



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Wes Shoemyer
18th Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 434
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

**A Weekly Column for the
Week of April 28, 2008**

**Contact: Kathy Armstrong
(573) 751-7852**

Light at the End of the Tunnel

JEFFERSON CITY – We've seen a flurry of activity in both the House and Senate as the 2008 legislative session winds to a close. The session officially ends May 16, and before we adjourn we still have to approve the 23-billion dollar state budget. It's also crunch time for the hundreds of bills filed at the start of the session, most of which will not go anywhere.

One bill that did receive final approval in the Senate this week is a measure that I strongly support. House Bill 2224 will increase the salaries of our underpaid county sheriffs' deputies by increasing the process server fees by ten dollars. This additional charge will apply to any civil summons, writ, subpoena or other court order. The money will be deposited into a Deputy Sheriff Salary Supplemental Fund to increase pay for sheriffs' deputies, many of whom currently 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. The Senate made a few changes to the House version, so the two chambers will have to iron out their differences before the bill can be sent to the governor.

This week I was appointed to a conference committee to help find a compromise on a wide-ranging agricultural bill. One of the most controversial provisions in Senate Bill 931 deals with the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). The bill says the state of Missouri may support a *voluntary* animal identification program but it prohibits the state Agriculture Department from requiring Missouri producers to register under the USDA's animal ID program. The bill also allows Missouri producers to withdraw from the NAIS any time and to have their

personal information deleted. SB 931 also creates an income tax credit for the costs of building an alternative fuel vehicle refueling station, it creates a sales tax exemption for the purchase of fencing materials, it adds spotted knapweed to the list of noxious weeds which need to be controlled, and it requires new generation cooperatives to operate within the state in order to receive tax credits.

The Senate also gave final approval to a bill that requires the Department of Health and Human Services to keep a real time electronic logbook on all purchases of pseudoephedrine, which is a main ingredient in the manufacturing of methamphetamine. It is hoped that by keeping track of all pseudoephedrine sales, Missouri can reduce the production and sale of meth.

Visitors to the Capitol this week included a group of cattle producers from Monroe County, and students and teachers from Paris, Shelbina and North Shelby elementary schools.

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.