



THE STOUFFER REPORT

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Senate District 21

Capitol Building, Room 332
Jefferson City, MO 65101

For the Week of:
Dec. 18, 2006

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Youth will Bring Joy to the World

Imagine being a teenager, worried about peer pressure and self image. Now, put yourself in the shoes of a freshman girl in the following situation: After the announcement of the annual Christmas Program, the principal is prompted by two families in the district to scrap the name of the event and use “Winter Program” instead. In doing so, a soft-spoken freshman girl rises out of her seat and asks the question we have all wondered, “How can you take Christ out of Christmas?”

This situation took place two weeks ago in a small town in our Senate district. Although I’m encouraged by the number of schools in our area choosing to celebrate Christmas for what it is, I realize many are feeling pressure from outside influences to cancel or alter similar events. In this case, the superintendent overruled, and the Christmas Program went on as it has in the past.

Christmas is not just about the birth of a Savior Child; it is about preparation for His death and eventual return. It is also about renewal, starting over, and celebrating the joy in our lives including family and friends. Who could be against that?

I hope I am never offended by the public display of a menorah or the continual barrage of modern Santas that have little to do with my personal faith. Christmas is for joy to the world, not another cultural battle. We Christians are probably more frustrated by our failure to save souls in a lost world than the removal of Christmas trees in an airport in Seattle.

Considering the above story, this Christmas I am thankful for the gift of our young people, and I pray they will live in a better world than ours. I am hopeful they will see a world of peace, where security and democracy overrule greed, power and violence in the false name of our Creator.

My wife and I pray these young people will grow into a society where government aid is reserved for only those who need it and that those who are of able body and mind will want to work to gain self respect, dignity and the all-American pursuit of happiness.

My children and I hope our young people will live in a world where there is a right and wrong — where morality is embraced and not shunned — and integrity is a virtue held by many.

My staff and I know these young people have potential — partly because they are of a generation that wants to make the world a better place.

It is no secret we are blessed with young people who we know can make a difference. They're active in 4-H, FFA, Scouts, Youth Groups, sports, and school organizations where they are leading today, not just preparing to be leaders tomorrow.

Merry Christmas to you and yours and particularly to our youth. As we celebrate the renewal and joy this season brings, let us give thanks for those who hold our future.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at bstouffer@senate.mo.gov.

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