**This Week in the Missouri Senate:
Digital Audio File Script on SB 786**

This week in the Missouri Senate, we review a new law that aims at strengthening prosecution of voter fraud…

**Nat Snd / Runs :04 / OC: voter fraud cases.**

*“This is the bill that will allow the secretary of state to investigate voter fraud cases.”*

[Senate Bill 786](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/bts_web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=22400059) was given final approval on May 12 and was signed into law on July 7. It will become law on Aug. 28.

There are many different components to the measure, but its biggest selling point comes after allegations of voter fraud and a lack of ballots at certain polling places in Missouri in recent years.

When Senate Bill 786 was first-debated on the Missouri Senate floor on March 30, sponsor — Sen. Will Kraus of Lee’s Summit — told colleagues his proposal would grant certain powers, only known to prosecutors, to the secretary of state…

**Kraus 1 / Runs :16 / OC: to do this.**

*“There was a situation Boone County, where nobody was willing to write the probable cause, and somebody approached the secretary of state to write the probable cause. The secretary of state said he had no authority to do that. This bill would give the secretary of state the ability to write probable cause in voter fraud cases, if no one else is willing to do this.”*

He adds initially, prosecuting attorneys were opposed to the concept…

**Kraus 2 / Runs :18 / OC: voter fraud cases.**

*“We allow them to appoint somebody in the secretary of state’s office as a special prosecutor. So, the ability to prosecute still stays with the local prosecutor, but — in the absence of that prosecutor having the ability, because maybe they’re part-time or they have other situations that don’t allow them to do that — they can name the secretary of state as a special prosecutor to prosecute voter fraud cases.”*

During debate, Sen. Scott Sifton of Affton mentioned prosecutors were originally opposed for the right reasons…

**Sifton 3 / Runs :21 / OC: more effective one.**

*“Our county prosecutors have general and original jurisdiction of matters in their county, and I think it’s fair to say that they’re fairly jealous of that. Sometimes, we have seen efforts in this building to — frankly — bulldoze through those objections. I would just say that I think that the approach that you have taken is probably the far more effective one.”*

He also says the secretary of state’s office has an Integrity Unit…

**Sifton 4 / Runs :18 / OC: local law enforcement?**

*“But, do you have an understanding as to how the office handles it now, when a complaint is brought forward that somebody is committing voter fraud — or that somebody is voting in multiple states or from multiple addresses within the state. Is it simply referred from the secretary of state’s office to local law enforcement?”*

Additionally, Senate Bill 786 also addresses election challengers and watchers, candidate filing deadlines, electronic voter registration and electronic filing with the [Missouri Ethics Commission](http://www.mec.mo.gov/).

Other election-related legislation this year includes [House Bill 1480](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=29694609), which allows voting machines to be used for the purpose of processing absentee ballots; and [House Bill 1631](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=25580042), which relates to voter ID — and was vetoed by the executive branch.

And, remember, you can follow these and other issues facing the Missouri Senate — plus see a complete list of the [measures](http://www.senate.mo.gov/16info/BTS_Web/GovActionTAT.aspx?SessionType=R) that were sent to the governor this year — by visiting our website: [senate.mo.gov](http://www.senate.mo.gov).

Reporting for the Missouri Senate, I’m Dean Morgan.