

Report from Senator David G. Klindt

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The Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!

This week the Missouri Senate witnessed a remake of the old horror movie, “The Attack of the Killer Tomatoes!”

The Senate Agriculture Committee, of which I am a member, held a hearing on a piece of my legislation that is commonly called “the seed bill” – SB 1009. This bill prohibits certain local regulations regarding the sale, storage and use of seeds. And it says that no state regulation can be more restrictive than federal regulations regarding the research, development, and use of seed technologies.

The seed bill is important to make sure we don’t have a patchwork of local regulations dictating what kinds of seeds farmers can or cannot plant. Also, the USDA hires the best scientists in the world and has put in place a very rigorous process regarding the development and testing of biotechnology. There is no reason for the state or any county or any city to try and duplicate what the USDA has already exhaustively done.

If you want to know why this bill is so important, just listen to the opponents. Their wild rhetoric reminds me of the old movie, “The Attack of the Killer Tomatoes.” Any minute now, a genetically modified tomato could roll into your house and attack.

Without this bill, we could have a situation where two misguided commissioners could drink the Kool-aid made from killer tomatoes, and ban all genetically modified seeds in that county. That might sound wonderful to the Kool-aid drinkers, but it could kill the future of farming in Missouri.

This week we also passed and sent to the House a bill known as “Jessica’s Law.” SB 588 will keep sexual offenders who prey on children behind bars or under the watchful eye of the law for the rest of their lives. Our children deserve this protection.

We started debating SB 816 this week – the statewide cable franchising bill – but vicious opposition from entrenched cable monopolies forced us to put the bill aside until later. If passed, this bill would let many consumers in Missouri have additional choices in cable television providers and access to better technology. The people want it. A recent poll found 91% of Missourians agreeing with the idea that more competition and better technology would be a good idea.

But first, we have to get past the existing cable monopolies – who are frightened of competition – and many of the bureaucrats in our city halls who are a little too cozy in helping the cable companies keep their iron-fisted grip on the market.

Maybe we should sick the killer tomatoes on ‘em!

