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# Ameren Missouri Asking for Electric Rate Increase

JANUARY 17TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Ameren Missouri Asking for Electric Rate Increase

## **Ameren Missouri Asking for Another Electric Rate Increase; PSC Hosting Public Hearings to Hear Input**

**Jefferson City, Missouri** - State Sen. Doug Libla, R-Poplar Bluff, is urging citizens to attend one of two open hearings of the Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC), regarding an electric rate case filed by Ameren Missouri. The local public hearing schedule:

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 – Cape Girardeau - Osage Centre – Room 4AB, 1625 North Kingshighway - NOON

Tuesday, January 17, 2017 – Charleston - Charleston High School, Clara Drinkwater Newman Auditorium, 606 S. Thorn St. – 6PM

Each hearing will begin with a public information/question and answer session conducted by the PSC Staff, followed by the Commission receiving testimony from the public.

On July 1, 2016, Ameren Missouri filed an electric rate case with the Missouri Public Service Commission seeking to increase annual electric revenues by approximately \$206.4 million. According to the filing, residential customers would pay approximately \$99 more per year if the rate request is approved. Citizens will be given the opportunity to speak on the proposed rate increase.

“We have seen evidence in recent years that Ameren continues to earn more than it’s authorized as a monopoly utility. Yet, it still seeks to charge Missouri customers more, who have no other avenues to purchase utilities,” said Sen. Libla. “These increases jeopardize the ability of local businesses to operate, fall most heavily on the backs of struggling families, and frequently seem unnecessary. It’s important these cases are properly vetted, and that includes gathering sufficient public testimony. This rate increase would affect all of us. I strongly encourage all citizens in my district to attend this important meeting. Make your voices heard.”

If you are unable to attend a local public hearing and wish to make written comments or secure additional information, you may contact the Office of the Public Counsel, P.O. Box 2230, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, telephone (866) 922-2959 email **[opcservice@ded.mo.gov](mailto:opcservice@ded.mo.gov)** or the Missouri Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 360, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102, telephone 1-800-392-4211, email **[pscinfo@psc.mo.gov](mailto:pscinfo@psc.mo.gov)**.

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## Representative Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report -

# Friday, January 13, 2017

JANUARY 16TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Representative Tila Hubrecht's Capitol Report - Friday, January 13, 2017

## **Missouri Welcomes New State Leaders**

Thousands of Missourians from across the state made their way to Jefferson City this week to join in the festivities as the state welcomed its new statewide officials. During the November elections Missourians elected Republicans to fill the statewide positions on the ballot. On Monday, Missourians saw Eric Greitens sworn in as the 56th governor of Missouri. Joining him as statewide office holders are Mike Parson, who was sworn in as Lieutenant Governor; Jay Ashcroft, who takes over as Secretary of State; Josh Hawley, who is Missouri's new Attorney General; and Eric Schmitt, who will now serve as the State Treasurer. They join Nicole Galloway, who currently serves as State Auditor. Galloway is the only Democrat currently holding one of the six statewide posts in the executive branch, and was appointed to the position following the passing of Tom Schweich.

House members participated in events throughout the day including an interfaith prayer service and a ceremony to recognize Missouri's heroes. Those in attendance for the salute to heroes heard from the mother of a Navy SEAL who was killed in Afghanistan. She talked about the heroism of veterans and the importance of patriotism. Greitens talked to the crowd about the importance of recognizing the efforts of the best representatives of the Missouri people.

After being sworn into office, Greitens delivered a short address where he talked about the need to work together to move Missouri forward. As he told a crowd of thousands, "For decades, Missourians have talked about change. Now it's time to fight for that change." He added, "Our state's world famous motto, 'Show me', reminds us that Missourians don't much value big talk. Our state's great history reminds us that Missourians have always understood that big achievements demand hard work. 'Show me' doesn't mean 'Give me.' It means 'prove it can be done, and we will do it.'"

Greitens followed his speech by issuing an executive order banning lobbyist gifts for executive branch officials. The order also prohibits employees in the governor's office from leaving their jobs to become lobbyists.

