



WEEKLY REPORT

State Senator Gary Nodler
District 32



Room 433 - State Capitol Bldg. - Jefferson City, MO 65101 - Phone: (573) 751-2306

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For additional information contact:
Barbara Mustoe
(573) 751-2306

MISSOURI SENATE ADDRESSES ISSUES THAT IMPACT MISSOURI'S FAMILIES

The United States is facing a crisis of values, which is quickly reaching catastrophic proportions. It is impossible to drive down the highway, turn on the television or open a magazine without being confronted with our society's moral decay.

"The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" is one of our most important works of history and we must learn the lessons of that book in order to prevent a future historian from writing the epic work "The Decline and Fall of the American Empire."

One of the most critical breakdowns in our society is that of the family. This nation was built on the foundation of Judeo-Christian values, with family being based around the marriage of a man and a woman.

I have to admit I never expected that we would ever have to legislate that marriage is a union between a man and a woman, but that is exactly what lawmakers are being forced to do.

This week the Senate gave first round approval to a measure I co-sponsored, Senate Joint Resolution 29, which would allow voters to amend Missouri's constitution to state that marriage is a union between a man and a woman.

In 1998, lawmakers passed a statute defining marriage as a union between a man and a woman – regardless of where a marriage is performed. SJR 29 would allow voters to place similar language in Missouri's constitution.

It's a tragedy that we have to consider this type of legislation, but with same-sex marriages now being performed in San Francisco and laws on marriage changing in other states – it's imperative that Missouri act quickly to clearly define marriage as a union only between a man and a woman.

A constitutional amendment would help defend the ban on same-sex marriages if challenged in court. Currently, 37 other states have laws that forbid same-sex marriages.

First-round approval on the Missouri measure came on the same day that President George Bush said he endorsed an amendment to be put in the United States Constitution banning same-sex marriage to “prevent the meaning of marriage from being forever changed.”

Since being elected to the Missouri Senate, I have had the opportunity to drive across the state to attend meetings and conferences. I enjoy seeing our state’s scenery, however, I have been horrified by the proliferation of X-rated billboards littering our highways advertising “adult cabarets” and other sexually oriented businesses.

It’s time to change that.

The Senate has given first-round approval to Senate Bill 870, which would prohibit locating sexually oriented billboards within one mile of a state highway.

Personally, as a grandfather, I want to be able to drive down Missouri’s highways without having to worry that my granddaughter will be exposed to the seedy messages and suggestive pictures bought and paid for by an industry with no regard for the innocence of our children.

After a final Senate vote, both of these bills will be sent to the House of Representatives for consideration.

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