

**West County Democrats  
Legislative Update  
August 14, 2017**



**Federal Items:**

As noted in a syndicated story in the 8/11/17 *Post-Dispatch*, since the start of the Trump administration, EPA actions against polluters have dropped dramatically. Scores of grants to prevent teen pregnancy have been killed three years before their end dates by HHS. Expect similar stories coming out of other executive departments in coming months.

Either by ineptitude or design, a tremendous number of appointments to critical sub-cabinet posts have not been submitted to the Senate. In the State Department, for example, a stated goal of reducing staff by 30% has been accompanied by leaving open senior leadership positions.

When Congress returns from vacation they face a series of deadlines:

- ▶ Fiscal Year 2018 begins October 1<sup>st</sup>. Congress must pass a budget or a continuing resolution.
- ▶ The Treasury runs out of borrowing authority this fall: some conservatives refuse to raise the debt limit.
- ▶ Authorizations for military expenses in Iraq and Afghanistan are expiring.
- ▶ "Obamacare" insurance providers require promised subsidies, or, rates will skyrocket.

**State Items:**

Due to a tax cut bill passed three years ago, most Missourians will get a small tax break beginning next year: the average family will save \$42 while the richest self-employed will save thousands to millions each year.

Despite threats of a series of Special Sessions, the best guess is that no more sessions will be called – though a short session concurrent with the September veto session is possible.

Governor Greitens does not play well with other Missourians. While he has plenty of time to visit with Vice President Mike Pence, he has had very little contact with legislators or other groups. Several division directorships and other major appointments remain open seven months after the Inauguration.

The bad laws passed this past session, including Senate Bill 43 which makes it harder to challenge workplace discrimination, take effect on August 28. Jim becomes the Missouri State Wonderdog on that date.

Right To Work will not take effect later this month. Enough signatures were collected to delay that law until a public vote in November 2018: expect big money to be spent on that ballot issue.

At present, more than 90 petitions have been approved for circulation.

**Glenn Koenen**