



2008 CAPITOL REPORT

SENATOR HARRY KENNEDY - DISTRICT 1
SERVING PARTS OF ST. LOUIS CITY AND COUNTY



Room 226, State Capitol, Jefferson City, MO 65101 Phone 573-751-2126 St. Louis Phone: 314-481-5857 Email: harry_kennedy@senate.mo.gov

Dear Neighbor,

I hope you are having a safe and beneficial 2008. As I am writing to you I am reflecting on the legislative session that ended May 16th.

The session was productive in a number of areas. The first is property tax relief. My thanks to all the people who either wrote, e-mailed or called about the burden of the current property tax system. The correspondence helped me convince some colleagues to understand the importance of property tax reform. I was a co-sponsor of SB 711, which modifies provisions regarding property taxation. This bill was signed into law on July 1st and should provide protection from backdoor tax increases.

I was the sponsor of SB 718 that modifies provisions of certain tax credit programs administered by the Department of Economic Development which was signed into law June 16th. Although this legislation might not have a direct impact on our daily lives, it will have an indirect impact by attracting high-paying jobs with benefits to Missouri.

I was disappointed that I could not convince my colleagues to pass SB 717 which would have increased the amount of tax credits available for taxpayers who modify their home if a disabled person resides in the home or if the disabled person was the homeowner. As we grow older, modifications in our homes will become a reality. This legislation would give a small tax break to individuals making modifications for someone who has a disability, such as people who need a ramp for a wheelchair or motorized device, pull-up bars in bathrooms, etc. I will not be in the legislature next year due to term limits, but I have talked to a colleague about sponsoring this legislation next year.

I have had the opportunity to visit with many school officials, business chambers, religious and community leaders and know that they are all very committed to the improvement of the region.

In March of this year, I had the opportunity to represent St. Louis City and St. Louis County in Bosnia-Herzegovina. I visited our sister city Brcko District. This trip was not at the expense of the taxpayers. I had the opportunity to visit with government, religious and civic leaders in Brcko. These individuals are all working together for a better Bosnia-Herzegovina. I was accompanied on the trip by Ibrahim Vajzovic who is president of the United Bosnian Association of St. Louis.

The people of Brcko are interested in mirroring some of our policies and procedures as they move forward in their governance. I see unlimited potential in a collaborative arrangement between Brcko and the State of Missouri.

I also had the opportunity along with seven other St. Louisians to visit the country of Turkey. The trip was sponsored by the Turkish American Society of Missouri and Bakiad of Turkey. Mustafa Yuvaz was our Turkish leader and serves as vice president of the Turkish American Society of Missouri. We had the privilege of meeting with government, hospital, religious and school officials. The purpose of the trip was to foster religious and cultural understanding between people. I found the people to be warm, friendly and very helpful.

I have included on the last page of this newsletter a "What's on your mind?" section — please contact me with any thoughts, ideas or suggestions. My term ends January 7, 2009, so I will not have the opportunity to file any new legislation. If you have an idea for legislation I will transmit that to the new senator.

Your neighbor,

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People you should Know:

Officer Ramiro Martinez is a five-year veteran of the St. Louis Police Department, all in the Third District. Officer Martinez has proven himself to be a consummate professional. He gets along well with the public and his fellow officers. Every supervisor he has worked for will attest to his professionalism and dedication to his job. Officer Martinez was "Officer of the Month" three times in 2007 and now is Third District "Officer of the Year."



Officer John Wilson is a St. Louis County police officer who serves in the Affton Southwest Precinct where he has been assigned since 2003. Prior to joining the county police department, Officer Wilson became a certified Emergency Medical Technician in 1989 and entered the Air Force in 1992.



Officer Greg VanMierlo is St. Louis County 4th precinct "Officer of the Year." He patrols the southern portion of the precinct. Officer VanMierlo also volunteers countless hours to the St. Louis County Police Explorer Post. He often volunteers to take on additional assignments. Officer VanMierlo is a valuable asset.



Officer Mickey Christ was chosen by his peers as St. Louis County Police, Second District, "Officer of the Year." He's a two-time "Officer of the Month" and has been with the department for two years. Officer Christ is an exemplary employee, always displaying a high sense of personal responsibility and exceptional performance on and off duty.



Officer Alphonso Neal, II, is the St. Louis Police Department First District's "Officer of the Year." He is assigned to the C-Platoon, or night watch. Officer Neal is also February's "Officer of the Month." He has received two Captains' Letters of Excellence and a Chief's Letter of Commendation. In addition, Officer Neal never called in sick during 2007.



