



MISSOURI SENATE

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**A Column for the Week
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Working to Pass Needed Legislation

Bills will improve health care, access to assistance and public safety

JEFFERSON CITY — This week I was able to bring several important bills I am sponsoring before Senate committees. Although the bills vary in subject matter, they are all vital for our state. The legislation will work to improve health care, government outreach and recreational safety in Missouri.

I am once again sponsoring legislation to stimulate research and treatment of cancer. Senate Bill 792 helps protect Missourians against cancer by requiring health insurers to cover patient costs for clinical trials for cancer treatment. Under the bill, health insurers are required to cover routine patient-care costs incurred as a result of phase II clinical trials for cancer treatment. Current law requires coverage only for phase III and IV of these trials.

This legislation allows for a two-pronged approach against cancer. It supports research of cancer treatment while allowing cancer patients to receive treatment through clinical trials. This measure will help ensure that Missourians who have cancer, now and in the future, receive the best treatment available to them.

SB 1061 is also known as the Faith-Based Organization Liaison Act. It requires the Missouri Department of Social Services to designate regional employees to serve as liaisons to faith-based organizations in their regions. Liaisons will communicate with and promote faith-based organizations as a means of providing services for individuals who would otherwise require public assistance.

Under this act, Missourians in need will be better able to receive help. The state will work with faith-based organizations to expand the scope of assistance to those in need while saving taxpayer dollars by utilizing and promoting these regional organizations.

Also this week I introduced in committee legislation improving waterway safety regulations in Missouri. Among its provisions, SB 1036 prohibits driving waterway vessels at a speed in excess of slow-no wake speed within 100 feet of any emergency vessel displaying its emergency lights. The act also prohibits vessels from continuously displaying spotlights, docking lights or other non-prescribed lights that hinder the night vision of other vessel operators. These common-sense provisions will improve waterway safety for our emergency workers.

Health-care access, assistance to those in need, and the safety of Missouri's emergency personnel are vital to our state. Together, these bills will make needed improvements to Missouri law.

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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.