

Science Note Guidelines

The following guidelines shall be used to draft thorough, well-resourced, and objective science notes upon request for elected officials and their staff. For all citations, primary literature should be referenced, but secondary information may be used to direct research directions.

1. Summarize Relevant Legislation (1 paragraph)

Briefly summarize proposed legislation and similar legislation passed or introduced in other states. Reference legislation directly, rather than news articles discussing legislation.

2. Identify Local Experts (2-3 scientists and/or engineers)

Search research institutions and MOST Policy Initiative network for experts who may be able to provide technical guidance to fellows and policymakers. Once experts are identified, they should be contacted and approval requested to include their contact information on final science note.

3. Conduct Literature Review

Use a peer-review search engine (i.e., Google Scholar) to conduct a search of peer-reviewed literature related to proposed legislation. Some examples of articles that may be particularly helpful:

- Work conducted in Missouri or surrounding states
- Review papers or meta-analyses

The search will likely not be exhaustive; however, best judgement should be used to select relevant papers that cover a broad range of information that may be useful to policymakers.

4. Summarize Relevant Literature (4-5 paragraphs)

Select 3-4 primary results that would be relevant to policymakers, and briefly summarize each (including in-text citations). The final paragraph should explicitly discuss any limitations or scientific disagreements associated with the current state-of-knowledge in relevant literature. Limitations may include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of knowledge on a particular topic (e.g., not enough literature)
- Inappropriate scope of research (e.g., studies conducted elsewhere)
- Limited statistical design and inference (e.g., stats don't answer research question)
- Scientific disagreement or lack of consensus
- Funding sources or authors leading to biased results

5. Highlight Main Scientific Results (4-5 bullet points)

Select the overarching points from the literature review and list as bullet points directly following the legislative summary. Highlights should be a responsible representation of the literature and may stand alone. Do not include in-text citations in highlights.



MOST Policy Initiative, Inc. a nonprofit organization aimed to improve the health, sustainability, and economic growth of Missouri communities by providing objective, non-partisan information to Missouri's decisionmakers.