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Senate President Pro Tem

MISSOURI GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rod Jetton
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 28, 2005

Lawmakers to Lead Bi-Partisan Medicaid Reform Panel Named *Commission Holds Organizational Meeting and Plans to Hear Public Testimony*

JEFFERSON CITY – State Representative Jodi Stefanick, R-Ballwin, and Senate Majority Floor Leader Charlie Shields, R-St. Joseph, were elected chair and co-chair, respectively, to head a 10-member bi-partisan commission that is charged with protecting the state’s most vulnerable people while revamping Missouri’s 40 year-old Medicaid system. Members of the Medicaid Reform Commission elected Stefanick and Shields at an organizational meeting held today at the state capitol.

Senate President Pro Tem Michael R. Gibbons, R-Kirkwood, created the commission through legislation earlier this year and was invited to share his vision for the commission at today’s meeting.

“I have the utmost confidence in the leadership abilities of both Rep. Stefanick and Sen. Shields,” Gibbons said. “Their private service backgrounds lend perfectly to these roles and I know they will balance compassion and fiscal responsibility in their approach to the task of determining who our most vulnerable citizens are and how we can protect them with the right care at the right place, the right time and the right cost.”

The Medicaid Reform Commission was created in Senate Bill 539 and is established to review the state’s current Medicaid system and make recommendations for a new, innovative healthcare delivery system for Missouri. The recommendations must be submitted to the Missouri General Assembly by Jan. 1. Although the commission was created in Senate Bill 539, a resolution (SCR15) was also passed allowing it to begin work before the Aug. 28 effective date of the original bill.

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MEDICAID REFORM CHAIRS

PAGE 2

Other members of the commission include Sen. Jon Dolan, R-Lake St. Louis; Sen. Chuck Purgason, R-Caulfield; Sen. Patrick Dougherty, D-St. Louis; Sen. Rita Heard Days, D-St. Louis; Rep. David Sater, R-Cassville; Rep. Bryan Stevenson, R-Webb City; Rep. Margaret Donnelly, D-St. Louis; and Rep. Yaphett El-Amin, D-St. Louis. Ex-officio members of the commission include Gary Sherman, Director of the Department of Social Services; Dorn Schuffman, Director of the Department of Mental Health; and Julie Eckstein, Director of the Department of Health and Senior Services.

In its first meeting the commission outlined the charges of the panel as well as heard testimony from two experts on the role of healthcare in Missouri.

The commission will next meet at 9 a.m., Wednesday, June 29, 2005, in House Hearing Room 3 in the state capitol, Jefferson City, MO, where they are scheduled to begin hearing public testimony.

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