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The Cauthorn Report

Special Session Recap: Saving Lives, Empowering Workers, Protecting Farms

Throughout my five years in elected office one of my top priorities has been protecting the life of the unborn. The governor called a special session to be held concurrently with our annual veto session to pass an important piece of pro-life legislation. I am proud to say because of our work there will be fewer abortions.

I believe parents have the right to know what is happening in their child's life. Every neighboring state, except Illinois, requires parental consent for a minor seeking an abortion. Parents are involved in every medical decision facing their child and abortion should not be an exception.

Unfortunately, some people will undermine parents and take someone else's child across the Mississippi river to get an abortion. Parents need to have the right to pursue legal action if this happens - and we have given them that power. This should serve as a deterrent for taking someone else's kid to get an abortion. Mere minutes after the governor signed this law into effect Illinois abortion clinics were complying with our tougher standards.

Another important issue was fixing a drafting error in the workers compensation reform passed earlier this year. The error, which would allow injured workers to sue in civil court instead of going through the workers comp system, was fixed. However, partisan politics prevented an important emergency clause from being passed so these changes can take place immediately. Now Missouri's employees will have to wait until December for the workers comp system to truly help them.

Finally, I am proud that both chambers passed a resolution calling on the Army Corps of Engineers not to institute a spring rise on the Missouri River. Our farms are not a testing ground for Fish and Wildlife Service to learn about pallid sturgeon spawning. The potential of flooding from this rise is not in the best interest of Missouri's farmers. Hopefully the court system will protect people, and the farms and economy that sustain human life, over fish. Some want to say that the special session was not worth the money spent.

I believe we had a responsibility to Missouri workers and employers to ensure the much-needed reforms in the workers comp system take place. More importantly, I do not believe we can place a value on life. Insurance companies and economists may be able to, but I can't. I do not believe the economic costs of the special session will ever outweigh the innocent lives we have saved.

Sen. Cauthorn represents Missouri's 18th Senate District. He can be reached at his capitol office at (573) 751-6858. You can also visit his web page by going to www.senate.mo.gov/cauthorn.

