



Column For Week of: December 10, 2007

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A Christmas Wish For You and Yours

This month, many of us are taking the time to shop for gifts for loved ones, spend time with family and friends, and do what we can to spread the holiday cheer. This time of year is a special time when many of us try to focus on what is truly important. I hope all of you will be able to enjoy the blessings of a loving family and caring friends. I will be taking the opportunity to celebrate Christmas with my family and loved ones, and I am also beginning to gear up for the 2008 legislative session. Starting on January 9, I will again be working in Jefferson City on the legislative priorities of the 16th District.

Some might think that being a legislator requires only six months of commitment, but let me assure you that I have been busy over the interim. While I also got to spend some of my summer and fall out on the farm, I also had work of a different sort. Along with spending time traveling throughout the district to meet folks, I also spent time at the Capitol in August for a special session. Just last week, I came to Jefferson City in order to listen to public input on the budget. The insightful comments from Missouri's citizens will help us focus on some of the most urgent priorities when planning for the next fiscal year.

Of course, much of my focus is on the upcoming legislative session. Last year was filled with both challenges and successes, so I will not be surprised if we are met with similar ups and downs in the coming months. There are some important priorities that continue to stay center-stage. At the end of November, I attended the National Assembly of Sportsmen's Caucuses Sportsmen-Legislator Summit in Branson. As well as having a great time showing off the natural resources of our state to the many other representatives, I

participated in discussions on issues such as access to hunting opportunities and increasing the number of youth hunters. As a hunter myself, I will continue to work at increasing opportunities in this state for sportsmen as well as defending our 2nd amendment rights.

There are plenty of other issues that will likely come up this year. State healthcare is certainly a focus for all legislators, however there are several different strategies on how the program should be handled. I am still focused on finding a system that will do enough to support the truly needy, children, elderly, and disabled of Missouri.

The next few months promise to be an interesting mixture of debate and compromise for all the members of the Legislature. I will continue to inform you about what is going on in Jefferson City as the year progresses. For now, I hope you all can focus on the joys and blessings of the season. On behalf of the Barnitz family, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Contact Me

As always, I appreciate hearing your comments, opinions and concerns. Please feel free to call me in Jefferson City at (573) 751-2108. You can also write to me at my office at the address below.

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