



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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The Cauthorn Report

JEFFERSON CITY, MO - Doctors facing high medical malpractice claims will soon see relief with Governor Matt Blunt's signing of tort reform legislation, House Bill 393. Senator John Cauthorn (R-18) joined the governor Monday for ceremonial bill signings in Hannibal and Kirksville.

"Our doctors will see results within a year that will help in lowering medical malpractice insurance," said Cauthorn. "This means highly skilled docs like OB-GYNs, critically needed in our area, will stay in rural Missouri and we won't have to travel to Columbia or Iowa for services we need."

Cauthorn joined Governor Blunt during the bill signing at the Hannibal Regional Hospital and Northeast Regional Medical Center in Kirksville. Reforms include prohibiting "venue shopping" for jurisdictions that give higher-than-average jury awards and lowers caps on punitive damage awards. The bill becomes effective August 28.

Dental hygienists are key to quality dental health care. The Senate Aging, Families, Mental and Public Health Committee heard testimony Wednesday on Cauthorn's Senate Bill 523 establishing the distant dental hygienists education program.

The program allows higher education institutions to establish distance learning programs that meet dental accreditation standards. Course work can be completed off-campus and clinical training can be delivered in a licensed dental office or approved facility.

"Keeping accredited dental hygienists in rural Missouri to provide needed cleaning and scaling of teeth is crucial," said Cauthorn. "By creating opportunities for aspiring hygienists to learn in their own

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hometown they are more likely to stay in their community.”

During legislative recess last week Cauthorn met with individuals regarding legislation affecting Medicaid. Cauthorn spoke at a forum sponsored by Pike County Agency for Developmental Disabilities and had staff meet with a group in Audrain County.

Visiting the capitol this week were numerous Future Farmers of America members from nearly every county in the district. The high school students were in town for a day of educational activities sponsored by Farm Bureau.

In the coming weeks Senators will consider budget proposals and a new school funding formula.

Sen. Cauthorn represents Missouri’s 18th Senate District. He can be reached at his capitol office at (573) 751-6850. You can also visit his web page by going to www.senate.mo.gov/cauthorn.