



State Senator John Griesheimer

***Capitol Report
2008***

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A Message From State Senator John Griesheimer

Dear Friends,

The 2008 legislative session was a very productive one for our district as I was able to advance several Senate bills as well as several House bills.

I was privileged to once again chair the Senate Economic Development, Tourism and Local Government Committee, and to serve on a number of other committees. I was also named chair of the Joint Committee on Gaming and Wagering that makes recommendations to the Legislature on issues pertaining to the state lottery and riverboat casinos.

We passed some real priorities for everyone this year, including a measure to ensure more telephone service competition and legislation to increase deputy sheriff pay and protect homeowners from tax increases caused by reassessments.

Meanwhile, we significantly increased the amount of state money going to school districts in our area, found more funds for colleges and universities, and approved programs to help our economy.

Please look through this legislative report to read more about these issues. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me or my office.

Sincerely,



Capitol Office Staff

One of a senator's most important assets is a dependable and friendly staff. I am fortunate to have both Carolyn Case and Chris Sutherland to assist me in my office in Jefferson City.

Feel free to contact them if you have questions about the Missouri Legislature, concerns about how the laws affect you, or simply want to book a tour of the Capitol for your family or group.

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Boosting Deputy Sheriff Pay

Senator Griesheimer's Measure Brings Better Wages for Deputy Sheriffs

County deputy sheriffs will receive better pay for their public service thanks to a bill I introduced, which was incorporated into House Bill 2224, that creates a fund for that purpose.

Last summer, I chaired the Senate Interim Committee on Funding for County Sheriff Offices to consider the problem of low pay for many county deputy sheriffs and to find a possible solution. The committee toured two of the lowest paid and neediest sheriffs' departments in the state and heard testimony from many county law enforcement officers.

The average salary for county deputies is just more than \$22,000, with most taking home only about \$15,500 per year, putting those with families below the federal poverty level.

I'm pleased we were able to put a new plan in place so these brave men and women will receive a



Sen. Griesheimer discusses his proposal to provide a fund to bolster the pay of deputy sheriffs supported by Senate colleagues Sen. Ryan McKenna (left) and Sen. Wes Shoemeyer (right).

respectable salary for the important work they do to ensure the safety of our citizens and property.

My measure allows sheriffs to receive an additional \$10 fee for processing any civil summons, writ, subpoena or other court order. This money will go into the newly created "Deputy Sheriff Salary Supplementation Fund," which will be used to bolster the pay of many county deputy sheriffs.

Our county sheriff departments cover thousands of Missouri miles to protect our citizens. We value their dedication and commitment to law enforcement and appreciate the risks they take each and every day. Providing adequate pay is the right answer to attracting and retaining some of the best and brightest law enforcement officers for these areas.

Property Tax Reform On the Way

A Senate bill I co-sponsored protecting Missouri taxpayers from tax increases caused by reassessment passed the General Assembly with flying colors. Senate Bill 711 requires all taxing jurisdictions, regardless of whether they are operating at or below their tax rate ceiling, to roll back their tax rate to counter reassessment increases.

Currently, only taxing jurisdictions operating at their tax rate ceiling are required by Missouri's Constitution to roll back levy rates to protect taxpayers, leaving taxing jurisdictions operating below their ceiling to approve back door tax increases with no legal recourse.

The new law closes a loophole that allowed taxing districts to apply new voter approved levies to future and unknown assessments. It also requires that taxpayers receive projected tax liability statements along with their reassessment notices. Charter counties and the

City of St. Louis will provide these in 2009, with all other counties participating by 2011. It also increases the Circuit Breaker Property Tax Credit from \$750 to \$1,100 for homeowners and expands eligibility for homeowners (not renters) up to an income of \$30,000 for singles and \$34,000 for married couples — a tax credit program expansion representing approximately \$5.8 million. Plus, another change means those who qualify for assistance through the Homestead Preservation Tax Credit with increases over 5 percent in their property tax costs will now be guaranteed some level of help, even if appropriations for the program are lower than needed to cover all costs.

