



Food Stamps For Drug Dealers????

JEFFERSON CITY — Debate is central to democracy and the process by which two sides with different views can come together to freely discuss and decide on differences. Debate promotes critical thinking, personal expression and the tolerance of others' opinions — and in the end forwards the best ideas.

While a legislative body's success is often measured by the laws it is able to pass and enact, I think it's equally important when legislators are able to stave off bad legislation before it has a chance to go anywhere. One such case occurred last week when the Senate debated a Democratic bill (SB 764) that would have made felons convicted of possession, use or distribution of drugs eligible for food stamps. I'm happy to report that the majority stopped the advancement of this illogical legislation. The bill would have allowed Missouri to issue food stamps to convicted felons who had successfully participated in or completed substance abuse treatment programs — a move that would have raised your taxes and rewarded people convicted of serious crimes.

Missouri lawmakers continually struggle to provide assistance to those who, through no fault of their own, need a support line to survive. We must balance a budget and in a few instances we must rob Peter to pay Paul if Paul's situation is determined more needy.

So siphoning precious resources to give to those that spread poison to our youth, ruined families and added to the downfall of so many lives, at the expense of others who are truly needy is bad government and is just plain wrong.

Debate on many other issues continues this week, and I look forward to studying and weighing the merits of each piece of legislation that comes to the Senate floor.

If you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

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