



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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Protecting the Health and Safety of Missouri's Elderly

According to estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, nearly 13 percent of Missouri's population is over the age of 65. This session, we approved several bills that will help improve the quality of life for senior citizens.

Driver's License Renewal

The governor recently signed into law legislation making it easier for senior citizens to show proof of lawful presence when renewing their driver's licenses. Under Senate Bill 1001, Missouri citizens who are currently 65 or older and do not have a birth certificate to substantiate lawful presence when renewing their driver's licenses can use a previously issued Missouri driver's license, instruction permit or non-driver's license.

The lawful-presence requirement is part of the Show-Me Proof program, which went into effect July 2005 in accordance with a federal mandate issued following the 9/11 attacks. The new law was intended to ensure that everyone with a state-issued ID card has a legal reason to be in the United States. To substantiate lawful presence, Missouri citizens must show their birth certificates. But this requirement has been an obstacle for many law-abiding senior citizens wanting to get their licenses renewed.

Many senior citizens of Missouri do not have birth certificates because they were born in other states, at home or before birth certificates were established. If they do have one, many

re laced with inaccuracies, which bog down the license-renewal process even more.

Home Delivered Meals

Another measure provides access to affordable nutritious meals. Currently, state money is only allocated to help cover delivering meals to senior citizens who are eligible for Medicaid. House Bill 1010 calls for an additional \$1 million to go toward programs that provide home-delivered meals to elderly citizens who are not Medicaid-eligible.

Along the same lines of providing senior citizens with food, we passed HB 1559 to add grocery and convenience stores to the list of food-service facilities that can donate food to charities without facing liability charges. The donating entities must give in good faith and will not be subject to criminal penalties or civil damages arising from the condition of the food, unless an injury is caused by the gross negligence, recklessness or intentional misconduct of a donor. This will significantly increase the number of donors that can give their excess products to those in need.

Assisted Living

Assisted-living facilities exist for those who do not need to be in nursing homes, but still need help doing some everyday routines such as bathing, dressing and housekeeping. To improve the quality of care that is provided at assisted-living facilities, we approved Senate Bill 616. The legislation requires facilities to meet several requirements before they can be approved by the state. These safety requirements make for better facilities for Missouri seniors. Also under the bill, assisted-living facilities cannot admit individuals who require significant care or are a danger to others. The facilities must also have a staff large enough and skilled enough to provide 24-hour care. Finally, this measure provides accountability to each resident. Under the legislation, facilities are required to periodically screen residents and develop individualized service plans, which will then be reviewed by residents or their family.

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 or visit me on the web at <http://www.jasoncrowell.com> and

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