These changes protect taxpayers, while the early notice and extra assistance will help everyone better prepare for the taxes they owe come December.

Senator Griesheimer's Legislation Adds MoDOT to One Call System, Expands Consumer Telecom Choices

Contractors and excavators who call the Missouri One Call Notification Center (1-800-DIG RITE) in advance of excavations will now also be notified of certain Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) underground facilities located near construction sites, thanks to my proposals incorporated into House Bill 1779 during the legislative session.

Under the new law, MoDOT will work directly with contractors involved in construction projects near highway right-of-ways, which will provide a more expedient process for contractors to complete construction projects. MoDOT also becomes a member of the Missouri One Call board and will participate in the One Call system for at least three years.

My proposals also modified the definition of "underground facilities" subject to the Underground Facility Safety and Damage Prevention Act or "One Call" law. Under the new provisions, gas distribution lines, electric lines, telecommunications facilities, cable television facilities, water lines, storm drainage, and sewer lines located on private land not owned by the utility will now be considered "underground facilities" for the purpose of the One Call requirement — if those lines are used for vehicular traffic control, the lighting of streets and highways, or communications for emergency response. Those lines will also be considered underground facilities if they cross or lie within a public easement, public right-of-way, or another person's property.

The new law also requires excavators using the One Call notification center to identify if proposed excavations



1-800-DIG RITE
(1-800-344-7483)

will be on public right-of-way, easements or for vehicular traffic use.

My measure is designed to protect Missouri workers and the public from loss of service and disruptions to underground electric, gas and telecommunication lines.

More Telecom Competition, Consumer Choice

Another key component of HB 1779 I successfully advanced promotes more competition and consumer choice for telecommunications services while preserving important state consumer protections. The new measure allows all providers of voice services to respond quicker to customers' needs by offering new services, regardless of the technology used — over the Internet, by wireless or traditional telephone networks.

The bill moves state law away from heavily regulating new technologies toward a system where market forces and customer choices are most important. The Missouri Public Service Commission will still have authority to resolve customer complaints and disputes among carriers.

The legislation also allows a telephone company more flexibility in setting market-based prices when competition exists. Prices that are market-based are essential if local phone companies are expected to continue to expand their capabilities to provide high-speed Internet and entertainment services in the state. The way this legislation is crafted, highly competitive cities like St. Louis, Branson, Columbia, Kansas City and Rolla will be used in setting the prices and options available to customers across Missouri from local phone companies.

Village Law Measure Repealed

One of the most challenging and embarrassing times of my senatorial career occurred last year with the passage of Senate Bill 22, an omnibus local government bill I sponsored. In the bill was a provision that unintentionally made it easier for landowners to incorporate their property as an independent community and thus avoid county planning and zoning restrictions in certain cases.

I sincerely and deeply apologize for the error. In my opinion, no one that read the amendment could

have come to the conclusion that it would help a single property owner create a village. But unfortunately, the provision did.

After a hard-fought effort by myself and a majority of other lawmakers who agreed it was flawed legislation, the state Legislature repealed the highly debated law in the final hours of the 2008 legislative session.

Senate Bill 765 became effective on August 28, 2008.

Major Transportation Projects Slated for the 26th District

As a member of the Senate Transportation Committee and the Joint Committee on Transportation Oversight, I continually work to secure transportation projects across the state, particularly in the 26th District. I am very pleased to report several Franklin, Warren and St. Louis county road and bridge projects have been completed or are included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for state fiscal years 2009 through 2013 (July 1, 2008 - June 30, 2013).



In Franklin County, the following projects are slated to be completed:

MO Route 100 - Replace bridge east of Route 185 at Little Boeuf Creek. Widen from two to four lanes on same alignment from east of South Point Road to I-44 (a cost-share project with City of Washington).

MO Route 185 - Route 185/Elmont Road Crossing over I-44 including associated outer road improvements north and south of I-44 (a cost-share project with the City of Sullivan).

