

May 12, 2006

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## Office of Jason Crowell State Senator

### The Crowell Connection

*Senator Jason Crowell proudly represents the people of Bollinger, Cape Girardeau, Madison, Mississippi, Perry, and Scott Counties.*

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## Missouri's Resurgence Continues in 2006 Session

Last week the 2006 General Assembly adjourned for the year, marking an end to another productive session. On the heels of last year's historic session, when we rewrote the K-12 education funding formula, improved our workers compensation system and reformed the state's civil lawsuit system, Missouri's resurgent path continued as we passed legislation on several important issues. This session, we continued to put our children first as we added \$142 million to K-12 education and passed legislation protecting our children by increasing penalties for sexual predators. In response to rising gas prices, the legislature created a 10% ethanol standard that will decrease emissions, support Missouri farmers, and reduce the price of gasoline.

### **Protecting the Rights of Property Owners**

The Legislature sent to the governor a strong property-rights bill combating eminent domain abuse in Missouri. Among its many provisions, the legislation prohibits eminent domain from being used in projects solely for purposes of economic development and shields farmland from being "blighted."

In the rare cases where eminent domain could still be used, the bill includes several measures benefiting property owners. They include:

- "Heritage Value"- if a farm or business has been in the same family for a minimum of 50 consecutive years, the owner will receive an additional 50% of fair market value.
- "Homestead Taking"- if the property taken is the primary residence, the owner will receive an additional 25% of fair market value.
- Replacement costs of the property will figure into fair market value. Meaning the cost of setting up a farm or business in a new location.
- Increased notification to landowners of intent to condemn from 30 days to 60.

### **Working to Eliminate Voter Fraud**

Every voter should feel confident in the election process from the moment they show

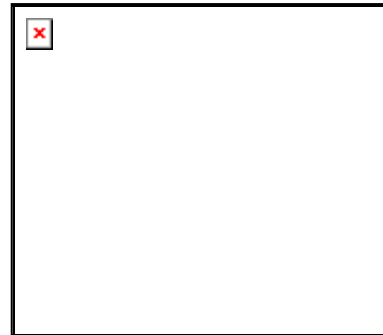


up to the polls to the point in which they drop their ballot in the box. The Legislature passed Senate Bill 1014 and 730, which I sponsored, to ensure that Missouri elections are fair and honest by requiring that voters provide photo identification when casting a ballot. Those who are 65 years old and over, are disabled home-bound citizens or have religious objections are exempted from showing a photo ID. Anyone who does not have a photo I.D. will be provided one for free. The new election safeguards will be in place for the November 2006 general election.

### **Increasing Missouri's Energy Independence**

Lawmakers succeeded in passing House Bill 1270, which requires that most unleaded gasoline sold in Missouri contain a 10 percent ethanol blend beginning Jan. 1, 2008. The new standard, which calls upon our state's corn crop, will be good for our agriculture industry, help Missouri farm families, decrease our dependence on foreign oil and improve air quality.

### **Protecting Our Children**



We have sent to the governor legislation protecting our children from sexual predators. House Bill 1698 calls for stricter mandatory sentences for those who prey on and sexually exploit the young. The measure also strengthens laws against cyber predators who use the anonymity provided by the World Wide Web to lure in children.

Although the curtain has fallen on this legislative session, I will continue to serve and look out for you. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in the Missouri Senate.

### **Contact Me**

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to contact me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2459. You may write to me at Jason Crowell; Missouri Senate; State Capitol; Jefferson City, MO 65101, or email me at [jcrowell@senate.mo.gov](mailto:jcrowell@senate.mo.gov) or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com>.

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