

**Welcome to the Show Me Action Conference**

**January 23, 2016**

The 2016 Legislative Session began Wednesday, Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>. Numerous bills were pre-filed and/or filed and referred including the hot topic of Ethics Reform, highlighted within.

With new leadership in both the House, House Speaker Todd Richardson, and Senate, Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard, there may be a more modest agenda with this being an election year.

Of the total Senate, two seats are not filled and four Senators will be running for statewide seats as well as Lt. Governor, Peter Kinder, who presides over the Senate.

House Speaker Todd Richardson and Senate President Pro Tem Ron Richard will most likely make ethics reform a priority this year. If the General Assembly passes the lobbyist gift ban, closes the revolving door of legislators cashing out to become lobbyists and passes the 'Steve Tilley bill' it will be a win for Missourians.

**Ethics reform legislation in the House**

[HB1981](#) Sponsored by Justin Alferman bans lobbyist gifts to state public officials. No longer will legislators be allowed to accept gifts such as tickets to sporting events, steak dinners, or travel from registered lobbyists.

[HB1574](#) Sponsored by Caleb Rowden this bill has been called the Steve Tilley bill because it will require former candidates/legislators to dissolve their campaign committees if they want to become lobbyists.

[HB1979](#) Sponsored by Caleb Rowden this bill has been called closing the revolving door. It is intended to stem the tide of legislators becoming lobbyists.

Actually Rowden's bill will only impose a one year cooling off period before outgoing members of the Missouri Legislature, statewide elected officials, or appointees who required Senate confirmation can become lobbyists.

[HB1983](#) Sponsored by Shamed Dogan will make it illegal for a member of the General Assembly or a statewide elected official from receiving compensation as a paid political consultant while still in office.

[HB1998](#) Sponsored by Jay Barnes will disallow candidates from investing their campaign war chests.

**Ethics reform legislation in the Senate**

[SB643](#) as sponsored by Sen. Bob Onder tries to do it all. Onder's bill, if successful, will ban lobbyist gifts, close the revolving door by making legislators sit out for two years before becoming lobbyists, requires public officials who register as lobbyists to close

their campaign accounts, and discourages members of the General Assembly from accepting appointments to paid state boards or commissions before their terms end.

### **Additional Areas of Discussion**

Currently Republicans have a “super majority” in the areas involving Pro-Life and 2nd Amendment. However, even with a “majority” of votes for Right to Work, Democrat Governor Jay Nixon vetoed the bill and we were not able to override his veto. In 2016, a Republican Governor may be able to accomplish Right to Work for Missouri.

In addition, in 2016, the Supreme Court will most likely take up a case that could impose a de facto right-to work rule across the public sector eliminating public employee unions’ ability to require fees from nonmembers. In *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, the court will determine whether public sector unions could continue to collect so-called “fair share” or “agency” fees. If the CTA loses, public employees across the country could opt out of membership and pay nothing for the union protections they enjoy. Look for a decision about June, 2016.

Obviously, funding our public infrastructure is a big issue also. Anyone who has travelled the state knows that many of our roads are in dire need of repair. This past year Missouri voters defeated a proposed statewide sales tax that would have raised billions of dollars to build roads, bridges and other transportation projects.

The question is also one of matching Federal funds. Missouri needs to generate enough money to keep from losing Federal transportation matching dollars or we lose them. For the 2017 budget year Missouri will be short approximately \$45 million dollars, at a cost to the state of approximately \$160 million in Federal dollars. There are approximately 8,000 miles of primary roads including interstates. The remaining 26,000 miles of state roads may see limited routine maintenance. Where will the funds for this deferred maintenance come from? Where will we end up if we do nothing?

In an election year, transportation and infrastructure may be a tough issue to move forward. However, it is something that we can not continue to pass along year after year. We need to find a solution to this sooner rather than later. It is an issue that affects every Missourian, both Republicans and Democrats alike.

We will continue to watch and report on other areas including but not limited to Ethics, Transportation/Infrastructure, 2nd Amendment, Planned Parenthood, Religious Freedom, Budget, Tort Reform, Education, Failing Schools and any new and exciting issue as updates occur.

See our website for additional information <http://mofrw.org> .

Maryann Manion

**Legislative Committee Report**

**MOFRW**

Legislative Committee Chairman

[maryannmanion@charter.net](mailto:maryannmanion@charter.net)