Interstate 44 - Replace the south half of the interchange and Osage Street west of Viaduct Street; replace and widen bridge, traffic signals, and add acceleration and deceleration lanes at Route 100 east in Gray Summit; widen bridge at Routes 185/D over I-44; rehabilitate eastbound and westbound twin bridges and Route AT bridge over Bourbeuse River.

MO Route 47 - Pave approach to create a four-way signalized intersection, add signals and lighting at the intersection of Route 47 and 14th Street/Rainbow Drive (a

cost-share project with City of Washington); widen pavement for left turn lanes, grading, drainage, traffic signals and lighting at Clearview Road north of Union; widen left turn lanes at the College Road intersection near Union; grade pavement and replace bridge from West Oak Street to Springfield Road in St. Clair.

US 50 - Pavement treatment from east of Route UU to Route 47 South in Union; construct turn lanes at the intersection of Denmark Road/Progress Parkway; widen from two to five lanes from Route 47 South to east of Denmark Road.

Also:

- Country Club Lane capacity improvements.
- Pavement treatment from Route 50 to Route 100.
- Work on the Missouri River bridge in Washington.

In Warren County, several improvements are also planned, including:

Interstate 70 - Resurface westbound lanes from west of Route 47 to the Montgomery County Line; pavement treatments on westbound lanes from the St. Charles County line to east of Route F.

Route B - Intersection and outer road improvements south of I-70.

In St. Louis County: Resurface pavement from Route CC to Route 100 along Route 109; pavement treatment on I-44 north outer road from east of Six Flags exit to Central Avenue; from Williams Road to I-270 along Route 44; from Route 109 north to Route 109 south along Route BA.

Grace Period for Vehicle Emissions Testing

During the legislative session, the General Assembly approved a bill I sponsored that provides a grace period to Missouri drivers in the St. Louis metropolitan area, whose vehicles fail required emissions testing, in order make repairs and complete retesting.

Senate Bill 936 allows drivers in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles County and Franklin and Jefferson counties with a current registration to drive up to 30 days beyond the vehicle's registration expiration if their vehicles fail emissions testing. Diagnostic testing typically requires at least two weeks to determine if repaired vehicles are meeting emissions standards and to reset the vehicle's computer system if repairs were made.

Under the new provision, drivers will not receive a ticket violation for expired vehicle tags if they present a copy of the most recent test results to law enforcement officers while operating the vehicle to reset its readiness monitors.

My measure will make it possible for motorists to get their vehicles tested and avoid getting a ticket if their vehicle unexpectedly failed the emissions test even though they brought it to the repair shop just before their vehicle registration expired. A license penalty, however, still applies.

We have hundreds of thousands of drivers in the St. Louis region who are required to complete the testing for cleaner and safer air and this will allow more time to satisfactorily complete the required testing.

NOTABLE LEGISLATION

Building On Our Economic Growth

Boosting the state's economy through job-producing legislation was among the highlights of this year's legislative session.

Missouri lawmakers endorsed a mega-project tax credit bill (House Bill 2393) that allowed the state to offer an incentive package that could have triggered an aircraft manufacturing company to build a passenger jet assembly plant at Kansas City International Airport. (By mid-July the company had chosen a Canadian location for its expansion.)

If the company had located here, it would have employed up to 2,100 workers who would have been paid an average wage of \$63,000. The company was required to invest a total of \$300 million in Missouri to qualify as a mega-project. While this project did not succeed, Missouri is now poised to offer this kind of economy-building tax incentive in the future.

Attracting business to Missouri builds on the many initiatives we've passed over the past three years, including the Quality Jobs Act and the Enhanced Enterprise Zone Program. These tax benefit programs were expanded with

the passage of two economic development bills (HB 2058 and Senate Bill 718) that will continue to benefit Missouri workers and employees by enhancing entrepreneurship and economic growth opportunities.

The Quality Jobs Act has helped to create nearly 22,000 new jobs and to retain 2,379 others since it began in 2005. The Job Retention Program within the Quality Jobs Act will be extended through 2013. The amount of tax credits that may be issued each year was increased from \$40 million to \$60 million.

