

# The **Association** report

from the **Capitol**

January 21, 2014

Recently the annual January gathering at the state capitol was observed for (roughly) the 259th time since statehood.

A gavel was rapped a couple of times at high noon in each of the house and senate chambers. It was the beginning of a new year - a new legislative session that offers a clean slate to pursue the hopes and ambitions that, in many cases, were left unfulfilled in past years.

And maybe this year there is a reason for optimism. Revenue has started to rebound from those lean years when belts were tightened and we lost ground to the hand that wields the budget paring knife. I speak specifically of the loss our members suffered when the state's contribution to the deferred comp plan was withheld in 2010. It was then eliminated by the governor in the 2011 budget.

Making this loss even more frustrating is the fact that it came just two years after the state's contribution was increased from \$25 to \$35 a month. As you may recall, it was our Association that led the successful campaign to increase the deferred comp contribution in 2008.

And it's the Association that once again is taking the lead encouraging legislative appropriations leaders to reinstate a state match for the deferred compensation program.

Some meetings with legislators in regard to a return of this benefit have already been held. The results of these sessions are somewhat encouraging. More meetings are planned. I'll be reporting on this periodically as the session moves toward its mid May conclusion.

**From Harry Hill, Lobbyist  
Transportation Employees' Association of Missouri**