

Column from Sen. Matt Bartle for

Week of Sep. 08, 2005

### **Legislature Convenes Special Session in Jefferson City**

This week the legislature reassembled in Jefferson City for a special session called by the governor to address several important issues that need immediate attention. Chief among these was a call by the governor to pass legislation protecting unborn children and minor girls facing the monumental decision of whether to have an abortion.

On Thursday morning the Senate Judiciary Committee which I chair convened to consider this bill which was referred to us by the President Pro Tem of the Senate. After taking public testimony, the committee voted to send the bill to the full Senate for the debate.

I have discussed this bill in a previous column so I will only briefly recap its three provisions. First, it would require a doctor performing abortions to at least have local hospital privileges in case the woman getting an abortion needed to be admitted. Secondly, it would ensure that a person with a financial interest in performing abortions (such as an employee of Planned Parenthood) could not be a court appointed guardian for a minor asking a judge for permission to get an abortion without her parent's consent.

Finally, the bill would make an adult who conspires to take a minor across state lines in order to evade Missouri's current law requiring a parent's consent for an abortion financially liable in civil court. This provision should help protect a young girl who finds herself pregnant by a child molester who then seeks to hide the evidence of his crime by taking her out of state before her parents find out.

There will be considerable debate on this issue and opponents of the bill will likely employ a tactical procedural move called a filibuster in an attempt to stall and ultimately stop it. In the end, I am confident that the full Senate will pass this bill by week's end and send it to the House of Representatives and ultimately to the governor for his approval.

During our brief special session we are also tasked with tying up loose ends on a worker's compensation bill; fixing an unintended consequence of a bill rightly seeking to protect individuals from having their name and address maliciously posted on the Internet; and streamlining inconsistencies in laws relating to drunk driving, child safety and prescription drug distribution in schools.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by e-mail at [matt\\_bartle@senate.state.mo.us](mailto:matt_bartle@senate.state.mo.us) or by phone at (888) 711-9278.

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