That evening, members joined the governor for the Inaugural Ball in the Capitol rotunda. Legislators and their families descended the staircase outside the governor's office as they were formally introduced as members of the Missouri General Assembly. Governor Greitens and his wife then kicked off the ball by dancing to the Missouri Waltz. The festivities continued with a performance by country music recording artist, and Missouri native, Sara Evans.

## **Right-to-Work Legislation Begins to Move through the House**

House Speaker Todd Richardson made it clear in his Opening Day address that the Missouri House would move quickly to pass a Right-to-Work bill. In just the second week of the 2017 legislative session, the House Economic Development Committee met to discuss five similar legislative proposals, which supporters believe are vital to efforts to spur job creation and economic growth in Missouri.

### **The committee met Tuesday afternoon to take testimony on the bills that would prohibit employers from:**

- requiring employees to join or refrain from joining a labor organization;
- requiring employees to pay any money to a labor organization; or
- requiring employees to pay any charity or third party the equivalent of money required to be paid by members of a labor organization.

All five sponsors testified before the committee to detail the benefits of the proposals. They highlighted the importance of giving workers the freedom to decide whether to join a union, and the increased level of accountability that union members would see from their unions as a result. As one sponsor said, "The change is simple. The union will now have to provide a service worth paying for to their members. They are no longer guaranteed members regardless of service or value, so they will have to work for them just as the union member works for their paycheck."

Supporters also focused on the economic benefits that other states have seen after implementing Right-to-Work. They echoed the comments of House Speaker Richardson, who said in his Opening Day Address that, "Since becoming a Right-to-Work State in 2012, Michigan has added 58,000 manufacturing jobs. While over the last two years Missouri has lost about 1,200 manufacturing jobs. And what's more, Michigan's average weekly wage isn't declining; it is growing at almost twice the rate of Missouri's."

State Treasurer Eric Schmitt also spoke in support of the measures along with the state's top business groups. Schmitt noted that Missouri is in fierce competition with other states for jobs and that the Show-Me State needs to use every tool in the arsenal to attract new

businesses. He said he has met with site selectors and being a Right-to-Work state is at the top of the list of the things they consider when looking for a new location for their companies.

Those who oppose the idea of making Missouri a Right-to-Work state also showed up to make their voices heard. Opponents referred to the proposal as an overreach of government and an impediment to the rights of employers and employees. They said companies and their employees should be able to negotiate without government interference. Opponents also disputed the economic benefits generated by Right-to-Work. Furthermore, they said voters should be allowed to decide whether Missouri should become the nation's 28th Right-to-Work state.

The House Economic Development Committee combined the five bills into a single measure and then approved the legislation by a vote of 8-4. The bill then received the approval of the House Rules – Legislative Oversight Committee Thursday afternoon. House members are set to discuss the proposal on the House floor next week.

### **House Gives Initial Approval to Gift Ban**

A state House proposal aimed at banning gifts from lobbyists to elected officials received first round approval from the Missouri House of Representatives Thursday. HB 60 is nearly identical to a gift ban proposal filed in 2016, which was passed out of the House with 147 votes in favor.

House Bill 60 is meant to help restore the public's trust in elected officials by limiting the influence of lobbyists. As the sponsor said about the bill, "We are trying to eliminate the undue influence of lobbyists on legislators in the building. That is the individually, personally consumable gifts from lobbyists to legislators. These are the one-on-one dinners; these are the press boxes at sporting events in the state. That's what we're trying to limit."

In addition to the prohibitions on expenditures by lobbyists for elected officials, the bill would remove reporting requirements that would not be necessary with a ban in place. It would exempt from those prohibitions flowers and plants given as expressions of condolence or congratulations. It would also exempt items such as plaques given to lawmakers when they are recognized by an organization.

The bill would allow lobbyists to provide meals that are offered to all members of the House and Senate, as well as all statewide elected officials. The bill includes a requirement that an invitation to those elected officials be made in writing at least 72

hours before the event.

House Speaker Todd Richardson has said he wants the gift ban bill to be the first thing the House sends the Missouri Senate this session. As the Speaker told his colleagues during his Opening Day address, “Missourians want a government they can trust and believe in. Last year we passed the first meaningful ethics reform in modern Missouri history, and we must continue the job we started.”

The bill now requires one more successful vote in the House before moving to the Senate.

