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## Critics of Missouri Plan lay out new judicial-selection proposal

By Jo Mannies

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**Bill Placke**, president of the St. Louis chapter of the Federalist Society, has kindly forwarded to us the latest version of the proposed ballot measure to revamp the state's current judicial-selection process for the state Supreme Court, appeals court, and circuits in the St. Louis and Kansas City area.

The aim is get the Legislature to approve the measure and place it on the November 2008 ballot.

Placke emphasizes that the Federalist Society is split over the measure. Those supporting include local lawyers **Tom Walsh** and **Sam Hais** (the latter a former circuit judge, and state Rep. **Jim Lembke**, R-South County.

Among other things, the proposal:

- Sets time limits on judicial vacancies
- Calls for the selection panel to pick five nominees, from which the governor would choose.
- Revamps and expands the selection panel (now three lawyers elected by the lawyers of The Missouri Bar, three citizens selected by the governor, and the chief justice of the state Supreme Court, who serves as chair).

The panel would be expanded to 10 members, some of whom would be picked legislative leaders:

- Two members of the Missouri Bar, appointed by the governor (one from each major party).
- Two gubernatorial appointees who "are not members of the Missouri Bar" (one from each major party).
- One person named by the state House speaker
- One person named by the House minority leader
- One person named by the state Senate president pro tem
- One named by the state Senate minority leader
- Two from the Missouri Bar, named by the attorney general (one from each major party).

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