

HB 1029 -- Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act

Sponsor: Schoeller

This bill establishes the Missouri Science and Innovation Reinvestment Act and the Missouri Science and Innovation Authority to create, attract, retain, expand, and enhance existing and new science and innovation companies. The authority, with an 11-member board of directors appointed by the Governor, has the duties and rights of an independent instrumentality of the state, including perpetual existence. The authority's powers include:

- (1) Executing contracts with science and technology enterprises; acquiring or selling facilities to be used for research, development, sponsoring, or commercialization of science and innovation; issuing bonds; and spending the moneys in the newly created Science and Innovation Reinvestment Fund to own and possess patents, copyrights, trademarks, and proprietary technology;
- (2) Making loans, grants, and investments; participating in joint ventures; and creating nonprofit entities to administer grants and trusts;
- (3) Owning patents and proprietary technology developed at any facility it owns or operates and compensating the employee who makes the discovery or develops the patent; and
- (4) Licensing, selling, contributing, or providing science and innovation intellectual property to third parties and promoting and facilitating the transfer of technology by assisting with patent filings and managing sales and marketing.

Board members serve three-year terms and may be reappointed once. The board must elect officers as specified in the bill and appoint a president to serve as the chief executive officer. The board must establish an executive committee, a scientific advisory board, and a commercialization advisory board with powers and duties as specified in the bill. The bill specifies the procedures for hiring employees, resolving grievances, and establishing retirement policies.

Moneys will be deposited into the Science and Innovation Reinvestment Fund by the Director of the Department of Revenue, beginning July 1, 2010, and continuing for the next 25 years, equal to a specified percentage of withholding taxes multiplied by the difference of all withholding taxes on science and innovation employees for the prior year minus the 2007 base year taxation. The authority must report annually to the General

Assembly and the Governor on the distribution of funds, the growth of science research in the state, and recommendations for additional legislation. The bill contains provisions regarding the authority's issuance and redemption of bonds; how the Open Meetings and Records Law, commonly known as the Sunshine Law, relates to certain authority dealings; the establishment of a conflict of interest policy; and the tax-exempt status of the authority. The board of directors will be prohibited from selling the authority or its substantial assets without authorization of the General Assembly; however, the authority is not required to submit its capital projects for review.