

THE INTERNATIONAL URBAN INSTITUTE

"Promoting Political Awareness and Civil Action in Our Community"

Wednesday, March 07, 2007

TO: Missouri Attorney General Jay Nixon

SUBJECT: Missouri State Board of Education Takeover

**From: International Urban Institute
5425 Arlington Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63120**

Dear General Nixon:

Our organization, in association with Save Our Schools, Local 420 St. Louis Teachers and School Related Personnel, and many others, strongly urge your immediate attention to pressing matters regarding the upcoming municipal election for school board members in St. Louis on April 3, 2007.

Our concern is that votes cast in this election (duly certified and prepared by the St. Louis Election Board in cooperation with the Missouri Secretary of State's office) will be nullified by the planned action of the Missouri State Board of Education. That board acting through DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) has announced the creation of a transitional school board composed of three appointed members. This action, if carried out, will also have the effect of nullifying the past elections of 2005 & 2006 where board members were duly elected and sworn.

We believe this to be a most serious matter affecting as it does the very basic tenets of voter rights as guaranteed by the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

In your role as Attorney General of Missouri, it is your clear duty to protect and defend the citizens of Missouri from actions described above. We believe that the circumstances, as well documented in the proceedings of the State Board of Education, DESE and the media---warrant your careful review and timely action.

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It is clear to us that if the State Board of Education acts as it plans to do, it will act in defiance of the overwhelming will of the voters as expressed in a January 30th, 2007, hearing at Harris-Stowe State University and duly reported to the State Board of Education by DESE.

We further submit that the planned takeover will seriously violate the rights of parents and students to a quality public education as guaranteed by the Missouri Constitution (Article 9—Preamble).

It is, therefore, imperative that intervention and/or injunctive action by your office be taken immediately. A thorough investigation of these matters will yield a body of facts and congruence with existing statutes that clearly prevent state takeover. In addition, we ask that any person(s) found to be involved in an attempt at voter nullification be prosecuted to the full extent of the law at both the state and federal levels.

We urge an immediate review of alleged illegal activities along with injunctive relief until a proper, fair and bi-partisan investigation takes place. We are aware that you can appoint an Independent Investigator in cases such as these and we urge that you do so.

Thank you so much for your immediate attention to these most serious matters. Please respond to this communication at your very earliest opportunity stating in detail what you plan to do.

Respectfully and Urgently Submitted,

The Education Committee of the International Urban Institute