



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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A Weekly Column for the
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Animal ID & Deputy Sheriffs Salary Bills Advance to House

JEFFERSON CITY – We actually saw some movement this week on several bills that I strongly support – including legislation to keep the animal ID program voluntary, legislation increasing the fees for process servers which will boost the pay of deputy sheriffs, and another bill to give advanced practice registered nurses the authority to write prescriptions.

The Senate gave final approval to Senate Bill 931, which bars the state Department of Agriculture from participating in the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) without legislative approval. SB 931 says the state may support a “voluntary” animal identification program, but we don’t need a bunch of bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. telling us how to operate our farms in Missouri.

SB 931 also allows participants in the NAIS to withdraw from the program at any time and requires that their personal information be deleted, unless that producer is part of an ongoing disease investigation. Right now farmers can sign up with the NAIS but there’s no way for them to drop out. This bill protects our property rights from government intrusion, and it protects small farmers who would have had to shell out money for microchips and scanners and all of the equipment needed to comply with the NAIS.

Also this week, the Senate approved and sent to the House a bill giving advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) the authority to prescribe certain controlled substances. I strongly support this bill because APRNs with prescriptive authority will be able to make up for the shortage of doctors in rural areas.

In many rural areas of our state, including the 18th District, where it can be difficult to find a doctor or a hospital, advanced practice nurses often handle the routine health care needs of citizens.

Finally, the Senate gave final approval to Senate Bill 935, which creates the Deputy Sheriff Salary Supplementation Fund. The fund will consist of money generated by a \$10 fee collected for serving civil summons and subpoena. When the Senate Interim Committee on the Funding for County Sheriffs Offices toured Shelby County last year, we heard stories of deputy sheriffs having to work two or three jobs just to make ends meet. Deputies in 91 of 114 counties make so little they qualify for public assistance. The legislation is expected to generate \$4-6 million per year, boosting the salaries of sheriffs' deputies across Missouri to about \$28,000. Right now, those deputies earn just over \$22,000 per year, and many are forced to look for better paying jobs with the Highway Patrol or in another state.

We welcomed a lot of folks to our Capitol office this week, including members of FFA, OATS, racing icon Carl Edwards, respiratory care advocates, five teachers who received the 2007 National Certified Teacher award, members of the Missouri Farm Bureau, folks with United Credit Union in Mexico, local healthcare advocacy network representatives, folks from the City of LaGrange, members of the 4-H Legislature Leadership conference, and members of the Hannibal Chamber of Commerce. It is really great to see the young folks from 4-H and FFA at the Capitol. The leadership skills and life experiences they provide last a lifetime as these young people become the leaders of tomorrow.

If you have any questions or comments about this or any other issue, give my Capitol office a call at (573) 751-7852, send me an email at wes.shoemyer@senate.mo.gov, or drop a line to Room 434, State Capitol, 201 West Capitol Ave., Jefferson City, MO 65101.