



Senator  
**Bill Stouffer**

**DISTRICT 21**

Senator Bill Stouffer – Cultivating Rural Missouri.

[Website](#) | [Contact Me](#) | [Newsroom](#)

## The Stouffer Report: Helping Military Families

While Missouri military men and women serve abroad, there are a lot of folks back home in rural Missouri who have to make due.

[House Bill 1678](#) is now on the governor's desk. This is not only one of the most important pieces of legislation for those serving in the military to come out of the Capitol this year, but maybe even in years. I was proud to be able to sponsor this bill in the senate.

House Bill 1678 does several things. It adds the chairman of the [Missouri Veterans Commission](#) to the [Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission](#). The commission's duties include developing policies and methods to improve the prosperity and job opportunities of retired military members and the families of former military members. The chairman of the Missouri Military Preparedness and Enhancement Commission will, in turn, also be a non-voting member of the Missouri Veterans Commission.

Our bill also helps families who have to move while a loved one is serving overseas. House Bill 1678 allows a military dependent who has completed preschool or kindergarten in another state to enter kindergarten or first grade, even if the child has not reached the required age for Missouri schools by August 1st. It authorizes the State Board of Education to develop recommendations regarding alternate assessments for military dependents that relocate to Missouri during the school year and allows school districts to accept a course in government completed in another state when a student transfers to a Missouri high school in ninth to twelfth grade to satisfy the state's graduation requirement.

Schools will also benefit from the bill, which requires the [state board](#) to establish a rule to allow the issuance of a [provisional teacher's](#)

[certificate](#) before the completion of a background check to the spouse of a military member who holds a teacher's certificate in another state that requires a background check and who has relocated within the last year. This avoids unnecessary duplication of services and will help put somebody to work who is qualified for the job.

It allows the spouse and children of a soldier who was killed in action after September 11, 2001, to receive an educational grant for tuition at a public or private college or university in Missouri. No eligible student will receive a grant for more than 100 percent of the tuition costs when combined with other similar funds given to the student.

Similar to [Senate Bill 830](#), sponsored by Sen. Maida Coleman – a Democrat whom I have much respect for – the bill also limits the tuition at state schools to \$50 per credit hour for “combat veterans” who served after September 11, 2001 with some exceptions. This is a huge cost savings to these students and their families.

House Bill 1678 renames the [Guard at Home Program](#) to the Hero at Home Program and extends the program to cover the first year after discharge from deployment. It also specifies military service and out-of-state employment, by itself, is not sufficient to justify a modification of a child custody or visitation order.

The governor says he is still reviewing the remaining bills to sign from this year's legislative session; I am confident he will sign this bill into law this summer.

*Senator Stouffer serves the counties of Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and a part of Clay.*

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by e-mail at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

#### Contact Information

<b>Capitol Office</b> State Capitol Room 332 Jefferson City, MO 65101	<b>Website:</b> <a href="http://www.senate.mo.gov/stouffer">http://www.senate.mo.gov/stouffer</a>	<b>Phone Number:</b> 573.751.1507
	<b>Toll-Free Phone Number:</b> 866.768.3987	<b>Fax:</b> 573.751.9764

[Click here](#) to unsubscribe.

*Serving Carroll, Chariton, Cooper, Howard, Lafayette, Macon, Ray, Saline, and Parts of Clay.*