

For TEAM news letter - from Harry Hill

As we begin a new legislative year in Jefferson City, several things come to mind. And I would go so far as to say this speculation and wonder is more acute in 2017 than it has been in many years.

The first thing that comes to mind is the installation of a new governor with unknown (specific) priorities. Other chief executives who have assumed the office in the last half-century have had a record of involvement in at least a general range of issues. (The exception would be Joe Teasdale in 1977).

Will Gov. Greitens push transportation issues or be sensitive to the needs of state employees? While little is known now, the future may become clearer as the session unfolds. An annual "state-of-the-state" address traditionally presented by the governor is expected within the next two weeks.

In other relevant matters at the capitol, on Wednesday (Jan. 11) an independent consulting firm made a presentation to legislators with the results of a comparative study regarding state employee compensation and benefits. The private firm was hired as a result of legislation passed more than a year ago.

The study indicated that Missouri is ranked last among the 50 states in "average annual pay." In addition to raising pay for many employees, the study recommended moving from a 10-year to a 5-year requirement for state employee retirement vesting. About 15 legislators, including four senators, attended the presentation.