Dr. Donna Jahnke, who is a resident of the 1st Senatorial District, is principal at Reed Elementary School in the Ladue School District. She started in the district as a teacher and then served as Community Services and Early Childhood Director. Dr. Jahnke has emphasized the Balanced Literacy workshops and led the Academic Achievement Committee.

- Sgt. Brent Cole
- Todd Bruemer, U.S. Navy
- David Blosser, U.S. Navy
- Brett Winkelmann, Coast Guard
- Ben McCauley, U.S. Air Force
- Cpl. Matthew T. Straub, U.S. Marines
- Army Specialist Matthew Saito
- Brendan Garvey, U.S. Navy
- Sgt. Stephen C. Walters, Army National Guard
- Senior Airman James Dobrynski, U.S. Air Force
- Sgt. Victor A. Will, U.S. Army
- Sgt. James A. Will, U.S. Army

Gubernatorial Appointments

Missouri citizens serve on more than 200 boards and commissions that provide professional regulation, protect public safety and health, enforce state statutes and advise the executive branch. Board members are appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate. A full list of boards and commissions is available at:

www.gov.mo.gov/boards/boards.htm



Francis "Chris" Rey joined the Board of Private Investigator Examiners. This board is composed of five members, including two public members appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. The board ensures that applicants complete a course of training conducted by a certified trainer; pass a written examination; and submit to an interview with the board.

John W. Siscell, III, joined the Truman State University Board of Governors. Mr. Siscell will serve a 6-year term on the board, which consists of 10 voting members. The board works under the university's mission of offering an exemplary undergraduate education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences by emphasizing and supporting excellence in teaching, pure and applied research, and public service.



If you would like to be considered for an appointment (most of which are strictly volunteer positions):

1. Complete the application form (www.gov.mo.gov/boards/BoardsApp.pdf) or call our office and we'll mail it to you.
2. Mail to: Senator of the 1st District, State Capitol, Room 226, Jefferson City, MO 65101 — or fax it to: 573-522-2465.
3. Please note that all potential appointees will undergo a complete background check.

2008



Dr. Donna Jahnke, Missouri National Distinguished Principal for 2008, in the center of the photo. From left to right: Luella "Babe" Yates, Jahnke's grandmother; Cleta Pouppart, friend; Richard and Carol Jahnke, father and mother; joined by the senator.



Students from The College School: Kiran Jeevanjee, Lucy Bhuyan, Benjamin Asyre, and Madlyn Nagel meet with Sen. Kennedy to discuss the senator's duties and responsibilities as an elected official.



Crestwood Elementary 4th graders' annual visit with Sen. Kennedy.



A real estate association's leadership training group.



Sam, Gus and Max with their father, Ed Beffa, and Sen. Kennedy. Sam, Gus and Max were Senate Pages.



St. Simon 6th grade class meets with Sen. Kennedy.

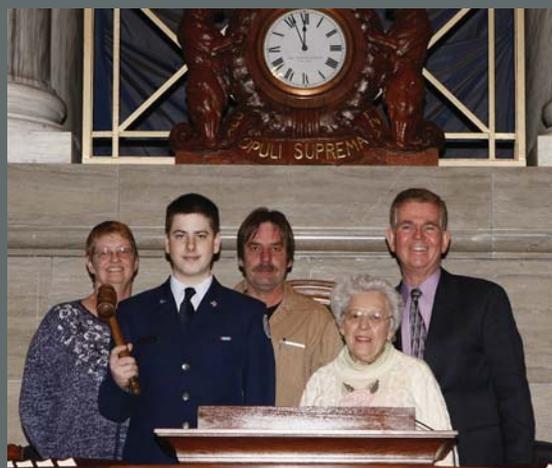
Visits



Foster and Adoptive Families Rally members in Jefferson City on April 14, 2008.



Members of a trade union take part in a rally at the Capitol. From the left: Matt Gilman, Dan Gilman, Mark Kreutzmann, Steve Jahnsen, and Sen. Kennedy.



Barbara, Gary and Alex Vehlewald and Lorraine Ura visit with the senator.



Sen. Kennedy, hospital executive Brenda Battle, and Hüseyin Eren, Deputy Secretary General of Finance in the Turkish government, exchange information.



St. Catherine Laboure Girl Scouts' annual visit.



Bosnian leaders visit the Missouri Capitol.

Business Leaders Address Community Issues



Crestwood-Sunset Hills Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting ceremony. From left to right: Crestwood Mayor Roy Robinson, behavioral health specialists Steve Ditzler and Janet Woodburn, and Senator Kennedy.



Senator Kennedy reviewing revenue numbers with Gregory F.X. Daly, St. Louis City Collector of Revenue.



At a recent South County Chamber event, Senator Kennedy congratulates *Ms. Green Park 2008*, Mrs. Loretta Terry.



