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## ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

### Gubernatorial banner causes flap at Mo. Fraternity

Associated Press | Posted: Wednesday, May 23, 2012 6:12 pm |

**A large campaign banner for a Republican gubernatorial candidate came down Wednesday at a fraternity at the University of Missouri-Columbia after a high-ranking staff member for Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon apparently raised concerns about whether the political sign was appropriate.**

Republican challenger Dave Spence hung a campaign banner last week on a new house being built for Beta Theta Pi, where Spence is an alumnus.

A day later, fraternity chapter counselor Jason Swindle said he got a phone call from the fraternity's national office in Ohio saying that Nixon communications director Sam Murphey had contacted the office to suggest that the political banner could jeopardize the tax-exempt status of a fraternity foundation and should come down.

Murphey, a Beta Theta Pi alumnus from Truman State University in Kirksville, declined to discuss the issue in a phone interview with The Associated Press. He instead sent an email stating: "I was a member of Beta Theta Pi, and I firmly believe in the organization's educational mission. I am not going to comment on actions I took, if any, in my personal capacity."

Bill Toalson, a Beta representative on the construction site, confirmed that after the banner was raised, "comments came back through the governor's office that it shouldn't be there." He said some alumni of the Columbia chapter also had reservations about favoring one candidate over another.

"The reason we took it down is we had some of our older members of the fraternity question whether or not we should be making a political statement as a fraternity," said Toalson, a 1970 graduate of the university.

Spence graduated in 1980 and later amassed a fortune by owning and selling a St. Louis business that produced plastic products, such as bottles. He donated \$1 million toward the construction of a new house for the Columbia fraternity chapter and also served as chairman for a capital campaign that sought to raise \$10 million for the project.

Spence campaign manager Jared Craighead said Wednesday that although the campaign asked if it could hang a banner on the house, it had no expectation that Spence was due the free political advertising because of his contribution. Craighead, who is an attorney, said he didn't believe the banner violated any Internal Revenue Service guidelines for nonprofits, such as a fraternity foundation that provides scholarships to students.

"What's inappropriate is the governor's official staff engaging in political activity" by calling the national fraternity to suggest the banner was inappropriate, Craighead said.



## Fraternity flap brings down banner

By Janese Silvey

A University of Missouri fraternity house has taken down a banner supporting gubernatorial candidate Dave Spence, and a fraternity adviser said it was because a representative from Gov. Jay Nixon's office had complained about it to the national chapter.

Jason Swindle, an alumnus and chapter adviser to the Beta Theta Pi house, said he received a call Friday from the national office that the banner was a threat to the chapter's tax-exempt status.

"They had received a call from the governor's office, and the point was made by the governor's representative that we need to take that down, that it would jeopardize our nonprofit status for our foundation if we left it up," Swindle said.

The person at the national office, who was not available for comment, told Swindle that Nixon's representative was spokesman Sam Murphey. Asked whether he placed the phone call during state work hours, Murphey said: "I am not going to comment on actions I took, if any, in my personal capacity."

Murphey said in an email that he "was a member of Beta Theta Pi, and I firmly believe in the organization's educational mission."

The banner has been taken down, and the fraternity will not press the issue, Swindle said.

"We have bigger fish to fry. ... If there's a problem with jeopardizing our non-profit status for our foundation, certainly we don't want to mess with that," he said.

Spence is an MU alumnus and was a member of Beta Theta Pi. He is heading a campaign to raise \$10 million for a new fraternity house, a position he held long before considering a bid for governor, campaign representative Jared Craighead said.

"Dave is a proud supporter and has appreciated the opportunity to give back to a fraternity that gave so much to him," he said. "He gave \$1 million himself because that's how important he felt like it was."

Reach Janese Silvey at 573-815-1705 or e-mail [jsilvey@columbiatribune.com](mailto:jsilvey@columbiatribune.com).

## Gubernatorial banner causes flap at MU fraternity

By The Associated Press

May 23, 2012 | 5:31 p.m. CDT

**JEFFERSON CITY — A fraternity at MU is removing a Republican campaign banner after concerns were raised by Democratic Gov. Jay Nixon's communications director.**

Republican gubernatorial candidate Dave Spence hung a banner last week on a house being built for Beta Theta Pi, where Spence is an alumnus.

