2018…

**Schupp 4 / Runs :17 / OC: medication they need?**

*“The 63,000 or so people that have been cut off from access to prescription drug support, through the* [*Missouri Prescription Drug Program*](http://www.morx.mo.gov/)*. I think the question looms over us, ‘How are we going to make sure people who are eligible for this program, our seniors, are able to afford the medication they need?’”*

After lawmakers gavel in, committee hearings will be the first order of business.

And, remember, you can follow these and other issues facing the Missouri Senate — plus see a complete [list of prefiled legislation](http://www.senate.mo.gov/18info/BTS_Web/BillList.aspx?SessionType=R) — by visiting our website: [senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

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