



Governmental Services Group

The first session of Missouri's 103rd General Assembly began business yesterday, January 8th, as the first day of the 2025 regular session. The Capitol was buzzing with activity for the first time in months as families and friends attended the swearing-in festivities. In terms of real work, this week was light as the legislature and executive branch get settled with new offices, new positions and so on. A small surprise that had been brewing was the Rep. Sparks-led challenge to Rep. Jon Patterson's presumed speakership. In the Speaker of the House vote, 152-10, there were ten vocal opponents of now Speaker Patterson. This came from his comments related to Amendment 3 overturning the state's abortion ban during the election season, which he appeared less willing to go against the will of the voters on this subject.

While it may have been a fool's errand to challenge the incoming speaker in this way, it does show that there could be some inter-party turmoil on the House side that mimics what we've seen in the Missouri Senate the past few sessions. House rules make it unlikely that these members or the Freedom Caucus will mount any major opposition, but it will be important to watch with close votes. Some dissenters in the majority could be a factor in stalling more controversial legislation.

The Senate makeup is largely the same in terms of Freedom Caucus members within the majority, and while they could stand up on an issue or two, we are expecting a less vocal opposition absent some personalities with less filibusters overall. That said, I don't see the infighting going away anytime soon as we'll have another generation of Senators eyeing higher office and self-policing on who is deemed the most conservative. This rift in the party has led to a dramatic decrease in productivity for the Republican super majority in recent years.

As mentioned previously, the budget outlook may not be as dire as once thought. However, this is not going to be the expanded state budget we have seen in previous years. We can expect to maintain most current appropriation lines but could face cuts in some areas depending on the consensus revenue estimates in the next few months. We will be keeping a very close watch on this.

We do not have chair and committee assignments just yet, and expect those in the coming weeks due to a slow start to the session. Important upcoming dates are Governor-elect Kehoe's inauguration (Jan. 13th) the State of the State Address by the new Governor (Jan. 28th) the final day to file bills (Mar. 1st) the legislative break (Mar. 17th-21st) and the final day of session (May 16th).

We consider it a privilege to represent you all in Jefferson City, and will keep you informed of the latest as we begin the 2025 legislative session.