

STATE SENATOR

Matt Bartle

8th District



2005 Legislation

The 2005 legislative session, which ran from January through May, was one of the most productive in recent history in terms of the quantity of substantive legislation that was sent to the governor. Senator Matt Bartle, the Senate Judiciary Committee chairman, sponsored and co-sponsored multiple Senate bills that successfully made their way through the legislative process. He was also the Senate handler of several important House bills as they were debated in the Senate. Here is a list of some of the bills Senator Bartle successfully handled this session.

Bills Sponsored by Sen. Bartle

SB 343 - Establishes the Missouri Quality Jobs Program, allowing some businesses to keep a portion of the state withholding tax on wages paid for newly created jobs.

SB 423 - Streamlines and improves a groundbreaking DNA testing program Sen. Bartle established in 2004. The program requires Missouri felons to give a DNA sample to authorities that is then matched against evidence of unsolved crimes already on file. In five months, the program has identified matches in 28 cold cases, including seven rapes, three of which were tied to serial rapists, and one homicide. Law enforcement officials have said this is the most important anti-crime initiative in Missouri in the past two decades.

SB 322 - Eastern Jackson County's task force on underage drinking asked Sen. Bartle to draft legislation to address the growing problem of underage drinking in our community. This bill will hold legally liable adults who knowingly allow minors other than their own children to drink on their property.

SB 323 - Establishes a program to promote adult stem cell research in Missouri. It defines eligibility criteria for future grants to facilities that collect cord blood for research and treatment purposes. Cord blood is an excellent, non-controversial source of stem cells that can be used to treat a variety of human illnesses.

SB 103 and 115 - In response to requests from local school officials, Sen. Bartle sponsored these bills to remove "red tape" that was tying the hands of officials. The bills allow school districts to convene a subcommittee of their board to rule on pupil residency waiver requests and give school officials more time to make student enrollment decisions.

House Bills Handled by Sen. Bartle

- HB 353 - Strengthens Missouri's criminal laws
- Closes a loophole created by a court decision that struck down part of the law protecting children from indecent exposure;
 - Requires repeat sex offenders who abuse children to wear a GPS electronic device;
 - Expands the definition of endangering a child to include making methamphetamine at a place where a child lives;
 - Increases penalties for financial exploitation of the elderly and disabled;
 - Prohibits employers from requiring Social Security numbers to be used as employee numbers for work-related activity;
 - Allows courts to order convicted criminals to reimburse victims of auto theft.

Bills Co-sponsored by Sen. Bartle

SB 539 - Reforms Medicaid (see page 2).

SB 270 - Requires the state treasurer to consider the benefits to the state when state money is invested in banking institutions.

Bartle Bills Passed as Amendments

HB 972 - Sen. Bartle amended anti-porn provisions onto this bill, which imposes common-sense regulations on sexually-oriented businesses. The bill bans total nudity, requires that performers be kept a reasonable distance from patrons, and prohibits anyone under the age of 21 from entering the property.

Other Major Bills from the 2005 Session

School Funding - Senate Bill 287

- Develops a school funding system that distributes education funds more equitably and moves the current program from one driven by property tax rates to a system based on the differing needs of school districts.
- The new "foundation formula" applies a minimum per-pupil dollar figure of \$6,117 and adjusts the figure according to varying property values and costs of living for each district.
- Implements an \$800-million increase in the annual education budget over the course of seven years.
- Authorizes \$15 million in grants for smaller districts.

Medicaid - Senate Bill 539

- Shaves an estimated \$600 million from the state budget by revising Medicaid eligibility guidelines.
- Decreases the number of Medicaid recipients by lowering the income threshold for some programs.
- Provides optional care for services such as prosthetics, dental care and hearing aides.
- Requires a process of eligibility verification for Medicaid applicants.
- Keeps Medicaid from going bankrupt.
- Establishes a commission to fundamentally reform the way Medicaid operates in Missouri.



Tort Reform - House Bill 393

- Restricts "venue shopping," a process allowing trials to be moved to jurisdictions that tend to give higher-than-average jury awards.
- Lowers caps on jury awards for noneconomic damages in medical malpractice cases.
- Overturns a court decision that allowed plaintiffs to bypass Missouri's damages cap and collect up to the full cap amount for multiple incidents arising out of the same injury.
- Will reduce the number of unreasonable jury awards and keeps top-quality doctors and businesses in Missouri.

Workers' Comp Reform - Senate Bill 1

- Modifies the state workers' compensation law.
- Requires that work be "the prevailing factor" instead of merely a "substantial factor" in the injury.
- Sets limits on compensation for preexisting conditions in which work-related injuries cause increased disability.
- Prohibits compensation to employees for accidents that occur while traveling to or from their place of work.
- Requires disabilities to be demonstrated and certified by a physician; medical findings demonstrable on physical examination or by appropriate tests or diagnostic procedures shall prevail over subjective medical findings.

Contact Senator Bartle:

If you have questions or comments on any issue involving Missouri government, feel free to contact my office. We will be happy to help you. My office is on the fourth floor of the Capitol, Room 431, and the phone number is 888-711-9278.

Visit me online at www.senate.mo.gov/bartle or www.senatormattbartle.org

e-mail: matt_bartle@senate.mo.gov