

Missouri Travel Council Legislative Report

From Dale Amick - May 19, 2008

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the May 18, 2008 Legislative Update

The Missouri Legislature concluded its 2008 session with a flurry of activity in the final day.

Included in bills passed in the final hours were a crackdown on hiring of illegal immigrants and repeal of the so-called "village" law.

Earlier, the legislature passed a new state budget that includes a 23.6 million dollar budget for the Division of Tourism, an increase of three million dollars over the agency's current budget. The new Division budget set to go into effect July 1 will be the largest in the history of the agency.

The legislature also continued to fund Amtrak at current levels, insuring two trains per day will cross Missouri. In addition, lawmakers approve another five million dollars for construction of rail sidings close to Jefferson City aimed at helping to keep Amtrak trains running on time.

Despite controversy, the legislature was able on the final day to pass repeal of the so-called "village" law, originally enacted last year that enables one person to incorporate into a village. The current "village" law will expire August 28 under legislation passed May 16.

The new illegal immigration crackdown includes making it a crime to give sanctuary to or knowingly hire an illegal immigrant. Businesses also are prohibited from misclassifying employees as independent contractors.

The legislature also passed:

--Tougher requirements for privately-owned swimming pools.

--Changes in watercraft laws, including a .08 intoxication limit while driving a watercraft.