The annual cap on the amount of tax credits the Department of Economic Development (DED) can authorize for Enhanced Enterprise Zone programs was increased from \$14 million to \$24 million. The program provides tax credits for new or expanding businesses designated by local governments and the DED.

Economic tax credits have proven to have a positive impact on our businesses and communities and can be credited in part to the creation of more than 80,000 new jobs in Missouri since January of 2005.

Stopping Illegal Immigration

With the recent passage of House Bill 1549, illegal immigrants are barred from applying for food stamps, housing and other public benefits and from obtaining state drivers licenses.

The new law will also crack down on employers who knowingly hire illegal immigrants or misclassify employees. The measure also gives the State Highway Patrol authority, training and resources to help enforce immigration laws.

While considered a federal issue, illegal immigration is a growing concern in Missouri and other states because of the hundreds of millions of dollars in jobs, benefits and services it costs each year.

While Missourians aren't responsible for securing our national borders, we can prevent illegal immigrants from harming our state if we shield jobs and benefits.



Senator Griesheimer is known for his bipartisan work in the Senate. Here he confers with Senate minority party member Sen. Victor Callahan.

2008 Gubernatorial Appointments



Sen. Griesheimer with Melinda Ward - Citizens' Advisory Committee for Marketing Mo. Ag. Products



Sen. Griesheimer with Mark Head - Advisory Committee for 911 Service Oversight



Sen. Griesheimer with Keith Henderson - State Blasting Safety Board



Sen. Griesheimer with Sheriff Gary Toelke - Amber Alert System Oversight Committee



Sen. Griesheimer with Steve Luecker - State Fair Commission



Sen. Griesheimer with Willard Halmich - Missouri Emergency Response Commission



Sen. Griesheimer with Charlene Heyde - Drug Utilization Review Board



Sen. Griesheimer with James Wesselschmidt - State Milk Board

Re-Appointed (not pictured):

Gregory Brown, Missouri Fire Education Commission; Louis Eckelkamp, Jr., Missouri Development Finance Board; Barbara Ostmann, Missouri Wine and Grape Board; Gregory Roeback, State Committee for Professional Counselors.

Anti-Meth Law Strengthened, Nurses Given More Prescription Authority

Qualified advanced practice registered nurses will now have authority to prescribe certain controlled substances, and the sale of pseudoephedrine products will now be more efficiently monitored, thanks to the passage of bill I co-sponsored that was approved by the General Assembly.

Senate Bill 724 allows advanced practice registered nurses to prescribe controlled substances in schedules III, IV, and V while operating under a collaborative practice agreement. The bill also contains anti-meth provisions that further limit the sale of pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient in the production of methamphetamine — a dangerous and destructive drug.

Under current law, pharmacies are required to maintain a paper log and document any transactions where the customer purchases pseudoephedrine



Sen. Griesheimer helped successfully advance SB 724.

products. The new law requires pharmacies to upgrade to an electronic, rather than written log and specifies that the photo ID provided by the buyer of pseudoephedrine products be issued by a state or the federal government and shown prior to the purchase.

Missouri Money

Each year, the General Assembly must determine how to budget taxpayer money for the next fiscal year. This session, the Legislature passed a \$22.4 billion spending plan that reflects responsible financial planning.

Money for the 26th District

- Funding for public schools in the 26th Senate District increased to **\$131.2 million**.
- A **\$600,000** funding increase for Amtrak, to sustain and improve passenger rail service.
- A **7.8 percent** increase in money for colleges and universities, including a **\$48.7 million** increase in Access Missouri scholarships.
- Missouri Eastern Correctional Center receives **\$9.9 million** in operating funds.
- Pacific Senior Center receives **\$25,000**.
- State parks in the 26th Senate District receive nearly **\$1.7 million**:
 - * Meramec State Park, **\$661,668**
 - * Babler Memorial State Park, **\$682,216**
 - * Castlewood State Park, **\$172,932**
 - * Robertsville State Park, **\$143,096**



* Revenue, Office of Administration, Elected Officials, General Assembly, Real Estate
 Source: Senate Appropriations Committee

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