



Senator  
**Bill Stouffer**

**DISTRICT 21**

Senator Bill Stouffer – Cultivating Rural Missouri.

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## The Stouffer Report: Assessing Floods of the Past and Present and Preparing for the Future

As we are seeing record flooding make its way south along the Mississippi River, I am reminded of the devastation that happened just 15 short years ago.

The flood of '93 was a major catastrophe for so many folks in rural Missouri, which were some of the hardest-hit areas in the Midwest. Obviously – our senate district saddling the Missouri River was one of the epicenters of this disaster. Many farmers lost their land, or at least a great deal of time and money, waiting for the water to recede so they could start all over again.

There will be several remembrances this year. One I am anticipating as being touching will be in Richmond. **The 15-year remembrance of the Hardin Cemetery flood will be held at the Farris Theatre in Richmond at 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup>.** The Hardin Cemetery Association will put on the event, led by Joanne Bogess and Ed and Linda Wolfe.

People who were involved with the Hardin Cemetery flood in 1993 will speak at the event. Organizers will also recognize anybody who may have helped, advised, or volunteered during and after the flood at the Hardin Cemetery in '93 as well as all veterans. In addition, organizers will show a one-hour documentary about the '93 flood at the Hardin Cemetery.

Speaking of the flood, we were fortunate to get a bill passed this year that will help rural Missouri folks in the event of future flooding. [Senate Bill 939](#) will allow small, inefficient levee and drainage districts to consolidate with others to provide more effective protection from flooding. I wrote about this bill in a previous column.

Currently, the board of supervisors of a new levee district may assess a fee of no more than one dollar per acre and each mile of right-of-way. Unfortunately, this amount was set in the 1950's and would no longer cover the costs of creating a new district.

The new law allows the ceiling to be no more than eight dollars, which is a conservative reflection of today's costs involved in this type of endeavor. The question to consolidate or form a new district and the costs involved would be up to a vote of the people. Similar language is included for drainage districts.

So, we are making progress. It is impossible to know when Mother Nature will strike. My wife and I are praying for all of the families who are suffering from the flooding.

*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).

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