Joan Edelson (*left*), executive director of the Affton Chamber of Commerce, and Sen. Kennedy at a ribbon cutting ceremony for a business owned by Patricia Gaffney (*center*).



April 1, 2008, was South County Chamber Day at the Capitol. Special thanks to Carole and Fred Baras and Chamber Director Donna Abernathy Schumann for another great event.



Senator Kennedy visiting with Barb Hehmeyer, Executive Director of the Lemay Chamber of Commerce.



Danielle Giessman, Rich Vollmar, aviation executive A.C. "Butch" Giessman, and Spirit of St. Louis Airport Director John Bales meet with Sen. Kennedy at Spirit Airport.

Reverse Mortgage Warning

A reverse mortgage, a loan against a home that does not have to be paid back as long as the homeowner is in the home, may be a good option — once all the facts are gathered.

By law, reverse mortgage lenders have to supply you with a free licensed counselor that is trained and approved by the state. Be sure you get the state appointed counseling and all of the facts before making any agreement with any reverse mortgage lender.

There are three free licensed mortgage counselors in St. Louis. Go to www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/hecm/hecmclist.cfm for more information.

Housing Options Provided for the Elderly
314-776-0155/888-776-0155

zbuz@hotmail.com

4265 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO, 63110

National Council on Aging

314-664-5051

sflanigan@justinepetersen.org

1023 N. Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63106

Redemption Center CDC

314-533-3344

redem_outmin@yahoo.com

4454 Manchester Ave., St. Louis, MO 63110

The 2nd Regular Session of the 94th General Assembly

Economic Development Senate Bill 718

Senate Bill 718, the economic development legislation I sponsored, increases the amount of state tax credits available to create new jobs and encourage new businesses in economically-depressed neighborhoods.

SB 718 at a Glance:

- Increases the annual cap for Enhanced Enterprise Zone Program tax credits from \$14 million to \$24 million.
- Increases the Neighborhood Assistance Program tax credits from \$4 million to \$6 million annually.
- Reforms the tax increment financing (TIF) mechanism that had been abused by too many local governments throughout Missouri.
- Increases the annual cap on the Quality Jobs Program from \$40 million to \$60 million, and it extends the sunset on job retention tax credits to 2013.

Fixing Property Taxes Senate Bill 711

Senate Bill 711, a legislative priority I co-sponsored, corrects a problem that principally has affected St. Louis area residents. This act requires tax rate rollbacks by all political subdivisions in reassessment years, it changes the way voter-approved tax increases are applied to assessed values, and it changes the time line for the assessment and appeal of property taxes. It also prohibits local governments from imposing penalties or interest when there is clear evidence the county made an error in determining the amount of tax due.

St. Louis and St. Louis County residents will be among the first to see the changes made by SB 711 in 2009.

Home ownership is part of the American Dream and one of the greatest opportunities for personal wealth and savings, but our current local property tax system had become an increasing burden on Missourians. Mandatory rollbacks will protect Missourians from unexpected and unfair property tax increases, at a time when families are trying to cope with rising food and fuel prices.

Protecting Children from Online Predators

Senate Bill 818

Senate Bill 818, which I also co-sponsored, stems from a tragic event involving the relatively new phenomenon known as “cyber bullying” or “cyber harassment.”

Senate Bill 818 requires school boards to have a written policy requiring school administrators to report crimes of harassment and stalking committed on school property to law enforcement officials. The law also clearly defines the terms “harassment” and “stalking” and increases the penalties for committing such acts. Our children should feel safe online, and SB 818 takes some important steps to help ensure their safety while surfing.



Sen. Kennedy sits beside Lt. Gov. Peter Kinder for the signing of Senate Bill 718.

TELEGRAPH ROAD AND THE I-255 BRIDGE REOPEN IN SOUTH ST. LOUIS COUNTY

On June 10, 2008, there was a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by many South County stakeholders and business leaders represented by the South County Chamber of Commerce (pictured below). The new bridge opened May 1, 2008, to traffic and is part of a \$7.1 million bridge reconstruction project to replace the two bridges over I-255 with one bridge and improve interchange flow. It has been my pleasure to work with the State Representatives of the 1st Senatorial District. Here I am pictured with Representative Sue Schoemehl at the podium and Charlie Dooley, St Louis County Executive, in the background.



What's on your mind?

The political process depends on the cooperation of its citizens and lawmakers. I would appreciate hearing your thoughts. My contact information can be found at the bottom of this page. Please send me your thoughts, concerns and ideas about any issue relating to the Missouri Legislature. I look forward to hearing from you.

Comments:

Name: _____

Address: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

State Senator
Harry Kennedy

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Jefferson City MO 65101

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