

State Senator Robert Mayer The Mayer Memo

Senator Robert Mayer - Serving Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Stoddard & Wayne Counties



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Bill Signings a Sure Sign of Summer

JEFFERSON CITY — Summer is typically the time when bills passed by the State Legislature are signed into law by the governor. Just this week, the governor signed my Senate Bill 1170, the *Rebuild Missouri Schools Program*, which allows school districts with one or more school facilities in a declared disaster area to apply for no-interest loans with the state board of education through a 20-year repayment agreement.

The new legislation gives Missouri school districts the financial means to recover and rebuild when school facilities are affected by catastrophic events. The bill was motivated by the near destruction of the Caruthersville High School in Caruthersville following a 2006 tornado. The school suffered extensive damage and must be rebuilt to strict standards because of its location within the New Madrid Fault Zone. I am very pleased school districts across the state will now be able to apply for financial relief when this kind of natural disaster occurs so they can rebuild and remain open for students.

If you've been watching the local, state and national news this week, you've noticed illegal immigration continues to remain a hot topic, in part because Missouri's legislation to fight illegal immigration (House Bill 1549) — which I strongly supported — was signed into law this week. I am very proud our state was not afraid to take on this tough issue, which has received little consideration from Washington, D.C., or to become a leader in addressing this huge and financially-crippling problem that costs American and Missouri taxpayers countless millions of

dollars in jobs, benefits and services each year.

Earlier this summer, several of my other bills were signed into law, including my legislation dealing with copper theft (SB 1034), expanding loan opportunities through the state's student loan organization (SB 967), and allowing stretches of highways to be named after law enforcement and military persons (SB 753). It was an honor to have the copper theft bill signed in my hometown of Dexter. Just recently, I was also privileged to help pay tribute to the late Corp. Rickey L. Bell as SB 753 was signed into law at the State Capitol. With many members of Rickey's family in attendance, part of Highway 84 in Pemiscot County was named the "Corporal Rickey L. Bell Memorial Highway" to recognize this young man's brave sacrifice and to honor his memory.

Several other top priorities I co-sponsored or supported this year also have been signed into law, including a bill to bolster the pay of many county sheriff deputies (HB 2224), a property tax reform bill (SB 711) that protects taxpayers from property tax increases caused by reassessment and a bill (SB 724) that strengthens the monitoring procedures for certain over-the-counter drugs, including pseudoephedrine, a key ingredient used in the production of methamphetamine.

Even though the legislative session ends in May, my work as your state senator continues throughout the year. Typically, summers are busy with bill signings, making presentations to civic and business groups, researching legislation, and, most importantly, meeting with constituents to discuss matters that are important to them.

As you can see, the 2008 regular session of the General Assembly was another productive one, and I credit most of the success to valuable input from citizens like you. As always, anytime you have any questions regarding legislation or state government, please feel free to call my Capitol office at (573) 751-3859 or toll free: (877) 291-5584.

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