### **House Committees to Look at Missouri’s Regulatory Framework**

Two state House committees are preparing to dive into the state’s framework of regulations and licensing requirements in an effort to make it easier to own and operate a business in Missouri.

House Speaker Todd Richardson announced in his Opening Day address that he has instructed the House Committee on Government Efficiency and the House Committee on Professional Registration & Licensing to review those requirements. Richardson said Missouri regulations have slowed the success in Missouri of ridesharing companies like Uber and Lyft and lodging companies such as HomeAway and AirBnB. As he said in his Opening Day speech, “It is past time that Missouri had statewide frameworks for disruptive technologies and allowed private enterprise to function in a free market.”

The chairman of the House Committee on Professional Registration & Licensing said tempering business regulations is a balancing act. As he said, “We have a responsibility to protect the individuals across the State of Missouri, but yet when the scale moves too far the other direction – when regulations become burdensome to business, that aren’t really effectively serving that purpose of protecting the public; it’s our responsibility to step in and pare those back to where we effectively meet the needs of protecting the public while, however, not being overly burdensome to businesses across the state.”

The chairman of the House Committee on Government Efficiency said it could be a multi-year process to vet all the regulations and requirements that are in place. He said, “Having these committees working hand-in-hand is going to be an asset for every person that’s either trying to get a job or to create a business that creates jobs in the state.”

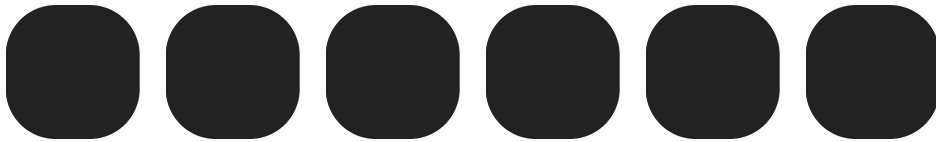
Also this week, Governor Eric Greitens signed an executive order to put a freeze on new government regulations that could hurt businesses and families. The executive order bans state agencies from creating new regulations through the end of February. Any new proposed regulation would need to get the approval of the governor before taking effect.

Additionally, the governor's executive order calls for a review of all current regulations.

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## Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report for Friday, January 13, 2017

JANUARY 16TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Jason Smith's Capitol Report for Friday, January 13, 2017

More Than a Speech - Friday, January 13, 2017

The most important speech for the future of this country wasn't the one President Obama gave this past week, a speech which looked back at eight years of failures, but instead will be the speech about our future Donald J Trump will deliver from the steps of the U.S. Capitol on Friday. He will speak about this country in a way which promotes individual

liberties, accountability, freedoms and personal choice. It will be a speech not about 'hope' and 'change', but instead about the concrete actions he will immediately begin taking to help put American's back to work, bring down the soaring costs of healthcare, reduce the tax burden and get government off the back of farmers, families, and small businesses.

Our country has seen some profound inaugural speeches throughout our history that have defined generations. The greatest inaugural addresses in American history all have one thing in common - they were delivered at critical moments in our nation's history. Whether impending war, secession, economic calamity or world crisis, these speeches all managed to balance that moment of peril and fright with one of prosperity and the American will to overcome.

Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address was delivered at a time when the country was deeply divided between the north and the south during the Civil War. In only 701 words, Lincoln sought to unify using divine intervention stating that both sides: "read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes his aid against the other." His words spoken that day in 1865 are some of the most powerful spoken in American history. Lincoln closed wishing no ill will towards those which looked to divide the Union, but instead with words of compassion, charity and optimism towards a mended State: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations. "

Faced with a nation engulfed in depression and panicked by a banking crisis, Franklin Delano Roosevelt opened his inaugural speech in 1933 with the assertion that everyone knows today: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." John F. Kennedy's phrase he delivered during his inaugural speech in 1961: "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country" still inspires generations of Americans over 50 years later.

The fact that Americans still reference these memorable inaugural speeches of the past is a testament to how impactful they actually are. We are at a pivotal moment in our nation's history; we have the opportunity to get off our current path of big government control and a 'Washington knows best' way of thinking. Just as some of the greatest inauguration speeches were given during critical times in American history, so will the inaugural address of Donald Trump as the 45th President of the United States on Friday. After



placing his right hand on the bible and swearing before God and the American people to serve this great country as President, Donald J. Trump will deliver his inaugural address with a message to get to work for the American people. So listen to what he says, pay attention for those few words or phrases which will come to define the first 100 days of this presidency and the new direction of our country – you never know what lines will live on forever in history.