Fraternity chapter counselor Jason Swindle said he got a phone call the next day from the fraternity's national office saying Nixon aide Sam Murphey had expressed concern the banner might jeopardize the nonprofit status of a fraternity foundation.

Murphey declined Wednesday to comment to The Associated Press about any actions he took.

Bill Toalson, a Beta representative on the construction site, said the banner was taken down because some alumni had reservations about favoring one candidate over another.

# MU professor hears reaction after panel's prostate cancer screening recommendation

By [Teresa Avila](#)

May 23, 2012 | 7:11 p.m. CDT

COLUMBIA — A recommendation announced Monday that men forgo routine prostate cancer screenings has drawn both gratitude and rejection.

**"I think we're seeing the full spectrum of responses that you might anticipate," said Michael LeFevre, vice chairman of MU's Department of Family and Community Medicine. LeFevre is also co-vice chairman of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the group that made the recommendation.**

Urologists and prostate cancer survivors have shown special concern about the recommendation, LeFevre said.

"It's hard for doctors and patients both to accept that not all cancers need to be detected or treated," LeFevre said. "It's especially hard when so many personal stories seem to contradict the science."

The task force concluded that there's little if any evidence that a blood test known as PSA testing saves lives. Instead, it announced that too many men suffer impotence, incontinence, heart attacks and occasionally death from the treatment of tiny tumors that never would have killed them.

"The studies show that there are very, very small benefits and significant harms, and that's what a man should understand if they're going to get a PSA done," LeFevre said.

Too much PSA, or prostate-specific antigen, in the blood only sometimes signals prostate cancer is brewing. It also can mean a benign enlarged prostate or an infection. Only a biopsy can tell.

Columbia urologist Michael Cupp of the Urology Associates of Central Missouri called PSA testing one piece of the puzzle in assessing a man's risk of prostate cancer. The test's contribution, though far from exact, is still necessary, Cupp said.

According to the National Cancer Institute, the U.S. death rate from prostate cancer fell by an average of 3.7 percent per year between 1994 and 2009. Cupp attributed the decline to early detection from PSA testing.

"Prior to PSA testing, because we had only the rectal exam, most prostate cancers were fairly advanced by the time we found them," Cupp said. "So the mentality of treatment was fairly aggressive."

After PSA testing became more prevalent, urologists became more comfortable with active surveillance of low-risk diseases such as prostate cancer, Cupp said.

This need for less aggressive treatment nearly closely falls in line with what the task force is recommending. The point of contention, however, comes from the task force's interpretation that the PSA's negatives outweigh its positives. Many urologists, including Cupp, disagree with this interpretation.

The 16-member task force has no urologists or oncologists on its panel and based its decision on a review of statistics from published scientific research.

This does not reflect the experience of those working with prostate cancer on a daily basis, Cupp said.

LeFevre sees it differently. "It's actually ideally suited to make an unbiased judgment about what the science tells us about screening without preconceived notions or conflict of interest," he said.

Both men said the ultimate goal is to inform patients so they can make an independent decision to receive the PSA test.

Among men, the American Cancer Society recommends that discussion about testing begin at age 50. High-risk patients might want to begin testing earlier. The decision includes factors such as race or family history. Whether to get the test should be a conscious decision made by the patient, LeFevre said.

Cupp said he recommends checking PSAs. "But I would not begrudge any person that chooses not to have it tested," he said. "I think it is a personal choice, but it needs to be a choice made on good information."

Recently, more patients have come to him with questions about PSA testing and prostate cancer, he said.

Most men will get prostate cancer if they live long enough. Each year, some 240,000 American men are diagnosed with it, most with slow-growing tumors that carry a very low risk of morphing into the kind that can kill.

The Obama administration said Monday that Medicare will continue to pay for PSA screenings, a simple blood test. Other insurers tend to follow Medicare's lead.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

*Supervising editor is Elizabeth Brixey.*