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I'm Cynthia Spratt with a look at Regional News on Big Country 99...

Among the five statewide propositions Missourians will vote on tomorrow is [Proposition B](#) - the Missouri Quality Home Care Initiative. It would create the Quality Home Care Council that would be tasked with making sure there is a stable, consistent work force of home caregivers to meet the growing demand for in-home care. On the surface, this might seem to be an issue that is not controversial, but the Missouri Chamber of Commerce doesn't see it that way. The Chamber believes approval of the initiative would be a back door way of allowing for greater union organizing. The Chamber's Vice President of Governmental Affairs, Trey Davis says this drops the threshold from 30 percent to 10 percent interest among employees to call an election to unionize. He says the Service Employees International Union is one of the major backers of this initiative because it stands to benefit. Missourians for Quality Home Care says the threshold is lowered because the 30 percent interest rule was created at a time when workers worked side by side and knew each other. Workers in the home care industry rarely see each other and don't have the chance to discuss work issues.

State law makes English the common language of Missouri. A constitutional amendment on the ballot tomorrow would make that official. Legislators in the 90s declared English as the common language in Missouri. Legislators now have asked voters to make it the official language of public proceedings. Rep. Brian Nieves sponsored the House Joint Resolution that placed [Constitutional Amendment One](#) on the ballot. Nieves says the controversy over making English the language of government surprised him. Nieves objects to criticisms that it is designed to bring out the "bigot vote". Nieves points out that his family is from Puerto Rico. He denies the measure is designed for anything but making English the language of official proceedings in the state. Rep. Mike Talboy calls the measure ridiculous and unnecessary. Talboy argues that no governmental body in the state has attempted to conduct business in another language. He says this might be an issue for Texas cities on the Mexican border, but not in Missouri. Talboy says the issue is a political ploy by Republicans, attempting to get their socially conservative base to the polls.

Americans for Tax Reform has released a statement applauding Missouri political candidates for signing the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, which commits the candidate to oppose and vote against any and all efforts to increase taxes. President Bush along with

41 US Senators and 192 members of the US House of Representatives have signed the pledge. In Missouri, Kit Bond, Roy Blunt, Jo Ann Emerson and Kenny Hulshof are among the signers.

The winter heating season has officially begun. The [Missouri Public Service Commission's Cold Weather](#) rule is now in effect. From November 1 through the end of March the vast majority of utility services in the state cannot disconnect services on a day forecasted to be below 32 degrees, during the following 24 hour period and customers must receive ample notification before utilities are turned off. The Cold Weather Rule is designed to help customers with home heat related bills. Last year, 127,000 Missourians received low income home energy assistance funding. The rule does not apply to every utility service in the state, only Public Service Commission owned services. To receive some of the benefits of the Cold Weather Rule customers must sign-up with their heat-related company.

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