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MISSOURI LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – JANUARY 11, 2008

TO: American Institute of Architects of Missouri

2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION IS UNDERWAY

Missouri lawmakers returned to the Capitol on Wednesday prepared to tackle a long list of hot-button issues – illegal immigration, health care, property tax relief and education. They are also touting campaign finance reform (again), mortgage fraud and a biodiesel mandate as top issues. The most pressing concern will likely be the state's budget. Lawmakers will have to make difficult choices to enact new programs this session.

Competition among Democrats and Republicans, rural and urban interests and the many term-limited lawmakers seeking higher office is likely to lead to a volatile session. The session will be a prelude and a backdrop to what are expected to be wide open and hotly contested races for the state's top elected positions. Nationally, it is the first presidential campaign in 56 years that does not include an incumbent president or vice president. In Missouri, five out of the six statewide offices are on the ballot, as well as one half of all the senate and the entire House.

Politics sometimes slows progress on policies during election years such as this. On opening day, however, the governor and lawmakers all were expressing a desire to work together.

SENATE COMMITTEE CHANGES:

Senate Appropriations: Chair, Sen. Gary Nodler (R-Joplin)
Vice Chair, Sen. Rob Mayer (R-Dexter)

Senate Economic Development, Tourism and Local Government:
Chair, Sen. John Greisheimer (R-Washington)
Vice Chair, Sen. Tom Dempsey (R-St. Charles)

Senate Ways & Means: Chair, Sen. Carl Vogel (R-Jefferson City)
Vice Chair, Sen. Tom Dempsey (R-St. Charles)

Senate Judiciary and Civil and Criminal Jurisprudence:
Senator Chris Koster (D-Harrisonville), now a Democrat, will replace Sen. Jeff Smith (D-St. Louis) as a minority member of this committee

CHANGES TO HOUSE COMMITTEES WILL BE ANNOUNCED EARLY NEXT WEEK.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND LEASES OVERSIGHT met on Wednesday to review the annual report. The chairs of the House and Senate Budget/Appropriations committees chair this committee. Other budget/appropriation members serve on the committee. This report will be available for distribution within the next week. Discussion centered around the new state crime laboratory for the Missouri State Highway Patrol in Springfield. This is the renovation of an existing

building in the amount of \$2.3 million. Trent Blair, director of the division of facilities management, design and construction, was present but did not testify. Deputy Director of OA, Rich Aubuchon, fielded questions from the committee regarding the crime lab.

Mr. Aubuchon said it would cost the state \$1 billion to make all the required repairs and maintenance on all the state owned buildings.

As per my conversation with Trent Blair, the division has submitted their request for supplemental appropriations to OA but they have not heard back from them regarding which requests they will include the supplemental request, HB 19. Once the supplemental requests are public record, we will review for projects of interest. Trent mentioned he talked with Rick this week. He might be willing to share potential projects with Rick. Trent is not real comfortable in his new position yet. Blair did tell me that the underground piping project at Bowling Green is not in the supplemental request, but will be in their FY08/09 appropriation request.

NEW BILLS OF INTEREST

HB 1576	Wasson	Modifies various statutes to implement Executive Order 06-04 that created the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration.
	Bill History:	01-10-08 H Read second time
SB 788	Scott	Moves the divisions of finance, credit unions and professional registration, and the State Banking Board, to the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration by type III transfer.
	Bill History:	01-10-08 S Referred to Senate Committee on Senate-Financial/Gov. Org. and Elections

NOTE: Hold control and click on bill number to view bill text, summary and history. PLEASE REVIEW these bills, they are identical. The bill appears to make the transfer of the division of professional registration to the Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration. However it may give the division more power than the currently have and reinstates the governor's authority to appoint the Chapter 327 board members.