MO Senate Begins 2016 Legislative Session

Intro: Lawmakers from across the state returned to Jefferson City for the start of the 2016 legislative session. Jonathan Lorenz reports from the State Capitol on the sights and sounds of the first day of the legislative session in the Missouri Senate.

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((NATS))

 Legislative action returned to the State Capitol with the sound of the gavel as lawmakers started the 2016 legislative session.

 Lawmakers in the Missouri Senate have already filed more than three hundred thirty pieces of legislation.

 Super: Sen. Ron Richard

 (R) Joplin

 *“Transportation again is going to be important to the Senate based on the flood that’s even more important now than ever, funding we are not just sure where that’s going to head but we do need to talk about it and as most of you know that’s been around here as long as I have and longer, my key issue is economic development, job creation.”*

On the other side of the aisle, the Senate’s top Democrat states he and his caucus are ready to get back to work.

 Super: Sen. Joseph Keaveny

 (D) St. Louis

 *“Both me and my caucus we’re anxious to get back to work, there is a lot of things we need to focus on from education funding to the flooding to healthcare.”*

The topic of transportation has grabbed early headlines across the state as lawmakers consider how to fund the state’s infrastructure.

 The state of Missouri contains the seventh largest road system in the country, but ranks forty-seventh in the nation when it comes to state funding for roads and bridges.

 *“That’s going to be another topic of discussion hopefully we can just get some kind of compromise, I don’t think the residents of the state of Missouri care whether they pay one dollar sixty-five a gallon or one dollar sixty-seven a gallon but they don’t want to be running into pot holes all of the time.”*

While all options regarding transportation funding are under consideration, the Senate’s second ranking Republican hopes for a little guidance on the issue from the second floor of the State Capitol.

 Super: Sen. Mike Kehoe

 (R) Jefferson City

 *“Budgets are all about decisions and choices just like you make in your own homes and Missourians make in their own homes and certainly the governor had the ability to make some of those choices over his seven years here.*

 *We’ve seen the direction that he has gone, but him getting out in front and helping with the transportation solution would certainly be helpful.”*

Lawmakers return to the floor of the Missouri Senate Monday at 4pm for the start of the first full legislative week of Two Thousand Sixteen… reporting from the State Capitol, I’m Jonathan Lorenz.