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Subcommittee on Student Debt Relief  
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## Capitol Report November 8th, 2018

### Strong Voter Turnout Sustains Missouri Republican Majorities

Thank you very much for your support and votes during this election cycle. As a result, I will return to Jefferson City for a final House term this January. As you know, Representatives and Senators are restricted to eight years in their respective chambers. So, I will return for my final term of eligibility in the House, and will again be in the majority party.

When the historic 100<sup>th</sup> General Assembly begins in January 2019, House Republicans will hold 116 of the body's 163 seats. In the Missouri Senate, Republicans will control 24 of the 34 seats. Also, both U.S. Senators will be Republicans as Attorney General Josh Hawley defeated Claire McCaskill. The final totals for elected officials shows that Republicans also retained six of the state's eight Congressional seats.

Tuesday's midterm election saw approximately 58 percent of Missouri's registered voters participate by casting a ballot. The figure is the highest the state has seen for a midterm since 1994 when 59 percent of voters participated in the process. Ballot initiative results are summarized in the next section.

### Several Ballot Initiatives Approved

In addition to selecting candidates for various offices, Missouri voters went to the polls Tuesday to decide the fate of several ballot initiatives dealing with topics ranging from a gas tax increase to the legalization of medical marijuana. When the day was done, voters had approved three changes to the Missouri Constitution and one change to state law.

The ballot initiatives approved by Missouri voters include:

- **Amendment 1 (Clean Missouri)** – This amendment to the Missouri Constitution will change the legislative redistricting process so that it is overseen by a state demographer appointed by the State Auditor, and then reviewed by a citizen commission. The current process calls for a bipartisan panel selected by the governor to oversee the process. The amendment also sets campaign donation limits at \$2,500 for the state Senate and \$2,000 for the House. The current state law sets the mark at \$2,600. Amendment 1 also creates a two-year revolving door ban against legislators becoming lobbyists; eliminates the majority of lobbyist gifts worth more than \$5; limits the ability of individuals and organizations to circumvent the contribution cap limits by counting the money from single-source committees toward the totals for the actual original donors; prohibits legislative fundraising on state property; and requires legislative records and proceedings to be open to the public.
- **Amendment 2 (Medical Marijuana)** – Another constitutional amendment will allow patients with cancer, HIV, epilepsy and some other conditions to have access to medical marijuana. It will change the state constitution to tax marijuana at 4 percent and allocate the \$18 million in annual taxes and fees to veterans programs. The measure will cost the state \$7 million in annual operating costs. It will also generate \$6 million annually for local governments. It will give regulatory authority for licensing the cultivation, testing and sale of marijuana to the Department of Health and Senior Services. The state will be responsible for a "seed-to-sale tracking system" to ensure marijuana only goes to qualified patients.
- **Amendment 4 (Bingo)** – Voters approved a constitutional amendment put on the ballot by lawmakers to change provisions in the Missouri Constitution dealing with the regulation of bingo. The constitutional amendment will allow

individuals who have, for at least six months, been a bona fide member of an organization licensed to conduct bingo to participate in the operation of a bingo game. The Constitution currently requires at least two years of membership prior to participation. It will also remove the statutory restrictions on the advertisement of bingo.

- **Proposition B (Minimum Wage Increase)** – A change to state law approved by voters will increase Missouri’s minimum wage, which currently stands at \$7.85. Proposition B will increase the minimum wage starting in 2019 to \$8.60 and will then increase it each year by 85 cents until it reaches \$12 per hour in 2023.

Amendment 3 another marijuana initiative, Proposition C also a marijuana initiative, and Proposition D which would have provided dedicated money to the Highway Patrol to free up Highway Fund for roads and bridges all failed.

## House Republicans Caucus Decide Leadership

The day after the election that saw Republicans continue their dominance, lawmakers traveled to the State Capitol to decide their leadership team for the 100<sup>th</sup> General Assembly that begins in January. The 116 members of the House Republican Caucus voted on a number of positions that will help set the legislative agenda and lead the House during the 2019 legislative session.

Members decided on the following leadership team:

**Speaker of the House:** Elijah Haahr

**Speaker Pro Tem:** John Wiemann

**Majority Floor Leader:** Rob Vescovo

**Assistant Majority Floor Leader:** J Eggleston

**Majority Whip:** Steve Lynch

**Majority Caucus Chair:** Sonya Anderson

**Majority Caucus Secretary:** Chris Dinkins

**Policy Development Chair:** Jeff Messenger

Following the caucus elections, Speaker-designee Elijah Haahr and Majority Floor Leader Rob Vescovo released the following statement regarding the leadership team for the upcoming legislative session:

“Throughout the past months, Republicans presented bold, 21st Century solutions to develop a strong workforce and create jobs, offering Missourians a chance to achieve the American Dream. Last night, voters sent a clear message affirming our vision for the future of Missouri by electing one of the largest majorities in the history of the House of Representatives. We are honored by the trust and confidence in our colleagues to lead our united Republican majority to serve the people of Missouri. Now with our strong leadership team in place, House Republicans are eager to begin the work of governing and remain committed to putting our solutions into action.”

## Paying Tribute to Our Heroes

As we celebrate Veterans Day this year, I hope you and your family will take time to talk about the significant contributions our veterans have made, and continue to make. We would not be the greatest nation on this planet today without their service and sacrifices, and our future would not be nearly as bright without the leadership they will continue to provide in the years to come.

It is an honor to serve the 51<sup>st</sup> District in the Missouri House of Representatives. Each week I will issue a capitol report to keep you informed of activities in Jefferson City. Any concerns or issues you might have are of great interest to me. I look forward to your input and thoughts, so please feel free to contact me at any time if you have questions, concerns, or ideas to improve our state government and the quality of life for all Missourians. My telephone number is 573-751-2204 or you may contact me by email at [dean.dohrman@house.mo.gov](mailto:dean.dohrman@house.mo.gov). Thank you for working with me to make Missouri a great place to live.

Serving the Constituents of the 51<sup>st</sup> District,



State Representative

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