

Report from Senator David G. Klindt

May 12, 2006

Progress for children, families, and property rights

There were plenty of winners in this year's legislative session that ended on Friday, May 12, and some losers, too. The winners include honest voters, private property owners, corn producers, taxpayers and schools. Among the losers: sexual predators and Big Oil.

After the United States Supreme Court issued the idiotic *Kelo* decision, which ruled that governments could seize private property through eminent domain and hand it over to private developers, the people rightly demanded action by their elected leaders. The Missouri General Assembly answered the call. Our eminent domain reform bill protects private property from greedy, tax-grabbing government officials, and that's the way it should be.

We also protected the honesty of our elections process by requiring voters to show a photo ID at the polls. This will cut down on voter fraud, such as people voting multiple times under different names. The bill also repeals straight party voting, making it more likely that races at the bottom of the ticket won't be unfairly influenced by the races at the top of the ticket. In short, we made it more likely that every honest vote will count and the cheaters will be chased away.

We protected children through the passage of "Jessica's Law," cracking down on sexual predators through tougher mandatory sentencing. Taxpayers came out a winner after I led the fight against a "sneak attack" by the cities, which were trying to raise telephone taxes by more than 30%. If the cities need more money, they should be honest with the people and put it to a vote instead of trying to fly under the radar screen in Jefferson City.

Corn producers and our rural areas are big winners with the passage of the statewide ethanol standard. Using ethanol made from corn will decrease our dependence on foreign oil, help our corn farmers, and provide an economic benefit to our rural communities.

We also passed important changes to the campaign finance laws, making it easier for the people to track all the money in the political system, and updated our lobbying laws to increase our oversight of this important function. The budget we passed this year includes more money for our top priorities, including public schools, highways, and public safety.

We had a very tough fight regarding our priority to build a new women's prison in Chillicothe. The battle raged until the very last day, but we got it done. The people of Chillicothe have worked very hard to make this happen. I congratulate them.

I also led the fight on some other issues that haven't gotten a lot of attention, but are important nonetheless. We convinced the State Tax Commission to hold the line on farmland productivity values, saving farmers money in property taxes. We also kept the Missouri Department of Transportation from making a horrible mistake in changing the way they issue contracts for the maintenance of the rest areas. The changes MoDOT initially proposed would have been damaging to some of our sheltered workshops in the Great Northwest.

Together, we've done some very good things. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the great people of the 12th District.