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## Congressman Smith's Capitol Report - January 6, 2017

JANUARY 11TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

Congressman Smith's Capitol Report - January 6, 2017

## **Hang in There America**

“I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter: So help me God.”

That is the oath I stood, raised my right hand and swore to uphold before god and the American people this Tuesday as the 115th Congress convened.

This oath is something I take very seriously. Hearing those words this week reminded me that our 45th President, Donald J. Trump will very soon raise his right hand and take an oath of his own in less than 14 days. Soon thereafter he will layout his vision for rebuilding our economy, restoring personal freedoms and liberties and getting the government off the backs and out of the lives of so many families, farmers and small business owners.

This week started the congressional work needed to lay the groundwork for our new President to hit the ground running on day one. The very first action we took was to strengthen the balance of power outlined in our Constitution and give power back to the people by taking the authority to legislate and regulate out of the hands of federal bureaucrats. Over the past 8 years, unelected Washington bureaucrats have run amuck under the Obama Administration, imposing thousands of unnecessary federal regulations that are crushing American families, small businesses and all of rural America. Americans simply cannot continue to survive under the weight of the heavy hand of the federal government.

In fact, the Obama administration has attempted to force through hundreds of “midnight regulations” on their way out the door. That is why I helped pass two pieces of legislation this week that will stop the outgoing administration from further hurting the American people. The passage of the Midnight Rules Relief Act and the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny (REINS) Act paved the way for the restoration of the Constitution under the Trump administration.

President Trump will also hit the ground running on day one in the White House following his inauguration. Instead of spending Inauguration Day parading through the streets of Washington DC for hours before hopping from one celebrity filled Inauguration ball to the next as his predecessor did, Trump has promised to spend the first few hours of his presidency actually doing the job he was elected to do – changing the direction of this

country for the American people. Trump has broken with tradition by requesting that his inauguration parade be shorter than presidents of the past and reducing the number of public events and appearances. In comparison, President Obama attended a whopping 10 balls following his second inauguration in 2009. In a meeting I had with Vice-President elect Mike Pence this week, I heard the same eagerness to get to work – the same refreshing zeal for putting the needs of Americans first, not the needs of a bloated government.

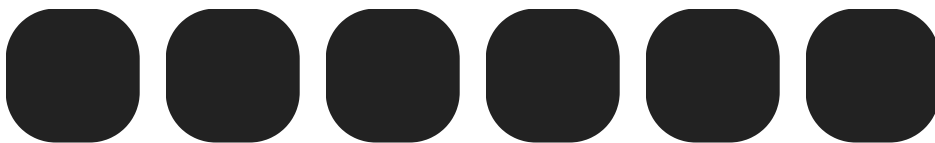
We have a lot of work to do to clean up the mess the Obama Administration created in our country, but President-elect Trump will waste no time on January 20th getting to work. You won't see President Trump basking in the glory of his new title as commander and chief of the United States atop a float in Washington or rubbing elbows with celebrities at fancy inaugural balls. Instead his first hours in office will be behind a desk, repealing some of the worst unconstitutional regulatory overreaches President Obama and his liberal allies have concocted.

Congress began the process of restoring the power of our Constitution this week, paving the way for President Trump once he takes the oath of office. Americans only need to hang in there for a few more days, then it'll be a matter of hanging on as we watch a President who is excited to get to work at a rapid pace to make America great again.

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# Stoddard County Teen Age Republicans Meeting

JANUARY 11TH 2017 BY DEE LOFLIN

## Stoddard County Teen Age Republicans Meeting

Dexter, Missouri - The Stoddard County Teen Age Republicans (TARS) will host their first monthly meeting of the 2017.

Stoddard County Teen Age Republicans are young men and women ages 13 - 19 who have an interest in politics, government, and serving their community!

They hope you will join them!

TARS will meet at McDonald's in Dexter on Sunday, January 29, 2017 from 3 p.m. - 4 p.m.

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