



Going Green

March 9, 2008

I hope this note finds you well. Let me give you a sense of what I've been up to lately.

First, I've been getting around the district. I've attended functions throughout the city, from the St. Louis Hills neighborhood's Art in the Park to annual fall festivals in The Hill, Clifton Heights, and The Grove. I've visited dozens of non-profits across the city, touring the new homes sprouting in [the historic Ville neighborhood](#) thanks to Northside Community Housing, discussing potential legislation to address the sub-prime loan crisis with leaders from [Beyond Housing](#), serving lunch to the clients at [Food Outreach](#), and meeting volunteer doctors with [Gateway to Hope \(GTH\)](#), an unprecedented initiative by doctors to treat (at no charge) breast cancer victims who otherwise would have no other option. (If you are a medical professional who can donate time or supplies, please reply to this email and let me know how you can help. This is an exceptional program, but it will only flourish through the generosity of people like you.)

I've spoken at forums on the state of the city schools, the separation of church and state, and the health care crisis in Missouri. I've visited charter schools ([such as the Associated General Contractors' Construction Careers Center](#)) and private schools (such as New City School), and I plan to visit every city public high school this fall as part of a program in which I'll ask SLPS civics students to propose legislation that will benefit our community. (I'll be selecting the best student proposal and sponsoring a bill modeled after that proposal.)

Second, I've been working on legislation. I've been fine-tuning bills to help provide funding for 1) early childhood education for city toddlers, 2) recruitment bonuses for math and science teachers who will teach in the city schools, and 3) retention

bonuses and special recognition for the city's most talented teachers.

I've also been crafting legislation to help make Missouri a national leader in green building (construction that reduces a building's impact on the environment and substantially reduces energy costs over the life of the building). During the last six months, my legislative aide (Stacy Morse) and I have met with a diverse (and ever-expanding) group of stakeholders: architects, home builders, realtors, engineers, interior designers, utility company representatives, facility managers, and environmentalists. Last week, we hosted this group - along with a group of legislators — on a tour one of the greenest buildings in the world, the [Alberici building in St. Louis County](#). John Alberici, chairman of the company, and Thomas Taylor of Vertegy, who designed the building, led the tours, and helped pave the way for our discussion of [Senate Bill 649](#), the bill I filed last session to require new state buildings to be more energy-efficient and to provide incentives for environmentally sustainable building design and construction in the private sector.

I was pleased to see legislators from both chambers and sides of the aisle come together to learn how we can save our state money in energy costs and be environmentally friendly. [Senator Rita Days \(D-14th\)](#) and [Representative Jake Zimmerman](#) (D-83rd), in whose districts the Alberici HQ sits, both attended and helped host the session. [Senator Carl Vogel](#) (R-6th), chair of the Ways and Means Committee (where SB 649 was sent last session), and [Senator Kevin Engler](#) (R-3rd) chair of the Commerce, Energy, and Environment Committee were present. Attendees from the Missouri House included [Representative Walt Bivins](#) (R-97th) chair of Energy and Environment, [Representative Rodney Schad](#) (R-115th) vice-chair of Energy and Environment, [Representative Kathlyn Fares](#) (R-91st), from the Budget Committee, [Representative Jim Lemke](#) (R-85th), member of the Energy and Environment and Capital Improvements and Lease Oversight Committees. [St. Louis County Executive Charles Dooley](#) joined us too, as well as key managers from the relevant state agencies.

With some of the brightest minds in the area around the table, I'm optimistic about the road ahead. It's exciting that such a diverse group of people agree that going green is not just a trend, but that it is inevitable. I hope to work with this coalition to convince the General Assembly that investing in green buildings and using sustainable resources will pay off in the long-term. (The cost to build green is usually about 5% higher and the eventual energy savings are between 40 and 60%; Alberici's savings

are over 60%.)

As always, I love hearing from you. Thanks for your continued support.

JRS

Contact Information

Capitol Office
State Capitol Building
Room 425
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Phone Number:
573.751.3599

Fax:
573.751.0266

Website:
<http://www.senate.mo.gov/smith>

District Office:
4515 Olive Blvd
Suite 210
St. Louis, MO 63108

Phone Number:
314.361.4333