



MISSOURI SENATE

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For Immediate Release
July 18, 2005

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Sen. Rob Mayer Announces Signing of Legislation Clarifying Inheritance Law

JEFFERSON CITY – Sen. Rob Mayer, R-Dexter, today announced that legislation settling disputed language in inheritance law has been signed into law by Gov. Matt Blunt. Senate Bill 407, sponsored by Mayer, clears up language in beneficiary deed law and overturns a court decision that invalidated family inheritance documents.

“Land that has been in the hands of a family for years should be allowed to be passed on to inheritors without hindrance from contradictory legal language,” Mayer said. “Senate Bill 407 sets the record straight and streamlines the process of passing on land.”

At issue was a 1995 amendment to beneficiary deed law that changed the terminology referring to landowners bequeathing property from “grantors” to “owners.” A recent court decision by the Missouri Court of Appeals stated that beneficiary deeds drafted since 1995 must refer to “owners” in order to be valid. However, Missouri beneficiary deed forms continue to refer to “grantors,” not “owners,” so it is probable that many beneficiary deeds continue to use the older terminology.

SB 407 clears up this legal mess by stating that the term “owner” refers to the actual owner of the property, regardless of how that individual is referred to in the deed. This new legislation clarifies existing law and ensures that families wishing to pass on land will not find themselves facing bureaucratic roadblocks.

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*Senator Robert Mayer represents the people of Wayne, Ripley, Butler, Stoddard, New Madrid,
Pemiscot and Dunklin counties in the Missouri Senate.*