



THE STOUFFER REPORT

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Senate District 21

Capitol Building, Room 332
Jefferson City, MO 65101

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Hunting Heritage Provides Multitude of Benefits for Missourians

Missouri's natural resources offer residents and visitors a wide variety of opportunities for outdoor recreation. Among rural Missourians, perhaps none is more popular than recreational hunting. But hunting is not just a lot of fun; it is also an economic boon for Missouri, a vital source of state revenue and a part of our heritage. That is why I have introduced legislation that will protect hunting rights in Missouri with the support of conservation groups and the National Rifle Association (NRA).

Senate Bill 225 enacts the Hunting Heritage Protection Areas Act. Under this act, recreational use of firearms is protected in hunting heritage areas, which are defined as federally designated 100-year floodplains. Additionally, the use of public funds to develop such areas would be prohibited, but the measure does not limit the usage of private funds by farmers and private individuals. This not only protects against increasing loss in hunting lands, it is also saves tax dollars from being used on areas known to flood. It is also good for the environment. These areas preserve habitat and "green zones" for wildlife and recreation. This includes a haven for North America's migratory birds, two-thirds of which travel through our state.

Hunting, fishing and other outdoor-related activities in Missouri generate \$2.48 billion in economic activity each year. Apart from our home-grown outdoor enthusiasts, tourists come to Missouri from throughout the United States to enjoy our outdoor opportunities. Non-resident hunting and fishing permits bring in \$80 million in state revenue, and that does not begin to count the economic impact of tourists renting hotel rooms, eating at restaurants, buying gasoline and shopping for supplies. All of these services mean jobs for Missourians.

Not only do Missouri's excellent outdoor sporting and recreational activities provide tremendous economic benefits for our citizens, they also represent time-honored traditions that have been handed down from one generation to the next. Further, recreational hunting is an essential part of wildlife management.

The Hunting Heritage Protection Areas Act acknowledges all of the benefits of hunting by assuring those who love the outdoors that their rights will be preserved and the public lands they hunt on will not be damaged by publicly funded development. I also hope that it will encourage more people to participate in hunting and other forms of outdoor recreation.

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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